

VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL
LOCAL PLAN PART 1 EXAMINATION HEARING

INSPECTOR'S REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION FROM THE COUNCIL

INSPECTOR'S REQUEST:

Further clarification from the Council about the 161ha of land at Harwell, allocated in the plan but not expected to be available in the plan period:

- a) What land is this exactly? (a plan identifying it would be helpful)
- b) Is the land within the Harwell Campus Strategic Employment Site boundary shown on the Proposals Map?
- c) Is it currently allocated for employment by the 2011 Local Plan?
- d) Is the "licensed site" referred to in HEAR 4 the whole of the 161ha or does this figure include other land as well?
- e) What evidence is there that it will not be available for employment use during the plan period?

COUNCIL'S RESPONSE:

1. The Inspector's request for clarification of the level of employment land available at Harwell Campus has prompted a re-measurement of the areas for the site. As a result, it is confirmed that there is 146ha of land at Harwell allocated in the Plan but not expected to come forward in the plan period.

a) What land is this exactly? (a plan identifying it would be helpful)

2. The plan at **Appendix A** shows the land parcels referred to in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Land Parcels at Harwell Campus and associated total areas

Harwell Campus	Total Area
Employment site area	274ha
Vacant/developable land up to 2031	128ha
A - Enterprise Zone	93ha
B - Vacant/Developable land	35ha
Remaining Land	146ha
C - Developed land	55ha
D - Licensed Site	87ha
E - Other vacant land	4ha

b) Is the land within the Harwell Campus Strategic Employment Site boundary shown on the Proposals Map?

3. Yes. The Strategic Employment Site is identified on the Proposals Map with a blue outline and is labelled CP6.

c) Is it currently allocated for employment by the 2011 Local Plan?:

4. Yes. All 274ha of the employment site is currently allocated for employment by Local Plan 2011. The 93 ha of Enterprise Zone is part of

the overall 274ha employment site area. Local Plan 2011 also allocated an area of land for employment to the northern end of the Campus site immediately west of existing housing (c.8ha). This land is now incorporated into the North-West of Harwell Campus housing allocation (site 12). This specific area is highlighted on the map at **Appendix A**.

d) *Is the “licensed site” referred to in HEAR04 the whole of the 146ha or does this figure include other land as well?*

5. The “licensed site” does not make up the whole of the 146ha. The “licensed site” makes up 87ha of the 146ha. The 146ha also includes land which is previously developed (55ha) and a couple of small parcels of vacant land (4ha in total), one of which is heavily constrained by the boundaries of the “licensed site”.

e) *What evidence is there that the 146ha will not be available for employment use during the plan period?*

6. In responding to this question, the council addresses each of the three types of land parcel which make up the 146ha.

Licensed Site (87ha)

7. The “Licensed site” is undergoing decommissioning over a long period of time. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and Magnox (which is responsible for decommissioning the licensed area at Harwell), have placed a milestone of 2064 to clear the whole of the site.¹ Harwell has sufficient land for employment development to last for the plan period and several years ago the “licensed site” was given a lower funding priority for decommissioning than many other sites.

8. The Council contacted Magnox with respect to the decommissioning process. They confirmed that a life time plan for decommissioning and restoration is currently in preparation.

9. The Harwell Campus Partnership, who liaise directly with Magnox, recognise that the licensed site will not be available in this plan period. Their draft Campus Masterplan which accompanies their Statement to Matter 6 states:

“Given the considerable timescales anticipated for the release of some parts of the licensed site and uncertainty surrounding the programme, it would not be sensible to consider the area’s redevelopment in any detail at this stage. The Framework sets out high level aspirations for the area which will be further detailed in later iterations of the document once more information about the phased release of the licensed site is known.”²

Developed land (55ha)

¹ Nuclear Decommissioning Authority – Business Plan 2015 – 2018, p.31. Available to download at <https://www.nda.gov.uk/publication/nda-business-plan-financial-year-beginning-april-2015-to-financial-year-ending-march-2018/>

² Matter 6 Written Statement – Kemp & Kemp for Harwell Campus Partnership, Para 3.39 Page 29

10. Developed land of 55ha includes a wide range of businesses and facilities which have defined the Campus' success to date. The emerging Local Plan seeks to safeguard existing employment development at Harwell Campus from alternative uses through Core Policy 15.

Small pockets of vacant land (4ha)

11. Approximately 4ha of land remains vacant which forms part of the 146ha. This land comprises principally of two parcels. The parcel to the west (identified as E1 on the map provided in Appendix A) is heavily constrained, locked between the campus boundary and the "Licensed site", with limited potential for development. The second, smaller parcel to the south east corner of the site is identified as E2 on the map provided in Appendix A and measures approximately 1ha in size. This area is open space on the edge of the site and the council considers it unlikely to contribute towards development.

12. The Council therefore considers that the 146ha of land cannot contribute in any meaningful way to strategic growth for the plan period, save for one hectare in the very south eastern corner of the employment site.

INSPECTOR'S REQUEST:

What is the Council's response to the argument that it is inappropriate to allocate (a) 219ha of employment land; (b) 364ha [previously 380ha] of employment land, including the 146ha [previously 161ha] referred to above when the SQW report (table 6.2 and K4) identifies that 164ha of employment land would be more than sufficient to provide for the 13,800 jobs forecast to be located on Class B land?

COUNCIL'S RESPONSE:

219ha of employment land

13. The provision of 219 hectares of vacant/developable employment land is considered appropriate in order to achieve the predicted level, mix and locational distribution of employment growth for the district up to 2031.

14. The Employment Land Review (ELR) Addendum 2014³ rationalises all of the assumptions and conclusions made in the SQW Report (ECO02) and looks at jobs purely from a locational and employment land perspective.

15. Table 3.2 of the addendum (ECO01.2) looks at jobs arising from the "Planned Economic Growth" section of the SQW Report. It identifies 2,600 jobs in the Space Science, Satellite Technology and Environmental Technologies sectors.⁴

16. The SQW Report assumes that the vast majority of these jobs "*are likely to cluster around Harwell in Vale of White Horse*"⁵, given its strong

³ Employment Land Review Addendum 2014 (ECO01.2)

⁴ Employment Land Review Addendum 2014 (ECO01.2) Table 3.2, p.12

⁵ "SQW Report" - Economic Forecasting to inform the SHMA and SEP (ECO02) p.21

connection to Science Vale. As previously mentioned in HEAR04, the SQW report suggests that new jobs in these sectors will require additional land at Harwell Campus, and hence the need to allocate “at least 20ha... for development in the short term over and above the EZ area, and more long term”⁶.

17. The ELR Addendum therefore concludes that these jobs should be located at Harwell Campus, either within the Enterprise Zone or on other developable land within at the campus. If the jobs were not able to come forward on vacant land at the Campus, then they would need to be accommodated elsewhere within Science Vale.

18. Table 2 below looks at all of the other designated employment sites in Science Vale to consider whether they would be suitable to accommodate these “Big Science” jobs.

Table 2 – Capacity of Science Vale strategic sites to accommodate 2,600 planned jobs

Employment Site	Capacity to deliver
Milton Park	No – Would result in displacement of jobs already planned for the Enterprise Zone.
Monks Farm	No – Site already expected to contribute 700 jobs to accommodate demographic growth.
Grove Technology Park	No – Site already expected to contribute 630 jobs to accommodate demographic growth.
Didcot A	Limited – Current planning application for predominantly B8 uses as part of a mixed use scheme. Smaller elements of B1/B2 uses are proposed. Land required to contribute 2,000+ jobs to accommodate demographic growth.
Milton Hill Business and Technology Park	Limited – Planning permission (P13/V1139/FUL) for B8 home delivery centre on half of site, to provide approximately 500 jobs.
Grove Road, Wantage	No – Single occupier with no developable land.
Downsview Road, Grove	No – Single occupier with no developable land.
Station Road, Grove (Williams F1)	No – Site already expected to accommodate growth of 500 jobs which are separate from the 2,600.
Existing Business Premises around Didcot Power Station	No – Multiple occupiers with no developable land. Planning permission (P14/V1906/O) granted for one million square foot building for storage and distribution purposes (B8).

19. The above table shows there is insufficient capacity on existing and future strategic employment sites to accommodate the planned jobs in the Space Science, Satellite Technology and Environmental Technologies sectors. The only exception to this is Harwell Campus.

⁶ “SQW Report” - Economic Forecasting to inform the SHMA and SEP (ECO02) Table K.4, p.119

20. It is therefore critical that sufficient land is made available for development at Harwell Campus in particular which is capable of accommodating the forecast growth in 'big science' sector jobs.

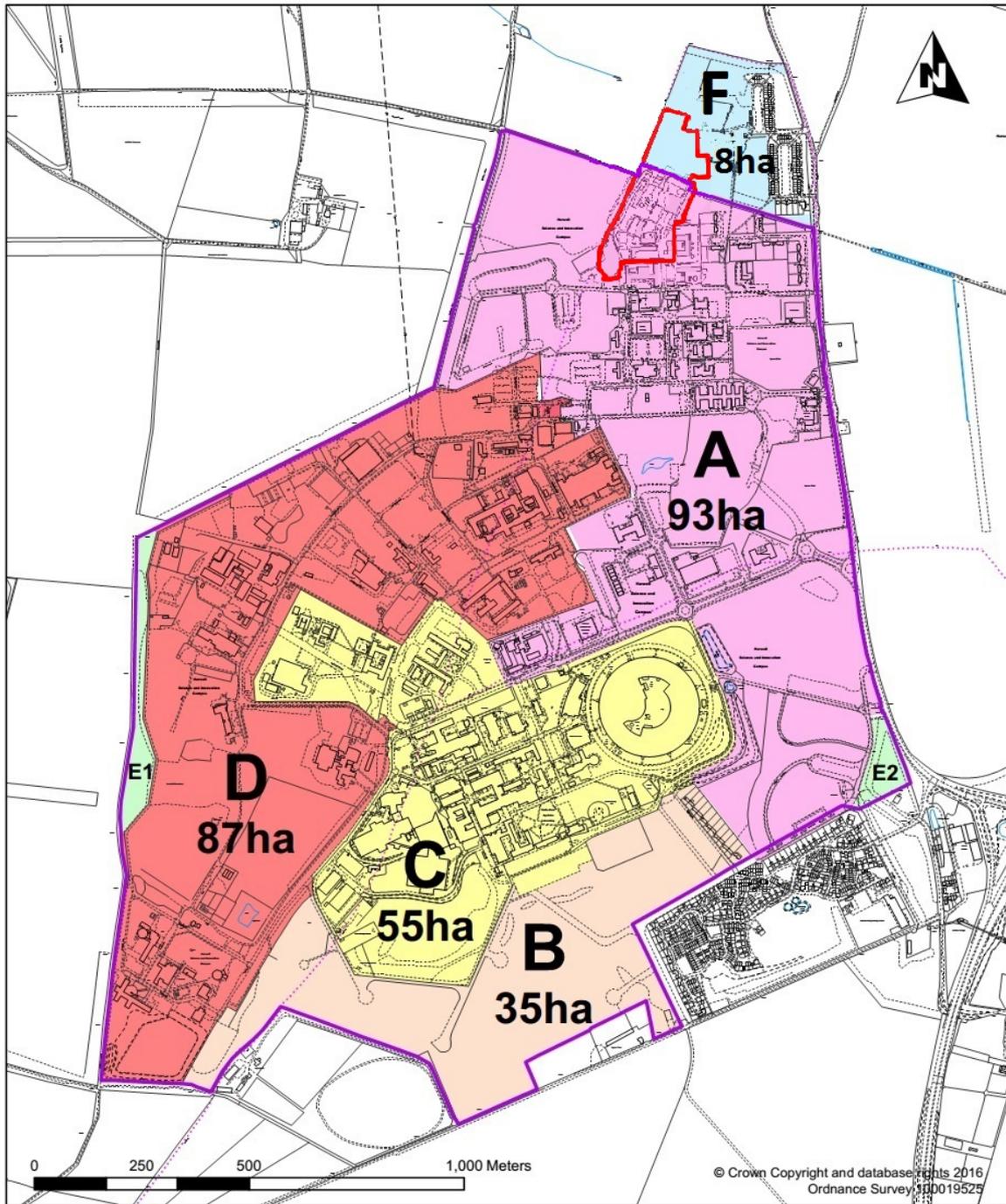
364ha of employment land

21. This has been discussed in greater detail through our response to sub question "e" above. It is not considered that the 146 hectares of land can contribute in any meaningful way to planned strategic growth, employment or otherwise, for this plan period.

Conclusion

22. The 87ha licensed site is heavily constrained and is unlikely to contribute in any meaningful way to employment development at the campus during the plan period. The 55ha of developed land at the campus is already developed out and presents very little or no opportunity for intensification, nor do the small pockets of vacant land which comprise part of the 146ha.
23. Employment land which is identified as vacant/developable by Core Policy 6 is all required to meet the employment needs for the district set out in the SQW Report and Table 3.2 of the Employment Land Review Addendum 2014 (ECO01.2).

Appendix A – Map of Harwell Campus



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|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|
|  | Harwell Campus Employment Allocation |  | D Licensed Site |
|  | A Enterprise Zone |  | E Other Vacant Land |
|  | B Vacant/Developable Land |  | F Part of Local Plan 2011 employment allocation, now proposed for housing |
|  | C Developed Land |  | Licensed Site due to become available in the plan period |