

VALE OF WHITE HORSE LOCAL PLAN 2031
(Part 1 Strategic Sites and Policies)
EXAMINATION

Malcolm Rivett BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI – Inspector
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STAGE 2 - MATTERS AND QUESTIONS

Matter 9 – Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area - (Core Policies CP15 and CP16)

- 9.1 Other than in connection with AONB issues (considered in Matter 6) are the Strategic Housing Allocations listed in policy CP15 soundly based and deliverable?
- (a) Crab Hill (site 14)
 - (b) Grove Airfield (site H8 and a “saved” Local Plan 2011 policy)
 - (c) Monks Farm (site 15)
 - (d) Valley Park (site 11)
 - (e) North-West of Valley Park (site 8)
 - (f) East of Harwell Campus (site 13)
 - (g) North-West of Harwell Campus (site 12)
 - (h) West of Harwell (site 10)
 - (i) Milton Heights (site 9)
 - (j) East of Sutton Courtenay (site 5)
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Supplementary Statement made by Ferax Planning on behalf of
Mays Properties and Minscombe Properties (873665)

- 1.0 Mays Properties and Minscombe Properties together have interests in land at Milton Interchange south of the A4130 currently identified as a site for Trunk Road Services (see saved Policy TR10).
- 2.0 Background:
- i. Core Policy 15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area reads:

“Our over-arching priority for this sub-area is to secure the aligned delivery of housing and employment growth together with the infrastructure required to achieve sustainable development.”

- ii. Core Policy 16 refers to the Didcot A site.
- iii. The site of the Milton Services Area which is controlled by Mays and Minscombe is to be designated as part of a new Didcot Enterprise Zone, but it is not an allocated employment site.
- iv. Neighbouring land (also identified in TR10 for Trunk Road Services) south of the A4130 adjacent to the Mays and Minscombe land, is designated as part of the Milton Park Enterprise Zone, and is subject to a Local Development Order allowing a range of “B” class and sui generis uses as well as Trunk Road Services uses.
- v. Land opposite (to the north of the A4130), known as Milton Gate, is rapidly being developed in a mixed-use development of roadside services, sui generis and employment uses under the Milton Park Local Development Order.
- vi. In early 2014 a joint planning application (P14/V0087/FUL) was submitted for the provision of a new junction on the A4130 together with an internal access road to serve the land under different ownerships. Permission was granted on 2nd May, 2014.
- vii. The current landowners have worked together to produce a comprehensive Master Plan for the development of the area identified for Trunk Road Services.
- viii. Two planning applications have recently been submitted to VWHDC on behalf of Mays Properties and Minscombe Properties for development on land south of the A4130 and east of the A34, for roadside services and other appropriate development.
- ix. The current applications are in outline with all matters reserved for future determination except for access, although an illustrative Master Plan has been prepared (copy enclosed) which provides a good indication of the way the land may be developed.

- x. There have been ongoing discussions with Planning Officers which have helped the evolution of plans and ideas.
- xi. The masterplan proposals are founded on an extant planning permission for a new junction on the A4130 with an access road through the site. This is of fundamental importance because it demonstrates a comprehensive approach to the proposals and their deliverability.
- xii. The collaborative and cooperative working of the two land owners/developers will help to ensure that a high quality design can be achieved. The area can be treated as a whole in terms of landscaping, drainage, the provision of services, the approach to pedestrian access and site permeability and a shared approach to design.
- xiii. The location should be considered in relation to its position within Science Vale UK. Also in close proximity is the current development of Great Western Park (3300 homes), the suggested Valley Park residential development (2550+ homes), the proposed new development at Milton Heights (460 homes), and the adjoining proposed development of North West of Valley Park (800 homes). Also within a 2km catchment area are the existing settlements of Milton, Milton Heights and Steventon.

3.0 Commentary:

- i. The development of the land for North West of Valley Park will require access from both the east (Valley Park) and the west (Milton Services Area) as a separate new access to serve the site is not considered to be feasible or acceptable by the Highway Authority.
- ii. The Valley Park development, including its proposed two road accesses is the subject of a current planning application being considered by VWHDC.
- iii. The Milton Services Area (Backhill Lane) junction is already consented (see 2.vi above), and its provision is included within Core Policy 17.
- iv. It is not clear whether there is sufficient capacity at these two junctions to accommodate the additional traffic that would be generated by the 800

additional houses. The developers of the Milton Services Area would have no objection to the use of their access road and the new junction provided in doing so their ability to develop their sites was not affected. The existing planning permission for the new junction to the A4130 was granted with a specific design capacity which will be fully taken up by the developments proposed for the Services sites. Should it prove necessary to alter the junction or to undertake improvement works to this section of the A4130 then these must be carried out by the developers of North West of Valley Park.

- v. It has been suggested by the developer's representatives that the development of the North West of Valley Park site might be carried out on the basis of a car-free or limited car development.. This is a laudable aim, and whilst being in line with Core policy CP35, it would no doubt create an awkward juxtaposition with the neighbouring development (Trunk Road services) supporting, and being reliant upon the use of the motor car. Should a car free or limited car development be proposed then Mays and Minscombe would require safeguards to be put in place to prevent future residents from using their site as a car park
- vi. The development of the land at Milton Heights and possibly North West Valley Park, will require a major upgrade to the foul water drainage infrastructure in the area, a long length of which is laid through the Mays and Minscombe landholdings.

4.0 Conclusions:

- i. Whilst not objecting to the principle of the development of North West of Valley Park (800 homes) or Milton Heights (460 homes), Mays Properties and Minscombe Properties, in holding land subject to current development allocations with extant permission for a junction of a specific capacity, would seek reassurance that any Local Plan allocation for the North West of Valley Park or Milton Heights developments would carry the caveats that:
 - i. In relation to N.W. Valley Park, any junction and infrastructure upgrade works would be entirely at the cost of this later development.

- ii. A neighbouring car-free development would not result in residents simply parking in the adjoining Service Area car parks.
- iii. Developers of the two residential developments should, at the earliest opportunity, seek a coordinated solution regarding the provision of foul water drainage and utility supplies in order that the proposed Mays & Minscombe developments are not held up.
- iv. Any retrospective infrastructure works required for these proposed housing developments which result in inconvenience and loss of trade by the operators on the Mays & Minscombe developments may lead to claims for compensation.

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STAGE 2 - MATTERS AND QUESTIONS

Matter 9 – Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area - (Core Policies CP15 and CP16)

- 9.3 Are the identified and safeguarded Employment sites listed in policy CP15 soundly based and deliverable. Are there other sites which would more appropriately meet the identified need for employment land?
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Mays Properties and Minscombe Properties (873665)**

- 1.0 Mays Properties and Minscombe Properties together have interests in land at Milton Interchange south of the A4130 currently identified as a site for Trunk Road Services (see saved Policy TR10).
- 2.0 Background:
- i. Core Policy 15: Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area reads:

“Our over-arching priority for this sub-area is to secure the aligned delivery of housing and employment growth together with the infrastructure required to achieve sustainable development.”
 - ii. Core Policy 16 refers to the Didcot A site.
 - iii. The site of the Milton Services Area which is controlled by Mays and Minscombe is to be designated as part of a new Didcot Enterprise Zone, but it is not an allocated employment site.

- iv. Neighbouring land (also identified in TR10 for Trunk Road Services) south of the A4130 adjacent to the Mays and Minscombe land is designated as part of the Milton Park Enterprise Zone, and is subject to a Local Development Order allowing a range of “B” class and sui generis uses, as well as Trunk Road Services uses.
- v. Land opposite (to the north of the A4130), known as Milton Gate, is rapidly being developed in a mixed-use development of roadside services, sui generis and employment uses under the Milton Park Local Development Order.
- vi. In early 2014 a joint planning application (P14/V0087/FUL) was submitted for the provision of a new junction on the A4130 together with an internal access road to serve the land under different ownerships. Permission was granted on 2nd May, 2014.
- vii. The current landowners have worked together to produce a comprehensive Master Plan for the development of the area allocated for Trunk Road Services.
- viii. Two planning applications have recently been submitted to VWHDC on behalf of Mays Properties and Minscombe Properties for development on land south of the A4130 and east of the A34, for roadside services and other appropriate development.
- ix. The current applications are in outline with all matters reserved for future determination except for access, although an illustrative Master Plan has been prepared (copy enclosed) which provides a good indication of the way the land may be developed.
- x. The layout for the frontage site (owned by Mays Properties) reflects ongoing discussions with potential operators and Planning Officers and may be regarded as a good indication of the likely form that development will take.
- xi. The rear (southernmost) land is owned by Minscombe Properties and its illustrative Master Plan has been prepared to demonstrate how the site

could accommodate some 9400m² of office floorspace. It is very unlikely that the land would be developed in this way and this has been done simply to reflect the capacity of the junction which already has planning permission. A range of other uses, which all generate less traffic, may be appropriate for the site, including : serviced offices, serviced residential apartments, Research and Development, light industrial, restaurant, takeaway food, and other uses associated with motor vehicles.

- xii. There have been ongoing discussions with Planning Officers which have helped the evolution of plans and ideas.
- xiii. The site is within an area which has emerged as a key location as far as the regional economy is concerned. The announced designation of the site as part of a new Didcot Enterprise Zone confirms its status.
- xiv. The masterplan proposals are founded on an extant planning permission for a new junction on the A4130 with an access road through the site. This is of fundamental importance because it demonstrates a comprehensive approach to the proposals and their deliverability.
- xv. The collaborative and cooperative working of the two land owners/developers will help to ensure that a high quality design can be achieved. The area can be treated as a whole in terms of landscaping, drainage, the provision of services, the approach to pedestrian access and site permeability and a shared approach to design.
- xvi. The location, providing development leading to employment, should be considered in relation to its position within Science Vale UK. Also in close proximity is the current development of Great Western Park (3300 homes), the suggested Valley Park residential development (2550+ homes), the proposed new development at Milton Heights (460 homes), and the adjoining proposed development of North West of Valley Park (800 homes). Also within a 2km catchment area are the existing settlements of Milton, Milton Heights and Steventon.

3.0 Commentary:

- i. Trunk Road Services in themselves are an important employment use.
- ii. There remains unmet demand for Trunk Road Services at this location on the A34, which together with other employment-generating development will complement the proposed nearby residential developments.
- iii. The 2011 designation of part of the identified Trunk Road Services site with Enterprise Zone status means that the site now has, in effect, a mixed use of Trunk Road Services, “B” class employment and sui generis uses.
- iv. The announced designation of the Mays and Minscombe sites, which are identified for Trunk Road Services, as part of the new Didcot Enterprise Zone confirms their suitability as sites for “B” class employment and sui generis uses.
- v. Core Policy 15 identifies strategic Employment Sites and safeguards existing key sites. The land owned by Mays and Minscombe at Milton Interchange should be identified as a strategic Employment Site given its future status (EZ) , its strategic sustainable location and its size when compared with other identified sites. This view would be in line with the aspirations of the Local Enterprise Partnership which is very keen to see this particular land used to generate significant local employment and growth.
- vi. Core Policy 28 relates to new employment development on unallocated sites. The Milton Services site is not identified as an employment site and if it is not to be included as a strategic site in CP15 then the wording of CP28 should be modified in order to be clear about the nature of the uses that would be acceptable on this site.
- vii. By virtue of being in such close proximity to residential areas, and by providing excellent footpath and cycleway linkages as part of the scheme, the proposed employment-generating development by Mays and Minscombe is consistent with Core Policy 33 (Promoting Sustainable

Transport and Accessibility) and Core Policy 35 (Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking).

4.0 Conclusions:

- i. The land controlled by Mays Properties and Minscombe Properties should be identified as a strategic site for the mixed use of Trunk Road Services and other employment-generating development in Core Policy 15.
- ii. Such an allocation would be soundly based, and the sites are deliverable.