

Our Ref.: DOR/JPP/186

19th December 2014

Vale of White Horse District Council
Benson Lane
Crowmarsh Gifford
Wallingford
OX10 8ED



By email: planning.policy@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Dear Sirs,

**Vale of White Horse District Council - Local Plan Part One Pre-Submission
Consultation December 2014
Representations on behalf of Doric Properties Limited and Mace**

We would reiterate our previous comments of April vis-à-vis settlement and retail hierarchy. Examined cross-border relative to Oxford's centres and within the Vale of White Horse District Council context Botley performs a role now greater than that of Blackbird Leys, a defined 'District' centre within Oxford City's Development Plan documents and also a superior role to that of Grove, defined as a 'Local service Centre'. For consistency Botley should reasonably be defined as a 'District centre'.

In terms of the general tenor of Core Policy 11 'Botley Central Area' and the supporting text at paragraphs 5.28 to 5.31 we would commend the policy and supporting text to the Inspector and are broadly in agreement with content, save for the issue of definitions.

Definitions should be broadly consistent across the wider-Oxford area. If this was the case then Botley would be recognised properly as a District Centre. As we commented in April the then latest NLP report commented:

'We consider that it is important for the District's three market towns to maintain, and strengthen, their role in the retail hierarchy.'

Although Botley is a similar size in terms of units and floor space to Faringdon, it does not perform as a town centre nor does it provide the range of services and other facilities that would be expected in a town centre. It functions more as a suburban district centre in the outskirts of Oxford City Centre. Grove (Millbrook Square) provides a local centre for surrounding residents with a "top up" retail offer'. [My underlining and emphasis].



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The earlier Savills report also found that,

*'Botley functions as a **district centre**. PPS6 (Annex A) defines a district centre as a group of shops:*

"..often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and arrange of non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as a library". [My underlining and emphasis].

At the time of the Savills report Botley was anchored by two food stores, Co-op and Iceland. Since then Tesco have opened in the centre, bringing the food store count to three.

Based on the above, we would suggest that the following retail hierarchy should apply:

Table 2.3 Retail Hierarchy (from NLP report)

Table 2.3 Retail Hierarchy

Hierarchy	Centre
Town Centre	Abingdon Wantage Faringdon
District Centre	Botley
Local Centre	Grove (Millbrook Square)

This is also reasonable in the context of the centres in neighbouring Oxford and would further improve the soundness of the policy.

We support policy CP11 but would urge you to amend the proposed settlement and retail hierarchy accordingly, and differentiate Botley as a District Centre, from Grove, which is a local service centre and not of the order of Botley.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

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cc. client



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