

**VALE OF WHITE HORSE LOCAL PLAN PART 2**

**EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC**

**RESPONSE TO MATTER 3 ON BEHALF OF  
THE HARWELL SCIENCE & INNOVATION CAMPUS PARTNERSHIP**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is submitted by The Harwell Science & Innovation Campus Partnership (“HSIC”) in relation to the Examination in Public of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2 (“the plan”). Carter Jonas LLP is instructed by HSIC.
- 1.2 HSIC has an interest in land at Harwell Campus as proposed in the allocation of Core Policy 15b: Harwell Campus Comprehensive Development Framework
- 1.3 HSIC has been supportive of the preparation of the plan and the overall principle direction of key elements of the plan. HSIC supports the overall strategy of continuing to promote growth in ‘Science Vale’ and the sustainable colocations of homes and jobs. HSIC consider it essential to the future success of the Harwell Campus that employment and bespoke housing are co-located to develop an innovation village. The importance of this housing element to the success of the Harwell Campus, and the importance of the Harwell Campus nationally and internationally demonstrate exceptional circumstances for development within the AONB. A significant proportion of the area in question has a history of residential use or has been the location for Campus-wide ancillary services, including a local centre. The vast majority of the land is previously developed. All of the land now proposed for inclusion in the residential allocation is allocated for employment use in the current Development Plan.
- 1.4 Representations were made detailing the views of HSIC through the informal (Regulation 18) and publication (Regulation 19) consultations for the local plan (Representor ID: 1097487). HSIC has also entered in to Statements of Common Ground with The Vale of White Horse District Council (“the Vale”) (SCG01) and with the Vale and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (“LEP”) (SCG05).
- 1.5 In this submission, HSIC sets out its responses to Matter 3: Questions 3.1 & 3.3. This statement should be read in combination with the HSIC response to Matter 7.

## 2.0 INSPECTOR’S MATTER 3: OVERALL HOUSING PROVISION IN THE PLAN AND ITS DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN SUB-AREAS

### Question 3.1:

***Is the proposal in the LPP2 to allocate 1,400 additional homes in the South East Vale Sub Area to support the economic growth of the Science Vale consistent with the strategy in the LPP1, supported by proportionate evidence and deliverable?***

- 2.1 The Harwell Science & Innovation Campus Partnership (“HSIC”) supports the proposals within the South East Vale Sub Area, and believes that the provisions of LPP2 are consistent with LPP1. The HSIC provides a more detailed response to this at Matter 7 – Harwell Campus, in particular with reference to the deliverability of development on the Campus. However, a summary of the submission is that a “key opportunity” identified in the LPP1 is “supporting economic prosperity.” This prosperity is directly linked to growth in ‘Science Vale.’ The opportunity is then translated into Strategic Objective 6:

*“Support the continued development of Science Vale as an internationally significant centre for innovation and science based research and business.”*

- 2.2 Figure 4.1 in the LPP1 (“*Building on our strengths- a sustainable strategy for the Vale of White Horse*”) contains a clear and unambiguous aim of “*Focusing sustainable growth within the Science Vale area.*”
- 2.3 Core Policy 5 reinforces the particular importance of growth in Science Vale by ‘ring-fencing’ 11,850 new homes across the plan period to be delivered in the area to support planned job growth. The supporting text to Core Policy 5, at paragraph 4.18, outlines the importance of housing allocations within Science Vale by stating:

*“The majority (almost 75%) of our strategic housing growth is allocated within close proximity to these key Science Vale business locations.”*

- 2.4 With the aim of “*significantly enhancing and delivering new infrastructure... focused on the Science Vale area*” that will “*enable [the] growth potential to be realised. Th[e] infrastructure cannot currently be delivered without the planned housing.*” It should be noted, that to maintain this argument of ‘almost 75% of strategic housing, within science vale’ and the rationale for the ring fence then additional allocations are necessary in this LPP2
- 2.5 The South East Vale Sub-Area strategy in LPP1, in Core Policy 15, is to seek at least 12,450 new homes. The policy and supporting text go on to reiterate the importance of ‘Science Vale’ in much the same way at the district wide strategy.
- 2.6 The LPP1 strategy for identification of sub-areas and the subsequent quantum of development was tested and found sound through examination. However, in removing two proposed allocations (‘sites 12 and 13’) in the South East Sub-Area the Inspector noted (at paragraph 119) that:

*“...the 1,400 dwellings are also intended to contribute towards the Science Vale’s element of the district’s objectively-assessed need for housing...”*

So, without replacing the two allocations there is a gap left over from the first plan and its examination. It is considered reasonable to continue to plan to meet this need in LPP2.

- 2.7 In support of LPP2, it is stated in the Sustainability Appraisal (reference CSD09) that:

*“...there is the need to consider the possibility of LPP2 allocations in the [South East] sub area in order to support Science Vale and Didcot Garden Town objectives. Specifically, there is a need to: achieve and maintain a balance of housing and employment across the Science Vale; deliver the Science Vale Strategic Infrastructure Package, through developer contributions; support the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) priority to deliver housing within the Oxfordshire ‘Knowledge Spine’ growth corridor; and support specific growth objectives at Harwell Campus. Guidance was provided by paragraph 9.12 of the LPP1 Inspector’s Interim Findings letter received on 6th June 2016. The letter confirmed the need to delete two allocations at Harwell Campus – total quantum 1,400 homes – from LPP1, stating that the Council “may wish to consider the need to allocate replacement sites in this area through the Part 2 plan.”*

- 2.8 The strategy, Policy 15a and the specific allocation at Harwell Campus, are underpinned by a range of supporting evidence including:

- Sustainability Appraisal (reference CSD09) that considers reasonable alternatives and site specific allocation (excerpts of the overall conclusion for the Campus and Grove allocations – 1,400 new homes – of Policy 15b are shown in the table below);

SA element	Para. number	Commentary
Homes	10.2.3	...provision for 1,000 homes at Harwell Campus, which is supported on the basis that this will involve addressing specific housing needs... The policy also proposes 400 homes at North West of Grove, which reflects latest understanding of what is deliverable at this site.
Services and facilities	10.3.4	...potential to deliver new community infrastructure on-site... “incorporating on-site services and facilities” ...400 homes at North West of Grove - would complement the existing committed growth at Wantage and Grove and help to deliver infrastructure...
Movement	10.4.6	...provide homes close to jobs... ...Harwell Campus performs

		well as a location for major growth within the Science Vale, from a perspective of wishing to avoid worsened traffic congestion at the A34/A4130 Milton Interchange, and on the A34 itself. This is because the new north-facing slips at the Chilton Interchange will provide an alternative point of access onto the A34; and the new Harwell Link Road will provide an alternative route to Didcot. ...there is considerable committed growth in the area, which is leading to significant enhancements to transport infrastructure and bus services Milton Park and Oxford...
Landscape	10.10.2	...housing and future employment development is brought forward in line with a comprehensive development framework. This is important not only to ensure that new development supports the vision for the Campus, but to ensure development is fully integrated with the Campus and reflects its location within the North Wessex Downs AONB and is developed to ensure that any further strategic infrastructure improvements are delivered in parallel. A comprehensive development framework will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

- Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (reference HOU2) that assesses a range of sites for their suitability, availability and achievability (excerpts from the HELAA relating to the most relevant sites are provided in the table below- but the assessment of other sites can be used as a comparison);

HELAA reference	Suitable	Available	Achievable	Overall capacity (dwellings)
Harwell Campus				
HASC11	Yes	Yes	Yes	254
HASC12	Yes	Yes	Yes	186
HASC13	Yes	Yes	Yes	225
HASC14	Yes	Yes	Yes	197
HASC15	Yes	Yes	Yes	268
Grove				
GROV01	Yes	Yes	Yes	709

- Strategic Economic Plan (reference ECO01) that reiterates the importance of science and technology and growth in Science Vale; and,
- Harwell Campus Exceptional Circumstances report (reference NAT04) that identifies the specific needs for homes in science vale and specifically at the Harwell Campus.

2.9 HSIC provides additional commentary and analysis in support of the need for homes in Science Vale and specifically at the Campus – and their deliverability – in response to Matter 7.

### Question 3.3:

***Taking the objectively assessed housing needs of the Vale and the unmet needs of Oxford together, is the overall housing provision in the LPP2, its distribution between sub areas and its various components, consistent with the strategy in the LPP1, supported by proportionate evidence and deliverable?***

2.10 As explained above in our response to Question 3.1 and in our detailed response to Matter 7: Harwell Campus, HSIC's view is that the overall housing provision in the LPP2 is consistent with the strategy in LPP1, is supported by proportionate evidence and, in so far as the Harwell Campus is concerned, is deliverable.