

Vale of White Horse Local Plan (Part 2) 2011-2031

Examination Hearings

**Statement by Oxfordshire County Council**

Matter 5

Dalton Barracks

Thursday 26 July 2018

### **Questions:**

- 5.1 Given the NPPF requirement for exceptional circumstances to be demonstrated for any alterations to the Green Belt, is the proposal to establish an inset to the Green Belt at Dalton Barracks justified by proportionate evidence in principle?
- 5.2 Is the detailed alignment of the proposed Green Belt inset boundary justified and supported by proportionate evidence?
- 5.3 Is the housing allocation at Dalton Barracks appropriate when considered against reasonable alternatives in the light of site constraints, infrastructure requirements and potential impacts? Have these been adequately assessed? Are the detailed requirements in Core Policy 8b and the site development template requirements – both general and site specific – justified and would they provide an appropriate basis for preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document for the site?
- 5.4 How would the proposal for Dalton Barracks relate to the existing community of Shippon? What new services, facilities and infrastructure links would be provided and is this realistic? Is the proposal viable? Would it comprise sustainable development?
- 5.5 Would the proposal for a Country Park as part of the development adequately mitigate any impact on nearby ecological sites or be otherwise justified and deliverable? How would it be managed and maintained?
- 5.6 Are the proposals to safeguard land for bus/cycle links between Dalton Barracks and the Lodge Hill Park and Ride site justified? Would there be any adverse impacts?
- 5.7 Is the estimate of site capacity justified in the plan period and in the long term?
- 5.8 Is it realistic for 1,200 dwellings to be delivered on the site during the plan period? What are the arrangements for the relocation of the existing military personnel on the site and are they realistic? How would the development be phased, and how would this relate to the continuing operation of the barracks?

### **Response**

1. Question 5.4: The County Council is working with the District Council and the site owners and promoters to ensure that necessary services, facilities and infrastructure are identified and that they will be provided so that development at Dalton Barracks is sustainable. Relevant needs include:
  - Primary school provision - Three primary schools on suitable sites are likely to be needed for the entire site development, with one of these needed to cater for the development anticipated prior to 2031.
  - Secondary school provision – One secondary school is likely to be needed for the entire site development. The County Council is content that this should be

provided after 1,200 houses have been built and therefore will be in the period post 2031. The secondary school site will need to be large enough to cater for cumulative development needs in the area.

- Improvements to highways – The proposed site accesses are onto a constrained highway network including narrow lanes, and therefore highway improvements will be required. The necessary improvements will need to be identified as part of the transport assessment for the site. These may include, but are not limited to, the following locations: Marcham Interchange; Frilford Junction (A415/A338); Marcham Village; the junction of A415 and the unnamed road towards Barrow Road; the junction of the unnamed road and Barrow Road; the junction of Long Tow and Wootton Road; the junction of Barrow Road and Faringdon Road; the junction of Honeybottom Lane/ B4017/Fox Lane; Hinksey Hill Interchange and junction with Foxcombe Road; Botley West Way junctions; B4017 Cumnor Hill; and Milton Interchange.
- Pedestrian and cycle links – A range of pedestrian and cycle links will be needed which may include, but are not limited to: routes between the site and Abingdon via Barrow Road; Faringdon Road; Cholswell Road; Long Tow; Wootton Road; an upgraded footpath no. 333/7 (which is particularly relevant given the severance created by the A34); connections to the A415 and to Wootton. Contributions to improving the public rights of way in the area will also be expected.
- Improvements to public transport – The phasing of development and supporting infrastructure will need to be appropriate to facilitate commercially viable and attractive (i.e. frequent and direct) bus services connecting the site with Abingdon and Oxford, and eventually with destinations within the Science Vale area.
- Suitable internal roads and links – Given the ultimate scale of development, particular attention will need to be paid to how the internal road, pedestrian and cycle networks will operate.

2. Question 5.4 cont. The County Council has sought an amendment to Core Policy 8b on Dalton Barracks in its Regulation 19 response to ensure that development complies with a comprehensive development framework supplementary planning document (paragraph 39 and issue 9). VOWHDC has indicated that it supports this in principle and has proposed a modification (AM5) which involves amending supporting text in paragraph 2.64. The County Council prefers its own suggested amendment to the policy as policies are accorded particular weight in accordance with the NPPF. For completeness, the two versions are as follows:

County Council proposed modification:

Core Policy 8b should be amended along the following lines: 'Proposals for development at Dalton Barracks must demonstrate how they ~~contribute towards a comprehensive approach to development~~ COMPLY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK SPD AND CONTRIBUTE TO INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE MANNER SET OUT IN THAT FRAMEWORK WHICH WILL REQUIRE ALL PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT TO CONTRIBUTE FAIRLY TOWARDS THE JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR TRANSPORT, EDUCATION, OPEN SPACE AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE.

VOWHDC proposed modification:

Amend Paragraph 2.64 as follows: "It is therefore essential that development is brought forward in line with a comprehensive development framework in accordance with Core Policy 8b AND CONTRIBUTE TO INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE MANNER SET OUT IN THAT FRAMEWORK WHICH WILL REQUIRE ALL PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT TO CONTRIBUTE FAIRLY TOWARDS THE JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR TRANSPORT, EDUCATION, OPEN SPACE AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE".

3. Question 5.6. The County Council raised concerns about the justification for the proposals to safeguard land for bus/cycle links between Dalton Barracks and the Lodge Hill Park & Ride in our Regulation 19 response (paragraphs 55-56 and issue 13). We are conscious of the possible expectation that safeguarding could lead to compulsory purchase orders and the County Council has no intention for such in this case. It is our view that there is no prospect that a bus link will be needed or commercially viable along such a route. We raised in our Regulation 19 response the potential adverse impact from safeguarding of undermining efforts to ensure the site is served by direct bus services using existing roads. Nevertheless, we appreciate that it may be that the District Council can justify safeguarding for a potential future pedestrian and cycle link to the Lodge Hill Park & Ride site as such a link could be beneficial.
4. Question 5.7. Our Regulation 19 response (paragraph 40 and issue 10) seeks that the full capacity of the site be identified in the Local Plan Part 2, and that capacity be tested on the highway network unless there is some mechanism to restrict planning applications. VOWHDC has not proposed a modification to address this on the basis that the Plan provides sufficient guidance and flexibility without amendment. The County Council is continuing to work in partnership with the District Council to address the issues concerning the site as a whole. Work to produce a supplementary planning document is ongoing. The County Council remains of the view that it would add clarity if the Local Plan identified the full capacity of the site and also identified that the strategic transport modelling has only addressed a 'phase 1' development of up to

1,200 houses. As a modification has not been proposed to date, we suggest that the text in 2.63 could be modified to address this as follows:

2.63. The Part 2 plan makes provision for around 1,200 dwellings at Dalton Barracks to be delivered within the plan period up to 2031 in accordance with Core Policies 8 and 8b and the Site Development Template set out in Appendix A. THE FIGURE OF 1,200 DWELLINGS HAS BEEN USED IN ASSESSMENTS TO DATE. However, it is recognised that the longer-term potential for development is much greater, potentially ~~in excess of 4,000~~ 4,500 dwellings ~~subject to provision of appropriate infrastructure.~~ THE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS FOR THE ENTIRE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE ASSESSED TO ENSURE THAT APPROPRIATE INFRASTRUCTURE CAN BE PROVIDED IN A COORDINATED AND TIMELY FASHION.

5. Question 5.8. The County Council will continue to work with the District Council and the site owners and promoters on matters such as phasing which should be addressed in the comprehensive development framework SPD. The County Council is particularly interested to ensure that required infrastructure elements are delivered at the earliest possible phases as this will enhance the sustainability of the site and avoid adverse effects from ever-changing interim measures (e.g. bus services).
6. Oxfordshire County Council is seeking to attend the hearing should the Inspector have any queries to direct to the County Council in respect of the Matter 5 questions.