



**Vale
of White Horse**
District Council

Publication Version
October 2017



Local Plan 2031

Part 2

Detailed Policies and Additional Sites

TOPIC PAPER 1
Duty to cooperate

This paper is one of six topic papers, listed below, which form part of the evidence base in support of the Publication Version of Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Detailed Policies and Additional Sites

Topic papers have been produced to present an overview of the evidence that has been considered in drafting the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. It is hoped that this will make it easier to understand how the Council has reached its conclusions.

The papers are available to view and access from the council website:

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

Topic Papers

1. Duty to Cooperate
2. Site Selection
3. Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities
4. Supporting Economic Prosperity
5. Supporting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
6. Protecting the Environment and Responding to Climate Change

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This topic paper provides a summary of how the Council is meeting its obligations under the 'Duty to Cooperate' as required by the Localism Act 2011, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).
- 1.2. The Duty to Cooperate is a legal requirement of Local Planning Authorities in plan-making. Whilst it is not a 'duty to agree', its primary purpose is to help achieve positive and effective local plans in relation to matters of wider than local importance. Meeting our obligations under the Duty to Cooperate is also an important part of plan-making and forms one of the key 'tests of soundness' set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.3. The evidence and processes summarised in this paper have helped to inform the preparation of the Publication Version of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Detailed Policies and Additional Sites (Part 2 plan).
- 1.4. The Part 2 plan will sit alongside the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (Part 1 plan) which was adopted in December 2016¹. The Part 1 plan sets the strategic priorities for the district and the focus upon delivering sustainable development. The Part 1 plan identifies the number of new homes and jobs to be provided in the area for the plan period up to 2031 to meet the Vale's 'objectively assessed need'. It also makes appropriate provision for new retail, leisure and commercial development and the infrastructure needed to support them.
- 1.5. The Part 2 plan complements the Part 1 plan by setting out:
 - policies and locations for the new housing to meet the Vale's proportion of Oxford's housing need, which cannot be met within the City boundaries, as agreed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board,
 - policies for the part of Didcot Garden Town that lies within the Vale of White Horse District,
 - detailed development management policies to complement the strategic policies set out in the Part 1 plan and replace the remaining saved policies of the Local Plan 2011, where appropriate, and
 - additional development site allocations.
- 1.6. Significant work has been carried out to inform the Local Plan 2031, and key stages of consultation have been undertaken with prescribed

¹ Vale of White Horse District Council (2016) *Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies*, available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/new-local-plan-2031-part-1-strategic-sites>

other relevant bodies in accordance with legislation. These stages have informed the preparation of the Part 2 plan. As part of our statutory consultation processes for the preparation of the Part 2 plan, the Council has undertaken formal consultation with all the required and relevant neighbouring authorities, prescribed and other relevant bodies. Preferred Options (Regulation 18) consultation on the Part 2 plan was undertaken from 9 March 2017 to 4 May 2017 and a Regulation 19 consultation was undertaken on the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan from 11 October 2017 to 22 November 2017. Both of these public consultations were undertaken in accordance with our Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)².

- 1.7. The Council has also undertaken ongoing engagement and informal liaison with neighbouring authorities and key statutory and prescribed bodies in preparing the Part 2 plan. The discussions have informed policy development and the additional site allocations in the Part 2 plan.
- 1.8. The Local Planning Authorities to which the Council considers the duty to most directly apply when preparing the Part 2 plan are listed below (they are also shown by Figure 1):

Oxfordshire county and housing market area:

- Cherwell District Council
- Oxford City Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- West Oxfordshire District Council

Other neighbouring authorities:

- Cotswold District Council
- Gloucestershire County Council
- Swindon Borough Council
- West Berkshire Council
- Wiltshire Council

² Vale of White Horse District Council (2016) *Statement of Community Involvement*, available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/statementcommunity-involvement>

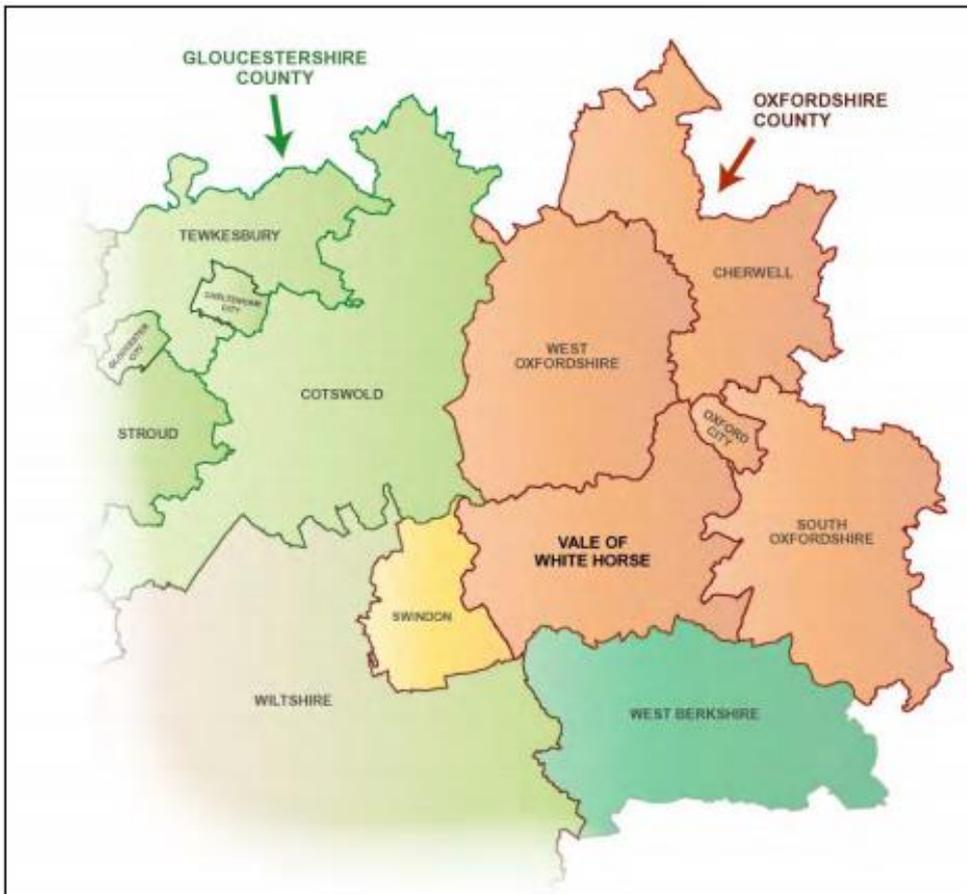


Figure 1: Map showing the various authorities neighbouring the district

1.9. In addition to Local Planning Authorities, other prescribed bodies subject to the Duty to Cooperate, are identified in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012³ as amended by the National Treatment Agency (Abolition) and the Health and Social Care Act 2012 (Consequential, Transitional and Saving Provisions) Order 2013⁴. The prescribed bodies relevant to the Vale of White Horse are listed below:

- The Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Natural England
- Highways England
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (NHS)
- The Civil Aviation Authority
- Local Enterprise Partnership
- The Homes and Communities Agency
- The Office of Rail and Road Regulation
- Highway Authorities (Oxfordshire County Council)
- Local Nature Partnership

³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/regulation/4/made>

⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/235/made>

- 1.10. The development of policies in the Part 2 plan have been tested through Sustainability Appraisal (SA)⁵ at key stages of the plan's preparation. This is a legislative requirement of the plan-making process. The SA has helped to identify a preferred policy option to inform the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan.
- 1.11. The structure of this topic paper reflects the following:
- **National Policy Context:** a brief summary of relevant national policies e.g. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) and relevant legislation
 - **Duty to Cooperate and Local Plan 2031 Part 1:** outlines relevant strategic cross boundary issues in the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1
 - **Meeting the Duty to Cooperate and Local Plan 2031 Part 2:** summarises key evidence and its outcomes.
 - **Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Preferred Options Consultation (March 2017):** summarises the key issues identified through the Regulation 18 public consultation in March 2017 related to the key strategic and cross-boundary matters
 - **Key Issues:** a short summary of key issues identified from consultation or through joint working
 - **Recommendations:** identifies the key recommendations for how this topic area has been addressed in the Local Plan 2031 Part 2.

⁵ AECOM (2017) *Sustainability Appraisal of Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2*, available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

2.0 NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

Localism Act 2011

- 2.1. The Duty to Cooperate is set out in Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011. It requires local authorities to work with neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies in preparing their Local Plan.
- 2.2. The Duty to Cooperate places a legal duty on Local Planning Authorities, county councils in England and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.
- 2.3. Local Plan Inspectors must firstly consider whether local plans meet the legal test of being prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate. Secondly, Inspectors are asked to assess the effectiveness of cooperation in addressing strategic matters. These considerations form part of the testing of local plan soundness. The Localism Act states that the Duty to Cooperate:
 - relates to a ‘strategic matter’ defined as sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two local planning areas or on a planning matter that falls within the remit of a county council
 - requires that councils set out planning policies to address such issues
 - requires that councils and public bodies ‘engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis’ to develop strategic policies, and
 - requires councils to consider joint approaches to plan making.
- 2.4. The PPG makes clear that exercising a collaborative approach to working, and identifying strategic matters and any strategic issues of particular or cross border significance should happen early on in the plan preparation process with a view to demonstrating that co-operation between authorities has led to outcomes and actions.

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

- 2.5. Section 33A (1) and (3) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 imposes the duty with other Local Planning Authorities and prescribed bodies when it undertakes certain activities, including the preparation of development plan documents, activities that can reasonably be considered to prepare the way for such preparation so far as they relate to a strategic matter. This is to maximise the effectiveness with which those activities are undertaken.

- 2.6. Section 33A (4) states that a strategic matter is: *“sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas, including (in particular) sustainable development or use of land for or in connection with infrastructure that is strategic and has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas.”*⁶
- 2.7. Section 33A (2) requires a local planning authority *“to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis” in respect of the activities that are subject to the duty.*⁷

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

- 2.8. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) gives guidance on the types of strategic matters where the duty may apply. Strategic matters include:
- the homes and jobs needed in the area
 - the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development
 - the provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat)
 - the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities, and
 - climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.
- 2.9. The NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that cross boundary issues are properly addressed and reflected in local plans. It also highlights the importance of joint working to meet development requirements that cannot wholly be met within a single local planning area, through either joint planning policies or informal strategies such as infrastructure and investment plans. Local authorities also need to demonstrate how collaborative working has influenced policy outcomes within the plan, in order for the plan to be found sound at examination.

Planning Practice Guidance (2014)

- 2.10. The National Planning Practice Guidance provides additional guidance on the national policies identified in the NPPF. With regard to the Duty to Cooperate and cross boundary matters, the PPG expands on the role and function of the duty in the plan making process.

⁶ section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

⁷ section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

- 2.11. In particular, the PPG sets out the implication for Local Planning Authorities that fail to demonstrate compliance with the duty for the examination of their local plan. The PPG seeks to ensure that this process addresses effective and deliverable policies on strategic cross boundary matters.
- 2.12. The PPG further expands on the extent to which Local Planning Authorities should cooperate, in particular, national policy places an emphasis on Local Planning Authorities to make every effort to secure the necessary cooperation on strategic cross boundary matters before submitting their local plans to the Secretary of State for Examination⁸. For instances where an authority will not cooperate, the PPG makes it clear that this should not prevent the authority bringing forward a local plan or from submitting it for examination.

Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) - Planning for the right homes in the right places: consultation proposals (2017)

- 2.13. The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) has published the following consultation 'Planning for the right homes in the right places'⁹ that sets out further measures identified in the recent Housing White Paper, to boost the supply of housing in England. The consultation sets out a number of proposals, which include the need to encourage local planning authorities to produce and maintain statements of common ground to improve their working relationship with other local planning authorities to meet housing and other needs across boundaries.
- 2.14. This consultation has placed an emphasis on local planning authorities to produce a statement of common ground over their housing market area or other agreed geographical area.
- 2.15. The Council has produced a number of statements of common ground with neighbouring authorities and key stakeholders which already address many of the points raised in the consultation. The statements of common ground are available to view and access on the Council website.

Other relevant plans and strategies

- 2.15. Relevant plans and strategies of our neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies have been reviewed to inform the preparation of the Part 2 plan. A review of relevant plans and strategies has also been carried out to identify cross-boundary issues to inform this topic paper.

⁸ CLG (2014) *Planning Practice Guidance*: Reference ID: 9-003-20140306, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/duty-to-cooperate>

⁹ CLG (2017) *Planning for the right homes in the right places: consultation proposals*, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-right-homes-in-the-right-places-consultation-proposals>

Such plans include: Strategic Economic Plan¹⁰ prepared by Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Local Transport Plan¹¹ prepared by Oxfordshire County Council as the Highway Authority.

- 2.16. The cross-boundary challenges and opportunities identified through this review are presented in **Appendix 1**, along with proposed policy responses and future actions to address these issues.

¹⁰ Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) (2014) *Strategic Economic Plan*, available at: <http://www.oxfordshirelep.org.uk/content/strategic-economic-plan>

¹¹ Oxfordshire County Council (2016) *Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031*, available at: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/connecting-oxfordshire>

3.0 DUTY TO COOPERATE AND LOCAL PLAN 2031: PART 1

3.1. The Local Plan 2031 Part 1 was formally adopted by Vale of White Horse District Council on the 14 December 2016. The Part 1 plan addressed a number of strategic cross border issues, including the following:

- an agreed process for delivering a portion of un-met housing need for Oxford City
- the comprehensive planning of housing and employment development and accompanying infrastructure across Science Vale, including the town of Didcot and the employment site of Culham Science Centre within South Oxfordshire
- the accommodation of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling show people across Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire and Oxford City
- the detailed planning of development proposed at the Swindon Eastern Villages and in the Western Vale sub area, including appropriate infrastructure on the surrounding road network, including the A420
- the planning of development within the district and in neighbouring districts, to ensure it does not unduly add to the congestion already present on the A34 without adequate mitigation
- delivery of the economic objectives of the County, such as those set out by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- delivery of the objectives of the Water Framework Directive
- the assessment and mitigation of development pressures at Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation through the cumulative impact of growth in Vale of White Horse District and neighbouring authorities
- preservation of the protected view cones of Oxford City, which extend into Vale of White Horse, and
- the need to safeguard land for mineral resources, aggregates, rail depots and waste management facilities through the Oxfordshire Waste and Minerals Core Strategy.

3.2. The Inspector, in his Report on the examination of Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1, came to the following view on matters relating to the Duty to Cooperate:

“In conclusion, having regard to all that I have read and heard, including the Statements of Common Ground between the Council and Oxfordshire, South Oxfordshire, West Oxfordshire and Cherwell Councils (in which these authorities state that they consider the Vale has met the Duty) I conclude that in relation to matters of strategic

importance the Council has engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with all relevant organisations in order to maximise the effectiveness of the preparation of the plan. It has therefore met the Duty to Co-operate.”¹²

- 3.3. Further evidence on how the council is continuing to meet its Duty to Cooperate for the Part 1 plan is contained in Topic Paper 1: Duty to Cooperate and Cross Boundary Issues¹³ published alongside the Submission Version of the Part 1 plan.
- 3.4. The Part 2 plan sets out examples of the Council’s commitment to ongoing working with its partners to ensure proper sustainable planning is achieved across administrative boundaries¹⁴, including:
- working jointly with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to ensure we plan effectively for job growth and housing needs along with supporting infrastructure across the Science Vale, including Didcot Garden Town
 - a ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to agree an approach to delivering strategic highway infrastructure across the Science Vale area, including those that span the district boundaries
 - working in partnership with other Oxfordshire authorities to plan for strategic infrastructure delivery across Oxfordshire as a whole, including consideration for cross border planning (beyond Oxfordshire) and beyond the plan period (i.e. after 2031). The Council is working jointly through the Oxfordshire Growth Board to produce an Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OXIS) that will provide a strategic view of infrastructure requirements to support the level of growth proposed by Oxfordshire authorities from 2016 to 2031 and beyond
 - working jointly with Swindon Borough Council and Oxfordshire County Council, the A420 Corridor Study has been published which facilitates cross border working and planning for growth along this important corridor, including the New Eastern Villages, and
 - supporting work of Thames Water and the Environment Agency to plan for future water supply and flood alleviation.

¹² Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031: Part 1 - Inspector’s Report (2016), available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/new-localplan-2031-part-1-strategic-sites>

¹³ Duty to Cooperate Topic Paper (2017) , available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

¹⁴ Vale of White Horse District Council (2017) *Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Additional Sites and Detailed Policies – Publication Version*, paragraph 1.27, available at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/lpp2

4.0 MEETING THE DUTY TO COOPERATE AND LOCAL PLAN 2031: PART 2

4.1. The Council is committed to working with our partners to ensure that proper sustainable planning is achieved across administrative boundaries. Most of the strategic matters that reach across local authority boundaries have been addressed in the adopted Part 1 plan. These included the District-wide needs for development, including objectively assessed housing need and employment. The Council has worked collaboratively and closely with organisations such as the Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England, Highways England and Oxfordshire County Council and neighbouring authorities to address these strategic matters.

4.2. The Part 1 plan addressed the following key strategic matters:

- working jointly with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to ensure we plan effectively for job growth and housing needs along with supporting infrastructure
- working jointly with Swindon Borough Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Western Vale Villages to ensure cross boundary infrastructure issues are adequately addressed. A Statement of Common Ground was agreed between the parties at the Examination of the Part 1 plan
- working with the Oxfordshire Growth Board to agree a process for delivery a portion of un-met housing need for Oxford City, and
- working with Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council to agree an approach to delivering strategic highway infrastructure across the Science Vale area.

4.3. Vale of White Horse District Council (VoWHDC) has engaged with Oxfordshire County Council, public bodies, other statutory consultees and stakeholders, including preparing technical evidence and planning policies to support the Part 2 plan, to ensure that strategic and cross-boundary issues are adequately addressed and planned for. This is presented in **Appendix 1** and includes the following:

- working collaboratively through the Oxfordshire Growth Board to identify how the unmet housing need for Oxford City should be apportioned between the neighbouring authorities and how it will be addressed in the Part 2 plan
- working positively and collaboratively with Oxford City Council to plan for additional affordable housing provision for Oxford in the Part 2 plan to be provided for within the Vale of White Horse
- working in partnership with Harwell Campus Partnership and other key stakeholders, including the North Wessex Downs

AONB Management Board to prepare a comprehensive development framework for site allocation at Harwell Campus in the Part 2 plan

- joint working with South Oxfordshire District Council to produce a Green Infrastructure Strategy. This work included a workshop and informal engagement with key stakeholders, including Oxfordshire County Council, Natural England and Environment Agency
- ongoing engagement with Oxfordshire County Council and key infrastructure and service providers to inform an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to support the Part 2 plan
- working collaboratively with Oxfordshire County Council and Highways England to deliver a comprehensive package of highway mitigation to minimise impacts associated with the Local Plan
- continue to work with Oxfordshire County Council to investigate opportunities for improving public transport, cycling and walking, particularly within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area, through the preparation of a Public Transport Study to support the Part 2 plan
- working collaboratively with Natural England, Environment Agency, Thames Water and North Wessex Downs AONB Board on site allocations and policy development for the Part 2 plan
- working collaboratively with Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership to inform policy development in the Part 2 plan
- working jointly with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to plan effectively for job growth and housing needs in the Part 2 plan, along with supporting infrastructure across the Science Vale, including Didcot Garden Town
- working collaboratively with Thames Water and Environment Agency to plan for future water supply by producing a Water Cycle Study to support the Part 2 plan, taking into account cumulative impact of growth from neighbouring authorities, and
- joint working with Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and South Oxfordshire District Council to develop a policy related to Community Employment Plans (CEPs) in the Part 2 plan.

4.4. The following four key strategic matters are emphasised further in this topic paper:

- working with other Oxfordshire authorities within the Housing Market Area (HMA) to plan for the agreed apportionment of the 'working assumption' figure for housing need that is unlikely to be met within Oxford City's boundaries

- working collaboratively with South Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council and other key stakeholders to prepare a masterplan for Didcot Garden Town
- working jointly with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to agree an approach to delivering strategic highway infrastructure across the Science Vale, including Didcot Garden Town, and
- working through the Oxfordshire Growth Board and Natural England to undertake strategic studies to investigate transport scenarios and air quality effects within the SAC in light of the proposed growth planned for the authorities within Oxfordshire.

Strategic Matter 1: Oxford Un-Met Housing Needs

- 4.5. As set out in the section one above, the Part 2 plan sets out policies and locations for new housing to meet the Vale's proportion of Oxford's housing need, which cannot be met within Oxford City boundaries.

Process of Engagement

- 4.6. The Oxfordshire Growth Board is a joint committee comprising the six councils of Oxfordshire and other key strategic partners, including the Local Enterprise Partnership, Environment Agency, Network Rail, Highways England and the Homes and Communities Agency.
- 4.7. The Board facilitates joint working on economic development, strategic planning and growth, in full accordance with the Duty to Cooperate. In September 2013, a Statement of Co-operation¹⁵ was signed by the council leaders of the local authorities in Oxfordshire. This set out a process to manage the outcomes of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA, published in April 2014), should any of the Local Planning Authorities in Oxfordshire not be able to meet their fully objectively assessed housing need. It was identified and agreed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board at an early stage that Oxford City would be unlikely to meet its housing needs in full, and that further work was required to determine a suitable apportionment of this un-met need which would need to be delivered by each of the neighbouring Oxfordshire authorities.
- 4.8. The post SHMA strategic work programme has been discussed at a number of Growth Board meetings since the publication (Regulation 19 public consultation) of the Part 1 plan. In particular a number of formal meetings took place. Further detail is available on the Oxfordshire Growth Board website.¹⁶

¹⁵ <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshire-growth-board>

¹⁶ Details of meetings of the Oxfordshire Growth Board are available to view online at: <http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=970&Year=0>

4.9. As part of the post SHMA strategic work programme, a number of joint evidence base studies¹⁷ have been commissioned by the Oxfordshire Growth Board to assist in the process of apportionment. These include:

- *Advice Note on Oxford's Development Capacity* (Fortismere Associates, August 2015) – Following this note, all of the authorities agreed a working assumption of 15,000 homes for Oxford City's unmet need up to 2031
- *Oxfordshire Green Belt Study* (LUC, October 2015) – This study assessed how the land within the existing Oxford Green Belt performs against the five main purposes of Green Belt designation. The study did not advise on the suitability or potential of land in the Oxford Green Belt for development
- *Strategic Options Assessment* (LUC, September 2016) – This assessment looked at areas of search for development consideration. 36 areas of search were included and looked at issues such as infrastructure, water supply and flooding
- *High Level Transport Assessment of Spatial Options* (ITP, May 2016) – This assessment considers the implications of development at the 36 areas of search identified in the Strategic Options Assessment, and
- *Education Assessment of Spatial Options for Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs* (Oxfordshire County Council, September 2016) – This report looks at the implications for the provision of primary and secondary school places of development at the 36 areas of search identified in the Strategic Options Assessment.

4.10. In addition to formal engagement such as through regular meetings at the Oxfordshire Growth Board, the Council has also undertaken engagement and informal liaison with neighbouring councils through individual meetings and informal liaison at a political, senior management and senior planner level to discuss specific cross boundary issues. This has been embedded within the Part 2 plan process from its early stages.

4.11. In particular, the Council has held a series of meetings with planning policy officers from Oxford City Council to discuss Oxford City Council's response to the Preferred Options Version of the Part 2 plan.

Agreed Apportionment of Un-met Housing Need

4.12. On the 26 September 2016, a Memorandum of Co-operation between the local authorities in the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area¹⁸ was presented to the Oxfordshire Growth Board. The purpose of the

¹⁷ All documents are available to view on the Oxfordshire Growth Board website at: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshire-growth-board>

¹⁸ Available to view online at <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/communityandliving/partnerships/GrowthBoard/MemorandumofCooperartion.pdf>

memorandum was to formally record and make public the Oxfordshire Local Authorities' engagement and co-operation under the Duty to Cooperate and to assist Oxford City with its unmet housing needs.

- 4.13. Following the collection of projects and assessments as set out above, the councils considered a 'working assumption' figure of 15,000 dwellings to be apportioned to the districts neighbouring the City. The apportionment is set out in **Table 1** below:

Table 1: Apportionment of unmet housing need for Oxford City

Local Planning Authority	Proportion of unmet need apportioned
Cherwell District Council	4,400
Oxford City Council	550
South Oxfordshire District Council ¹⁹	4,950
Vale of White Horse District Council	2,200
West Oxfordshire District Council	2,750
Total	14,850

- 4.14. The memorandum notes the timetable for each of the districts to address their apportionment. The adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 includes a policy commitment (**Core Policy 2: Cooperation on Unmet Housing Need for Oxfordshire**) that confirms how the Council will address the quantum of Oxford's unmet housing need, to be provided for within the Vale through the preparation of the Part 2 plan. This policy ensures the unmet need is considered and planned for in a timely manner and informed by a robust plan-making process prepared in accordance with national policy and legislation.
- 4.15. In line with Core Policy 2, the Council continues to work jointly and proactively with all the other Oxfordshire local authorities and through the Oxfordshire Growth Board to address any unmet housing need.
- 4.16. The Preferred Options Version of the Part 2 plan published in March 2017 sought to accommodate the agreed apportionment of 2,200 dwellings in full, subject to the plan-making process. This was delivered through a combination of existing strategic site allocations in the Part 1 plan and additional sites proposed in the Part 2 plan. Taken together, the plan will ensure timely delivery of housing to meet both the needs of the district, as well as the needs of Oxford City.

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- 4.17. In addition to working collaboratively on Local Plan issues with neighbouring authorities and key stakeholders through the Oxfordshire

¹⁹ South Oxfordshire District Council has not agreed to their respective apportionment figure of 4,950 dwellings.

Growth Board, the Council formally consulted the Preferred Options Version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 with neighbouring authorities, including Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council, prescribed and other relevant bodies in accordance with legislation. A full summary of the responses related to this particular strategic matter can be found in the **Consultation Statement**²⁰. Key comments from the consultation are highlighted below:

- Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council were broadly supportive of the Part 2 plan's approach to deliver the 2,200 homes agreed by Oxfordshire Growth Board as an appropriate apportionment for the Vale to help meet Oxford's unmet housing need to 2031
- Oxford City Council commented that the plan should allocate specific sites to deliver the apportionment; nomination rights and eligibility should be agreed for a proportion of housing for people from the Oxford City housing register
- Oxford City Council commented that the Plan should contain a specific requirement of 2,200 dwellings to meet unmet need
- Oxford City Council would like to see the plan consider how its spatial strategy relates to Oxford
- Oxfordshire County Council broadly supported the selection of site allocations in the Part 2 plan to meet Oxford City's unmet need
- Oxfordshire County Council were supportive of the principle of meeting the agreed apportionment of Oxford's unmet need through a combination of Part 1 and Part 2 strategic site allocations, and
- West Oxfordshire District Council commented that the plan should consider how its spatial strategy relates to the accessibility to Oxford, in particular public transport connections.

Key actions in relation to Strategic Matter 1

4.18. The Council has identified a number of cross-boundary challenges and opportunities through the review of relevant plans and strategies, through stages of consultation and through ongoing engagement with our neighbouring authorities in relation to this strategic matter. The key challenges and opportunities are summarised briefly below:

- working positively with Oxford City Council and other Oxfordshire authorities, including through the Oxfordshire Growth Board, to plan for housing for Oxfordshire in the longer term. This may include the preparation of an update to the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

²⁰ the Consultation Statement that support the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan is available to view and access at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

- working positively and constructively with Oxford City Council to agree an approach to the allocation of affordable housing to site allocations in the Part 2 plan to meet the agreed apportionment of Oxford City's un-met housing need
- updating the Part 2 plan to reflect that the agreed quantum of unmet for Oxford to be addressed within the Vale should be within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area and ensuring that at least 2,200 homes are demonstrably close and accessible to Oxford
- demonstrate how the proposed allocations are consistent with the Spatial Strategy²¹, and
- provide a commitment to addressing affordable housing need for Oxford. A commitment has been added to the Part 2 plan to agree an approach between Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxford City Council.²²

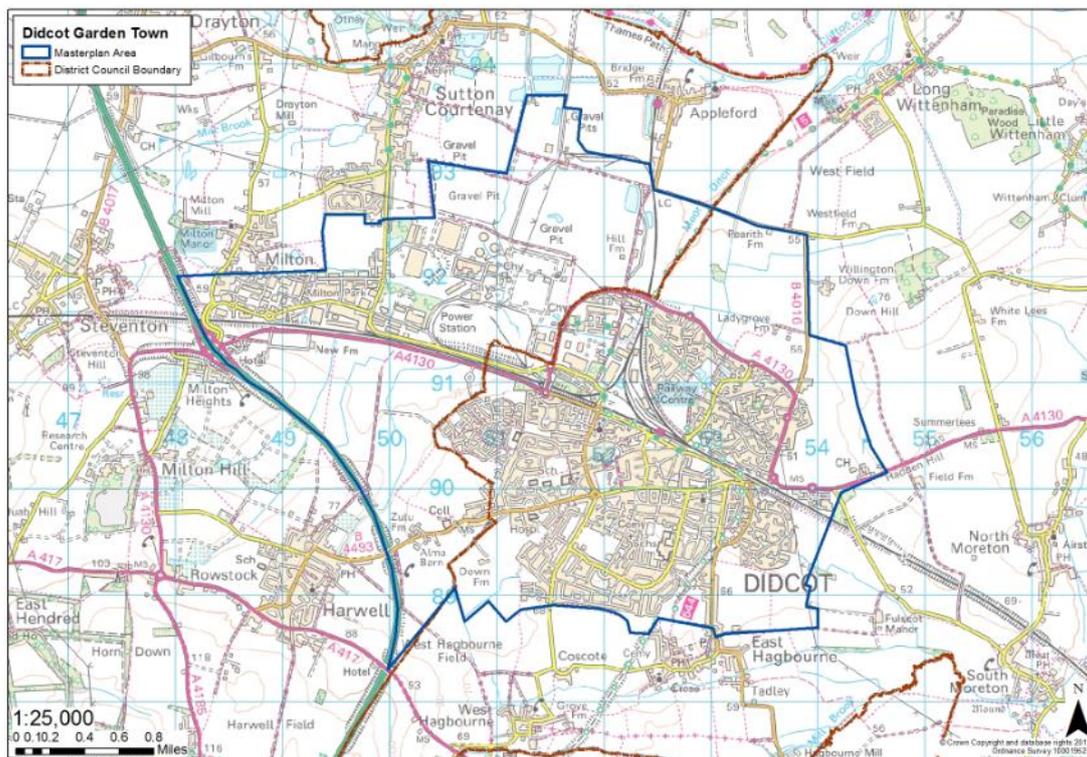
²¹ Further detail is set out in the Site Selection Topic Paper

²² Vale of White Horse District Council (2017) *Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Additional Sites and Detailed Policies – Publication Version*, Paragraph 2.25, available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

Strategic Matter 2: Didcot Garden Town

- 4.19. Vale of White Horse District Council is working with South Oxfordshire District Council and other key stakeholders, in particular Oxfordshire County Council and Highways England to prepare a masterplan for Didcot Garden Town.
- 4.20. The masterplan boundary includes land in both districts, as shown on the map below.

Figure 2: Map of the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan Area



- 4.21. This includes a number of strategic development sites in the district, including part of Great Western Park, Valley Park, North West of Valley Park, Milton Park and the large brownfield site at Didcot A.
- 4.22. The Part 2 plan contains policies (Core Policy 16a: Didcot Garden Town) and proposals for the part of Didcot Garden Town that lies within the Vale of White Horse District, including a number of important development and design principles. Policies have emerged and been refined through the joint work undertaken on developing the masterplan to ensure consistency with the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Document.
- 4.23. The Didcot Garden Town has been discussed at a number of meetings during the preparation of the Part 2 plan. In particular a number of

formal meetings took place. Further detail is set out in Chapter 2 of the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Document²³.

- 4.24. The Council, working in partnership with South Oxfordshire District Council has met with key stakeholders, utilities and service providers and other key representatives to shape the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Document and to inform the master planning principles contained within the Part 2 plan.
- 4.25. In addition to formal engagement, the Council has also undertaken engagement and informal liaison with the Didcot Garden Town team and planning policy officers and specialist officers at South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council to ensure the master planning principles to support the Garden Town are aligned in their respective Local Plans, are consistent with local and national policy and support the vision and objectives for the Didcot Garden Town as set out in the Delivery Document.

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- 4.26. In addition to working collaboratively with South Oxfordshire District Council and other key stakeholders on the Didcot Garden Town masterplan, the Council has formally consulted upon the Preferred Options Version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 with prescribed and other relevant bodies in accordance with legislation. A summary of the responses related to this particular strategic matter can be found in the **Consultation Statement**²⁴. Key comments from the consultation are highlighted below:

- Historic England commented on the proximity of the proposed Didcot Garden Town Masterplan area to a scheduled monument of a settlement site north of Milton Park and to the east of Appleford. Historic England commented that Figure 2.7 should include an additional Masterplan principle requiring the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and heritage assets.
- Highways England were supportive of the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan Principles including the aim to reduce reliance on motorised vehicles and move towards active and public transport
- Natural England were supportive of the principle for the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan Principles in enhancing the natural environment, but commented that a strategic approach to green infrastructure and the creation of ecological networks should be

²³ Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils (2017) *Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan*, available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/business/didcot-garden-town-0>

²⁴ The Consultation Statement that supports the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan is available to view and access at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

undertaken. Natural England commented that this principle should include a commitment to deliver a net gain in biodiversity

- Oxfordshire County Council commented that the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan Principles should include a principle on sustainability in relation to energy, water and resource use, including re-use, recycling and composting.
- Sport England commented that their Active Design principles are referenced in the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan Principles
- a number of comments supported the principle of the Didcot Garden Town but raised concerns over the loss of green space, housing quality and transport links, and
- a few comments supported the Didcot Garden Town initiative but raised concerns in respect to how it should be implemented.

Key actions in relation to Strategic Matter 2

4.27. The Council has identified a number of cross-boundary challenges and opportunities through the review of relevant plans and strategies, through stages of consultation and through ongoing engagement with our neighbouring authorities in relation to this strategic matter. The key challenges and opportunities are summarised briefly below:

- continue to work jointly with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire to ensure we plan effectively for job growth and housing needs along with supporting infrastructure across the Science Vale, including Didcot Garden Town
- the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan Principles as set out in the Part 2 plan will need to be reflected in the final Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan document, and
- continue to work with the Didcot Garden Town team, neighbouring authorities and key stakeholders to develop a joined up vision and delivery strategy for the area through a future Development Plan Document (DPD) or Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Strategic Matter 3: Transport Infrastructure

4.28. Vale of White Horse District Council, continues to engage with Oxfordshire County Council on matters relating to highways and public transport, including the provision of new cycleways and footpaths. The Council has jointly prepared the Evaluation of Transport Impacts – Technical Note²⁵ to inform the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan, and takes account of planned growth in neighbouring authorities. The Council has also worked closely with Oxfordshire County Council and neighbouring authorities, including South Oxfordshire District Council to identify new land to be safeguarded for future transport schemes²⁶.

²⁵ Available to view as part of the evidence base informing the Preferred Options consultation.

²⁶ See the Local Plan 2031: Part 2 appendices.

- 4.29. Furthermore, the Council works collaboratively with other Oxfordshire authorities, through the Oxfordshire Growth Board, to prepare an infrastructure strategy for Oxfordshire. The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OXIS) will provide a strategic view of infrastructure requirements to support the level of growth proposed by Oxfordshire authorities from 2016 to 2031 and beyond. The Strategy will set out the priority of strategic infrastructure investment needs to support jobs and housing growth in Oxfordshire. Further details on the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy are available on the Oxfordshire Growth Board website.²⁷
- 4.30. On-going engagement and cooperation has taken place with Oxfordshire County Council throughout the preparation of the Part 2 plan. This has involved working together on technical studies to help inform development and infrastructure requirements. The Council has regular Policy Liaison Meetings with Oxfordshire County Council to ensure the technical work related to transport infrastructure, such as the Evaluation of Transport Impact (ETI) and ongoing work to consider sustainable transport options, is effective and aligns with the Part 2 plan and the Local Transport Plan.
- 4.31. Strategic highway schemes safeguarded within the Part 2 plan are included at the request of Oxfordshire County Council, as part of the current and emerging Local Transport Plan and are informed by evidence prepared by Oxfordshire County Council as Highways Authority²⁸.
- 4.32. The Council also works cooperatively and constructively with Network Rail on priorities for future investment and capacity upgrades in the area. This includes looking at options for expansion of the railway station at Didcot, including opportunities for improved pedestrian and cycle access, passenger facilities, and long term platform capacity upgrades. The Council is also working in partnership to undertake further work investigating the potential for a new railway station at Grove.
- 4.33. As discussed further below, the Council has engaged with local bus companies, including Oxford Bus Company, Thames Travel and Stagecoach Oxfordshire on future public transport provision in line with planned growth through the Part 2 plan.

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- 4.34. In addition to working collaboratively on Local Plan issues with neighbouring authorities and key stakeholders including, South Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council and

²⁷ <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshire-growth-board>

²⁸ except for the proposed link between Dalton Barracks and Lodge Hill proposed public transport interchange, which is proposed by the District Council.

Highways England, the Council formally consulted on the Preferred Options Version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 with prescribed and other relevant bodies in accordance with legislation. A summary of the responses related to this particular strategic matter can be found in the **Consultation Statement**²⁹. Key comments from the consultation are highlighted below:

- Oxfordshire County Council supported the safeguarding of land for park and ride sites at Cumnor and Lodge Hill which are consistent with proposals in the Local Transport Plan 4
- Oxfordshire County Council supported the principle of safeguarding land for a South Marcham Bypass
- a number of comments supported the long-term aspiration to deliver the Marcham Bypass to ease congestion and improve air quality, but concerns were raised that there is no timescale or funding commitment
- a number of comments raised concerns that safeguarding land for park and ride sites would impact on air quality by encouraging further car use
- Highways England were supportive of the principle for safeguarding land for the delivery of future transport schemes and would like to be involved in further discussions with the Council
- Oxfordshire County Council commented that a further area of safeguarding is sought to ensure the pedestrian/cycle route extends to the junction of the A4130 allowing for continued link through Backhill Lane Tunnel
- South Oxfordshire District Council commented that the existing Memorandum of Understanding should be updated regarding planning for development and the delivery of highway infrastructure improvements that cross administrative boundaries
- Network Rail supported the principle of improving connectivity through the safeguarding of land to support the re-opening of Grove Railway Station, and
- Oxfordshire County Council would like to see land safeguarded for pedestrian and cycle links for the re-opening of Grove Railway Station.

Key actions in relation to Strategic Matter 3

- 4.35. The Council has identified a number of cross-boundary challenges and opportunities through the review of relevant plans and strategies, through stages of consultation and through ongoing engagement with our neighbouring authorities in relation to this strategic matter. The key challenges and opportunities are summarised briefly below:

²⁹ The Consultation Statement that supports the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan is available to view and access at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

- continue to work in partnership with other Oxfordshire authorities to plan for strategic infrastructure delivery across Oxfordshire, including consideration for cross border planning (beyond Oxfordshire) and beyond the plan period
- continue to work in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council, Highways England and other stakeholders to plan for future highway improvements and to support the delivery of the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 4
- ongoing engagement with Oxfordshire County Council and key infrastructure and service providers to inform an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to support the site allocations in the Part 2 plan, and
- continue to work collaboratively with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to plan for and deliver transport infrastructure in the Didcot Garden Town and wider Didcot area, through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The MoU should demonstrate the councils' commitment to ensuring that planning for strategic infrastructure for individual schemes as set out in the Part 1 and Part 2 plan is appropriately coordinated and supports the planned growth across Oxfordshire.

Strategic Matter 4: Impact of Growth on Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

- 4.36. It is considered likely that housing across Oxfordshire will have an effect on the air quality within a small part of the Oxford Meadows SAC as it lies adjacent to the A34 and A40.
- 4.37. Through the Oxfordshire Growth Board, the Local Planning Authorities are undertaking strategic studies to investigate transport scenarios and air quality effects within the SAC adjacent to the A34 and A40, which will in turn inform specific mitigation interventions. The Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) that supports the Preferred Options Version of the Part 2 plan states that *“until this study is completed, it has been assumed in this analysis that an air quality effect may exist and appropriate plan-level measures to address the issue (as accepted for other local authorities) have been identified and are reflecting in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1, which would enable a conclusion of no adverse effects to be reached for the allocations and policies contained with the Local Plan 2031 Part 2”*.³⁰ The Part 1 plan therefore contains plan-level measures to address this issue until the studies are completed.
- 4.38. In addition to formal engagement through the Oxfordshire Growth Board, the Council has also undertaken ongoing engagement and

³⁰ AECOM (2017) *Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 – Habitats Regulations Assessment*, para 8.5.34, available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

informal liaison with Natural England in relation to reviewing the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) to support the Part 2 plan, taking into account air quality effects with the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC). This informal liaison has informed site specific requirements set out in the Site Development Templates and policy development in the Part 2 plan. The Council has also engaged with Natural England, as a key stakeholder, during the preparation of a Green Infrastructure Strategy to support the Local Plan 2031 that takes into account recommendations from the HRA.

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4.39. In addition to working collaboratively on Local Plan issues with neighbouring authorities and key stakeholders through the Oxfordshire Growth Board, the Council formally consulted the Preferred Options Version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 with prescribed and other relevant bodies in accordance with legislation. A summary of the responses related to this particular strategic matter can be found in the **Consultation Statement**³¹. Key comments from this consultation are highlighted below:

- Natural England were broadly supportive that the outcomes of the Oxfordshire wide strategic study to assess air quality impacts on the Oxford Meadows SAC are being considered in the HRA to support the Part 2 plan.

Key actions in relation to Strategic Matter 4

4.40. The Council has identified a number of cross-boundary challenges and opportunities through the review of relevant plans and strategies, each stage of consultation and through ongoing engagement with its neighbouring authorities in relation to this strategic matter. The key challenges and opportunities are summarised briefly below:

- continue to work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities and key stakeholders, through the Oxfordshire Growth Board to produce evidence related to transport scenarios and air quality effects within the Oxford Meadows SAC in light of growth proposed in Oxfordshire, and
- continue to work collaboratively with Natural England in relation to the production of an Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) to inform policy development and site allocations in the Part 2 plan.

³¹ The Consultation Statement that supports the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan is available to view and access at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2031-part-2>

Policy Development and Site Allocations for Local Plan 2031: Part 2

- 4.41. The Council has engaged with all statutory and prescribed bodies as listed in Regulation 2 and 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012³², as part of the process of drafting policies and identifying additional sites allocations to be included in the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. The Council has engaged with the following statutory and prescribed bodies during the preparation of the Part 2 plan:
- Environment Agency
 - Natural England
 - Historic England
 - Highways England
 - Oxfordshire County Council
 - Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
 - National Health Service (NHS)
 - National Rail
 - Health and Safety Executive
 - Thames Valley Police
 - Oxford Bus/Thames Travel
 - Stagecoach
 - Thames Water
 - Scottish Southern Electricity (SSE)
 - Gas (British Gas, Southern Gas Network, Wales and West Utilities)
 - Electricity (National Grid, UK Power Networks)
 - Mobile Operators (Vodafone, O2, BT)
- 4.42. In September 2016, the Council undertook informal engagement with infrastructure providers and key stakeholders on a shortlist of thirty-four sites it considered had potential for allocation in the Preferred Options Version of the Part 2 plan.
- 4.43. This provided key stakeholders and infrastructure providers with the opportunity to review and provide comments on detailed assessment of all the sites. Feedback received from stakeholders and infrastructure providers at this stage assisted in identifying sites that were considered to be not deliverable, as well as identifying a number of specific requirements for each of the remaining deliverable sites. In November 2016, a second stage of informal engagement took place, which looked at a number of refined scenarios for the remaining deliverable sites. It also sought feedback on draft site specific

³² The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/767/contents/made>

requirements which would inform the site development templates of the Part 2 plan³³.

- 4.44. Further informal engagement on updated Site Development Templates was undertaken with key stakeholders and internal officers in July 2017 following the formal 'Preferred Options' consultation. Comments from this stage has informed the Site Development Templates for the Publication Version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. Further information on the Site Selection process for the Part 2 plan is contained within **Topic Paper 2: Site Selection**³⁴.
- 4.45. In parallel, the Council also consulted with key stakeholders and specialist officers within the Council on draft development management policies for the plan. Feedback received in November 2016 helped to shape the policies for inclusion in the Preferred Options Version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 published in March 2017. Further informal engagement with key stakeholders and specialist officers was undertaken in July 2017. Taking into account the responses received from the Preferred Options consultation, this stage has helped to refine the policies to be included in the Publication Version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2.
- 4.46. In the months preceding the Preferred Options consultation, the Council also met on an on-going basis with statutory and prescribed bodies including Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, the Environment Agency and Natural England, to address specific matters relevant to each organisation and to seek to overcome issues raised through informal engagement.
- 4.47. The Council has also met with statutory and prescribed bodies including Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, the Environment Agency and Natural England to inform policy development in the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan. The Council has undertook regular meetings with Oxfordshire County Council through Policy Liaison Meetings to discuss a range of policy matters including infrastructure, highways and education provision that have helped to inform policy development and sites in the Part 2 plan.

Statements of Common Ground

- 4.48. Vale of White Horse District Council has worked actively, constructively and positively with its neighbouring authorities, other prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies and service and infrastructure providers over the course of the preparation of the Part 2 plan on strategic planning matters. This has included activities ranging from undertaking statutory consultations, to preparing joint evidence to

³³ Site Development Templates are included in Appendix A of the Preferred Options of Local Plan 2031: Part 2

³⁴ Site Selection Topic Paper (2017), available at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/LPP2

inform local plan making, exchanging written correspondence and on the production of Statements of Common Ground. The Council invited relevant public bodies to enter into Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs) and an agreement on strategic and cross-boundary matters has been reached with the following public bodies, including:

Statements of Common Ground with neighbouring authorities:

- Cherwell District Council
- Oxford City Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- West Berkshire Council
- West Oxfordshire District Council

Statements of Common Ground with Government agencies and public bodies:

- Environment Agency
- Highways England
- Historic England
- Natural England
- Thames Water
- Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership

- 4.49. The Council has held a series of meetings with planning policy officers from Oxford City Council to review and discuss Oxford City Council's response following publication of the Preferred Options Version of the Part 2 plan. The Council continues to work collaboratively and positively with Oxford City Council to plan for housing for Oxfordshire in the longer term, in particular agreeing an approach for addressing the affordable housing need for Oxford.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This topic paper summarises the steps the Council has taken during the preparation of the Publication Version of Local Plan 2031 Part 2, in order to meet the requirement of the Duty to Cooperate. The content of the Part 2 plan has been informed by strategies and plans of our neighbouring authorities and other key stakeholders, by responses to stages of consultation and by ongoing engagement activities.
- 5.2 The topic paper illustrates a number of areas where the content of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 already seeks to address cross-boundary issues. It has also highlighted cross-boundary challenges and opportunities, which the Council will continue to address through ongoing joint working with neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies.
- 5.3 The key additions or changes to the Part 2 plan to effectively address strategic matters and other cross boundary interests are set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 5.4 The Council has sought to address the key strategic matters identified in **Section 4** through continued engagement and cooperation with statutory bodies and neighbouring authorities that has informed policy development in the preparation of the Publication Version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2.
- 5.5 In relation to Strategic Matter 1: Oxford un-met housing needs, the Council has formally met with planning policy officers from Oxford City Council in August 2017 to review and discuss Oxford City Council's response to the Preferred Options for the Part 2 plan and to provide an update on the Part 2 plan.
- 5.6 During the preparation of the Part 2 plan and following bi-lateral discussions with neighbouring authorities, including Oxford City Council, the Publication Version of the Part 2 plan has sought to plan for the quantum of Oxford's unmet housing need to be planned for in the Vale. The Part 2 plan ensures that at least 2,200 additional dwellings are allocated within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area and are demonstrably close and accessible to Oxford.
- 5.7 In addition to planning for the appropriate housing requirement, the Council has also sought to plan for the appropriate types of dwellings, to contribute towards the affordable housing needs for Oxford City, including the need to determine the affordable housing need for Oxford to be provided for within the Vale following a future update to the Oxfordshire SHMA and the completion of Oxford City's Local Plan.
- 5.8 Following discussions with Oxford City Council, the Part 2 plan includes a commitment for the Council to work positively with Oxford City Council

and other Oxfordshire Authorities to plan for housing for Oxfordshire in the longer term beyond the plan period.

- 5.9 In relation to Strategic Matter 2: Didcot Garden Town, the Council continues to work collaboratively with South Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council and other key stakeholders to prepare a masterplan for Didcot Garden Town. The Part 2 plan contains policies and proposals for the part of Didcot Garden Town that lies within the Vale of White Horse District. Core Policy 16a in the Part 2 plan ensures that development proposals located within the Garden Town Masterplan Area demonstrate that they have complied with the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan Principles.
- 5.10 The policy has been refined following ongoing engagement with South Oxfordshire District Council and other key stakeholders and taking into account the responses received to public consultation on the Preferred Options Version of the Part 2 plan.
- 5.11 In relation to Strategic Matter 3: Transport Infrastructure, A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been produced between Vale of White Horse District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council on the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure in the Didcot Garden Town and wider Didcot area. The MoU demonstrates the Councils' commitment towards ensuring that planning for strategic infrastructure for individual schemes as set out in the Part 1 and Part 2 plan is appropriately coordinated and supports the planned growth across Oxfordshire. The MoU sets out commitments including developing policies for safeguarding of land to enable future provision of agreed infrastructure schemes, including areas of safeguarded land that cross administrative boundaries and to develop Didcot Garden Town with ongoing engagement and collaborative working with Oxfordshire County Council to assist in the co-ordination of delivery of planned development and infrastructure.
- 5.12 The MoU also commits to collaborative working on the development of feasibility, business cases and evidence base for transport improvements to support employment and housing growth.
- 5.13 This Topic Paper demonstrates how Vale of White Horse District Council has maintained and continues to maintain active engagement with neighbouring authorities, statutory organisations and prescribed bodies on matters of strategic importance and other cross-boundary issues.
- 5.14 The Council will continue to engage with neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies on an ongoing basis in order to identify and address cross-boundary issues. This approach will help ensure that liaison with neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies remains fully embedded within the plan-making process at the Vale.

Appendix 1: Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities, relevant content of the Publication Version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1, and how the Duty to Cooperate has been met

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
<i>Housing</i>		
<p>Need to ensure a robust approach to meeting the future housing needs of the Oxfordshire housing market area, including the agreed apportionment of unmet need to be met within the Vale of White Horse District</p>	<p>The housing proposals in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and Part 2 seek to fully meet the objectively assessed need for housing arising in the Vale. This is based on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Oxfordshire that identifies the objectively assessed need for each local planning authority. For Vale of White Horse, the housing requirement is 20,560 dwellings plus the agreed apportionment of Oxford’s unmet housing need to be addressed within the District for the plan period 2011 to 2031.</p> <p>Oxford City Council responded to an early consultation highlighting the need for the Part 2 plan to allocate specific sites to deliver the apportionment; nomination rights and eligibility should be agreed for a proportion of housing for people from the Oxford City housing register.</p>	<p>The Council has worked as part of the Oxfordshire Growth Board to identify how the unmet housing need for Oxford City should be apportioned between the neighbouring authorities. The Council also continue to work collaboratively with authorities within and outside the county area where it is necessary to plan effectively on matters of strategic and sub-regional significance.</p> <p>A Memorandum of Co-operation between the local authorities in the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area was signed on 26 September 2016 that identified the agreed apportionment for the quantum of Oxford’s unmet housing need to be met within the Vale of White Horse as 2,200 dwellings for the period up to 2031.</p> <p>Core Policy 2 in the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies</p>

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
		<p>confirms how the Vale of White Horse will address the quantum of Oxford's unmet housing need, to be provided for within the Vale, through the preparation of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2.</p> <p>The Part 1 plan includes a clear policy commitment to ensure unmet need is addressed in a timely manner, informed by a robust approach to plan-making and prepared in accordance with national policy and legislation.</p> <p>The Part 2 plan allocates additional housing sites to address the agreed quantum of unmet housing need for Oxford to be addressed within the Vale.</p> <p>The unmet need is met by a combination of Part 1 strategic allocations and Part 2 additional allocations. The Part 2 plan ensures that at least 2,200 additional dwellings are allocated in the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area that are suitably close to and accessible to Oxford.</p>

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
		<p>The Part 2 plan includes a clear commitment that the Council will work with Oxford City Council to agree an approach to the allocation of affordable housing to contribute towards the affordable housing needs of Oxford City.</p> <p>The Council will continue to work positively with Oxford City Council and other Oxfordshire authorities to plan for housing for Oxfordshire in the longer term, including planning for additional affordable housing provision for Oxford to be provided for within the Vale of White Horse.</p>
<p>Need to ensure that the accommodation needs of the gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople communities are planned for appropriately across the Vale of White Horse, Cherwell, South Oxfordshire and Oxford City districts</p>	<p>A Joint Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People Accommodation Needs Assessment was prepared in early 2013 and an update prepared in 2014 to support the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1.</p> <p>A joint assessment was prepared in 2017 to provide an assessment of current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation</p>	<p>The Council continue to work with South Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council and Oxford City Council to ensure the accommodation needs of the gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople are planned for appropriately.</p> <p>Core Policy 27 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 provides for the needs of</p>

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
	in the districts of Cherwell, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. This was particularly in light of the revised Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) published in August 2015.	Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People.
Infrastructure		
Need to facilitate the delivery of increased skills and knowledge within Science Vale to provide opportunities for local people to gain the skills needed to access jobs available	<p>The Council has liaised with key stakeholders including Oxfordshire County Council and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to produce a policy in the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 to support Community Employment Plans (CEPs).</p> <p>This policy commitment is consistent with the Strategic Objectives set out in the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1, the Council's Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020 and the Strategic Economic Plan produced by Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.</p>	Development Policy 10: Community Employment Plans (CEPs) in the Part 2 plan encourages developers to consider in their proposals how opportunities for local employment, apprenticeships and training can be created during both construction and operation.
Need to ensure that the necessary supporting infrastructure accompanies the growth proposed in the Local Plan 2031 Part 2	Ongoing engagement with key infrastructure/service providers has informed an update to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which accompanies	The Council will continue to work with infrastructure/service providers, including Oxfordshire County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group, to review

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
	the Publication Version of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2.	and update the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The Site Development Templates that support the Part 2 plan identify the key infrastructure and service requirements which are to be provided within or as part of the site allocations in the Part 2 plan.
Transport		
Need to ensure that proposed development (both within the Vale and in neighbouring districts) does not unduly add to the congestion already present on the A34 without adequate mitigation	<p>The Council has prepared an Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) Study to inform the preparation of the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. This has identified a number of impacts on the highway network associated with increased growth in the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and Local Plan 2031 Part 2.</p> <p>The Local Transport Plan and supporting evidence proposes a number of additional transport schemes within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area, including Park and Ride sites for accessing Oxford from the A34 and A420 corridors.</p>	<p>The Council has and continues to work with Oxfordshire County Council as the leading highway authority, and Highways England to deliver a comprehensive package of highway mitigation to minimise any harmful impacts associated with new development. Work is also ongoing to improve public transport, both increased frequency and new services.</p> <p>The Council continues to work with Oxfordshire County Council and Highways England to develop a Route Based Strategy for the A34.</p> <p>The Council continue to work with Oxfordshire County Council to investigate</p>

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
	<p>Oxfordshire County Council is investigating two additional strategic highway infrastructure schemes, including dedicated access to/from A34 to Milton Park and pedestrian and cycle bridge over A34 at Milton Heights in the Local Transport Plan.</p> <p>Detailed feasibility work is progressing to inform the preferred location of a new station at Grove.</p>	<p>opportunities for improving public transport, cycling and walking within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area.</p> <p>The Council continues to work with Oxfordshire County Council, Network Rail and other stakeholders to investigate the re-opening of a railway station at Grove within the plan period.</p> <p>Core Policy 12a: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area sets out additional land safeguarding to support the delivery of strategic highway schemes and assist in achieving sustainable development associated with the additional housing proposed in the Part 2 plan.</p> <p>Core Policy 18a: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements within the South East Vale Sub-Area sets out additional land safeguarding to avoid</p>

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
		<p>the future delivery of the schemes being prejudiced.</p> <p>Core Policy 19a: Re-opening of Grove Railway Station updates the area of land to be safeguarded for the provision of a new station. This has been informed by feasibility work with Oxfordshire County Council.</p>
Employment		
<p>Need to help deliver the economic objectives of the county, such as those set out by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership</p>	<p>The Council has worked positively and collaboratively with the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and South Oxfordshire District Council to prepare a policy in the Part 2 plan to support Community Employment Plans (CEPs). This is a key objective of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and supports local evidence produced by the LEP to address exclusion from the labour market and to assist younger people and adults who are marginalised or disadvantaged from work. This is consistent with the Council's Corporate Plan objectives including optimising employment</p>	<p>Development Policy 10: Community Employment Plans (CEPs) is included in the Part 2 plan to encourage a localised approach to recruitment associated with new development proposals.</p> <p>The Council has worked with Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and South Oxfordshire District Council to produce a policy that encourages new development proposals to maximise opportunities for local economic development in line with local evidence, national policy and guidance.</p>

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
	opportunities and encouraging local apprenticeships.	
Water Supply		
Need to work with Thames Water to ensure that development proposals do not adversely affect the water and wastewater network.	<p>Thames Water was consulted as part of the process of informing the update to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which has been published as part of the supporting material to the Local Plan 2031 Part 2.</p> <p>The Council has also liaised closely with them as part of the evidence work to inform our strategic site allocations and policy development for the Local Plan 2031 Part 2.</p>	<p>Through close cooperation with Thames Water and the Environment Agency, the Council has prepared a Water Cycle Study to inform the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. It takes account of water catchments across administrative boundaries, particularly for Oxfordshire and Swindon. It also takes into account cumulative growth in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1.</p> <p>Core Policy 14a: Upper Thames Strategic Storage Reservoir updates the land safeguarded for a reservoir between East Hanney, Drayton and Steventon.</p> <p>The Council will continue to work with Thames Water to ensure that future development proposals do not adversely impact the water and wastewater network.</p> <p>The Site Development Templates to support the site allocations in the Local</p>

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
		Plan 2031 Part 2 ensures that developers liaise with Thames Water to ensure that appropriate works are carried out if needed and water supply capacity and wastewater capacity can be demonstrated to be deliverable within their development proposals.
<i>Natural Environment</i>		
Need to ensure that any development pressures at Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) caused by our strategy or arising from cumulative impacts are adequately assessed and mitigated.	Oxford Meadows SAC is located adjacent to the north eastern boundary of Vale of White Horse District. Responses to our previous consultations on the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and Part 2 from Natural England highlighted the need to conduct further work to ensure that impacts from the A34 would now have an adverse impact on the Oxford Meadows.	A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been published as part of the supporting evidence to the Local Plan 2031 Part 2, and includes consideration of potential effects of the proposed local plan on Oxford Meadows SAC (including recreational pressure, air quality and water quality impacts). The HRA concluded that likely significant effects on the Oxford Meadows SAC as a result of development under the proposed Local Plan 2031 Part 2 will not occur either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
		<p>The Council continue to work with the other Oxfordshire authorities through the Oxfordshire Growth Board to undertake strategic studies to investigate transport scenarios and air quality effects within the SAC.</p>
<p>Need to help deliver the objectives of the Water Framework Directive and the Thames River Basin Management Plan</p>	<p>The Water Framework Directive requires that there is no deterioration in the status of water bodies and that they all achieve good ecological status by 2027. The Thames River Basin Management Plan sets out actions to help meet this obligation.</p>	<p>Development Policy 29: Watercourses seeks to ensure that watercourses are accommodated appropriately within new development to ensure that they do not compromise the ecological importance of the watercourse. This policy has been developed in consultation with Environment Agency.</p> <p>The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) identifies where water and wastewater infrastructure upgrades are required, provision of which to the required treatment standards will help ensure that the ecological status of water bodies in the district will meet the required standards despite future increased treated waste water discharges arising</p>

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
		<p>from planned growth from the Part 2 plan and the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1.</p> <p>The Council will continue to work with Environment Agency and other partners in helping to deliver the objectives of the Water Framework Directive and the Thames River Basin Management Plan.</p>
<p>Need to help deliver the objectives of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</p>	<p>Concerns were raised by Natural England, North Wessex Downs AONB Unit and other stakeholders with respect to the site allocation at Harwell Campus located within the AONB. This was followed up with a meeting with Natural England and AONB unit to discuss these concerns.</p>	<p>Core Policy 16b: Harwell Campus Comprehensive Development Framework in the Part 2 plan ensures that new development is fully integrated with the Campus and reflects its location within the North Wessex Downs AONB.</p> <p>The Framework will provide detailed guidance to inform proposals including the need for a landscape and visual impact assessment on the North Wessex Downs AONB.</p> <p>The Council will work with Harwell Campus Partnership and other key stakeholders including the AONB Management Board to prepare a comprehensive development framework</p>

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
		<p>for the Campus. Additional guidance will be published as a Supplementary Planning Document.</p> <p>Development Policy 20: External Lighting ensures that development proposals involving external lighting are sensitive to dark night skies in accordance with the AONB Management Plan.</p> <p>Development Policy 34: Countryside Recreation Facilities ensures that proposals do not harm the North Wessex Downs AONB and/or its setting.</p> <p>The Council will continue to work with the North Wessex Downs AONB Board/Unit and other local authorities to help deliver the objectives of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB.</p>
<p>Opportunity to help facilitate the restoration of the section of the Wilts & Berks Canal within the district</p>	<p>It remains a longstanding aim of the Council to support the restoration of the canal to a navigable state.</p> <p>Policies L14 and L15 from the existing Local Plan 2011 were saved in the</p>	<p>Development Policy 31: Wilts and Berks Canal seeks to support the long-term vision for the restoration of the Wilts and Berks Canal. The policy safeguards the historic route of the canal from</p>

Key cross-boundary challenges and opportunities	Evidence which has informed these challenges and opportunities	How has the Duty to Cooperate been met and how has it informed the Local Plan 2031 Part 2?
	<p>adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1. The Local Plan 2031 Part 1 sought to review these policies as part of the preparation for the Local Plan 2031 Part 2.</p> <p>Meetings took place with members of the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust and the Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership to inform the draft policy (Development Policy 31) which was set out in the Preferred Options (Regulation 18) of the draft Local Plan 2031 Part 2.</p>	<p>development that would prejudice the delivery of the canal's restoration.</p> <p>The Council will continue to work with the Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership to ensure that planning policy helps facilitate the viable and appropriate restoration of the canal.</p>

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