

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

INSPECTOR'S REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION FROM THE COUNCIL

INSPECTOR'S REQUEST:

Council to point to the evidence relating to basis for the proposed allocation at Harwell Campus and the proposed sustainable community.

COUNCIL'S RESPONSE:

Summary of key evidence relating to proposed allocation at Harwell Campus

- 1. PC2A VOWHDC Response to Inspectors Letter Green Belt Boundaries and AONB Information Request, and**
- 2. VOWHDC Matter 6 Hearing Statement: Proposed Housing Sites in North Wessex Downs AONB**

The Local Plan 2031, and the proposals it contains, has been informed by a wide range of evidence that has been prepared iteratively over a period of several years. The rationale for locating development at Harwell Campus is comprehensive and encompasses a broad range of the Local Plan evidence. In particular, the two documents listed above summarise the Councils evidence and case for allocating housing at Harwell Campus as published during the Local Plan Examination stages.

The other documents listed below provide a brief summary of those documents that informed the rationale for locating development at Harwell Campus.

3. TOP.02 Topic Paper 2. Spatial Strategy (November 2014)

The section entitled 'Additional Consultation' (Page 15; Paragraphs 3.16 to 3.18) explains that an allocation was first proposed at Harwell Campus as part of the Additional Consultation carried out in 2010. This was based on the desire to co-locate housing with the expanding range of job opportunities identified at this location for internationally significant research and innovation businesses.

4. ECO.10 Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan

This document provides a clear strategic framework to support the accelerated delivery of housing to facilitate economic growth and to ensure housing is located as close to where economic growth potential exists. Specific references include:

Page 55.

"We consider housing as a critical part of delivering the economic potential of Oxfordshire in a sustainable way"

Page 58.
Pages 110 & 120.
Page 111.

“We understand the importance of ensuring that people are able to live in affordable houses close to where the economic potential will be delivered”

“Crucial importance of housing to facilitate economic growth”

Reference to provision of ‘Research Village at Harwell’

“Greatly accelerate the pace of house building and provide a more varied offer with attractive public realm and a sense of place that appeals to people coming to work and live in the area”

5. ECO.02 Economic Forecasting to Support the SEP and SHMA (February 2014)

This document identifies the predicted employment growth within the VOWH, thus confirming the important role of Harwell Campus for economic growth. Page 19 Table 4.1 sets out the Potential Employment at Harwell Campus (EZ and Rest of Harwell): Net new employment (allowing for displacement) = 5,400 (3,500 within EZ and 1,900 Rest of Harwell Campus)

Section 6, set out on page 38, considers the inter-relationship between employment forecasts and the housing requirement. It is made clear that housing delivery is critical to support economic growth. For example:

“If housing requirements are not met, the consequence would be rising housing costs, which could in turn constrain the ability of firms to recruit and therefore grow”.

6. ECO.21 Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal

This document provides further evidence for the critical role of housing delivery to support economic growth. For example on Page 1 it is stated that:

“Accelerate the delivery of 7,500 homes across the county and recognise that the provision of quality housing will be fundamental to the delivery of innovation led growth”.

7. ECO.19 Oxfordshire Innovation Engine Report: Realising the Growth Agenda (October 2013)

This document adds further weight to the strength of evidence of the economic potential of the Science Vale area. Page 62 includes a discussion of Issues affecting Harwell Campus and identifies, in particular, that:

“Housing supply in the area has lagged behind commercial development”

There is further discussion on page 63 of the problems associated with insufficient housing supply and how this has limited the economic potential of the area. For example it is stated:

- “almost a third of firms responding to a survey identified a shortage of housing as a constraint on recruitment”
- “one consequence of insufficient housing is the relatively slow growth of Oxfordshire’s working age population”

- High house prices may be a cause of the fact that Oxfordshire's workforce is also ageing more quickly than the national average"
- "there is already evidence that firms in the south of Oxfordshire recruit from a wide labour catchment, including north Oxfordshire, the Thames Valley and Wiltshire"...the 2012 travel survey for Milton Park showed that 75 % of those surveyed travelled to work by car", and
- "unless there is a substantial rebalancing of housing and employment growth, this situation is likely to persist, which in turn will increase commuting and congestion".

8. PLP.01 Local Plan 2031 Housing Delivery Update (February 2014)

Pages 49 onwards explain why the Council is proposing new development allocations in the South East Vale Sub-Area. Paragraph 4.36 highlights the significant package of new infrastructure planned to accompany the housing and economic growth in the Science Vale area and Paragraph 4.38 refers to the need to:

"Be careful the scale of development is sustainable and any impact on the local services, facilities and road network are correctly mitigated".

Paragraphs 4.39 and 4.40 set out the rationale for allocations at Harwell Campus and in particular, recognise the highly significant nature of the location and how new development will improve the sustainability of the site, increasing opportunities for people to live and work in close proximity, and to provide a better range of services, facilities and public transport options.

9. PLP.01.1 Local Plan 2031 Housing Delivery Update Supporting Paper (February 2014)

Page 20 explains the methodology the Council followed for identifying potential sites. Paragraph 69 states:

"In addition to sites assessed through the SHLAA, we also considered further potential sites including sites within the Science Vale Oxford area which could be capable of supporting a new or significantly expanded village. We focused this search for 'new or expanded village' sites on the Science Vale Oxford area because this is a key area for growth, and residential development in this area would be close to employment opportunities at Milton Park and Harwell Oxford Campus".

Pages 29 and 30; paragraphs 90 to 95 set out the Council's rationale for identifying sites within the AONB.

10. PLP.01.2 Local Plan 2031 Housing Delivery Update Supporting Paper: Appendix 5 Site Information Tables (February 2014)

Pages 26 to 29 set out the Site Information Tables for the East Harwell and North West Harwell Campus sites, which summarise details of the site assessment process for these sites.

11. TOP.03 Topic Paper 3: Strategic Site Selection (November 2014)

Page 19; paragraphs 4.39 and 4.40 set out a summary of consultation stages and decisions made on site selection, including for the Harwell Campus Sites (sites

TPS052 and TPS053). These paragraphs describe how the proposed site area was reduced in size following the February 2014 consultation to reflect the findings of the more detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Study¹ to minimise any harmful impacts.

12. SCG17 Statement of Common Ground Between Vale of White Horse District Council and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Paragraph 2.4 states in particular that:

“It is crucial for the future success of the site and for Harwell Campus to continue to compete on an international stage that housing is delivered adjacent to the site. Housing adjacent and fully integrated to the campus, delivered alongside local services and facilities is necessary to ensure the site provides a world class environment to attract inward investment, commercial enterprise and a highly skilled workforce, to ensure the campus evolves from a Science and Innovation Park to a world class campus environment offering a work-live-play community”.

13. Matter 6 Written Statement – Kemp and Kemp for Harwell Campus Partnership

Harwell Economic Review (January 2016)
Harwell Campus Needs and Delivery Report (December 2015)

The Council’s position has been supported by evidence prepared by, for example:

- Ptarmigan Land
- Harwell Campus Partnership

Furthermore, the Council continue to work in partnership with Harwell Campus and other stakeholders to prepare a masterplan for the campus site. This work is ongoing and has involved the collection of various evidence, including for example, surveys of businesses and organisations located at Harwell Campus. However, as this data is partially of a commercially sensitive nature, it has not yet been made public. Some related evidence was published by Harwell Campus as part of their Examination Hearing Statement, which sets out a compelling case for providing housing at Harwell Campus.

Notes:

- Barton Willmore has produced a note on behalf of Ptarmigan Land, which has been shared with the Council (Appendix 1) concerning this matter. The Council endorse the content of this note.
- Kemp and Kemp also produced a similar note on behalf of Harwell Campus Partnership concerning this matter, which has also been shared with the Council (**Appendix 2**). The Council endorse the importance of clarifying within the Local Plan how that housing type and mix at Harwell Campus will meet the needs of the Campus. The Council’s proposed modification is set out within the updated Schedule of Proposed Modifications.

¹ NAT04.01 to NAT04.04 East Harwell Landscape and Visual Impact Study

Examination into the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031

Note for Inspector

Housing Need Associated With Employment Growth
at Harwell Campus, Vale Of White Horse

February 2016

EXAMINATION INTO THE VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN 2031

NOTE FOR INSPECTOR

**HOUSING NEED ASSOCIATED WITH EMPLOYMENT GROWTH
AT HARWELL CAMPUS, VALE OF WHITE HORSE**

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1.0 Note for Inspector

Housing Need Associated with Employment Growth at Harwell Campus, Vale of White Horse

- 1.1 The above-trend growth of Harwell Campus, as acknowledged within the Oxfordshire SHMA's 'Committed Growth' scenario, will create a need for additional housing in the Vale of White Horse (VoWH) over and above basic demographic trends. This note quantifies the number of dwellings, in the context of the overall Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAN) which can be considered as directly linked to the expansion of Harwell Campus.
- 1.2 It is anticipated that Harwell Campus will see net gains of 5,400 jobs over the plan period – ~23.5% of all 'committed growth' scenario job creation. To make a simplistic calculation, one could take 23.5% of the overall OAN figure (20,560 dwellings over the plan period) as being related to employment growth Harwell Campus (i.e. c. 4,830 dwellings). This linear relationship, however, does not account for other factors (such as natural population change and net migration) which have a varying influence on housing need depending on the magnitude of job growth assumed.
- 1.3 To provide a more robust estimate, GL Hearn have run a reiteration of the 'committed growth' scenario, minus the jobs at Harwell to establish the difference. This resulted in an OAN 3,460 dwellings lower than the committed growth scenario. However, GL Hearn acknowledge that a range of factors could influence the specific impact of Harwell, and that a reasonable range for the number of dwellings needed as a direct result of employment growth at Harwell Campus would be 3,500 to 4,500 over the plan period.
- 1.4 Notwithstanding the AONB designation, the Plan would otherwise therefore need to ensure that between 3,500 and 4,500 dwellings were delivered over the plan period to support the growth of Harwell Campus. The Council has sought to do this in such a way that creates a mixed use campus environment and innovation village, thereby meeting the particular needs of the Campus. This will help to create the type of environment which Harwell needs to compete against global competitors and continue to attract world class researches and employers. Furthermore, it facilitates sustainable transport solutions through the collocation of jobs and homes, and generates demand for public transport and other services (such as shops) at the Campus – further reducing the need to travel by car. The overall housing requirement

for Harwell has subsequently been amended to reflect the conclusions of the Council's landscape assessment. Following this, it is understood that an assessment of the sites' (12 and 13) physical capacity was undertaken to accommodate an appropriate scale of development, balanced against the need to create a sustainable community, which informed the final proposed quantum of development at Harwell Campus.

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HARWELL CAMPUS PARTNERSHIP

THE DEMAND FOR HOUSING INTEGRATED WITH THE CAMPUS

1. At the Examination on the 2nd February the Harwell Campus Partnership agreed to provide evidence of the demand for housing integrated with the Campus, and the deterrent effect on potential investment from the absence of an adequate present housing stock. As promised, that evidence is attached. This note provides the context for that evidence.
2. The Partnership seeks an allocation of 1,400 homes: 550 homes on the proposed Site 12: North of Harwell Campus and 850 within the existing Campus.
3. The Quod evidence¹ indicates that there will be a net additional 9,000 jobs across the Harwell Campus by the end of the plan period. Quod note that not all of these will be new jobs to the area, but it is anticipated that 5,400 will be. For present purposes we assume that the "not new" jobs will be taken by people who already own or rent in a relatively convenient location.
4. There will therefore be an additional 5,400 employees. If each of those employees needs a home, then 1,400 homes represent approximately 26% of the need.
5. Applying the Chilton Parish Council figure for Chilton Field², where (without any tailoring or management of the housing) 10% of the residents work on the Campus, would lead to a requirement for 540 homes, or approximately the level of the proposed North of Harwell allocation (Site 12).
6. Using the figures from the Campus Community Survey³ that 25% of those employed on the Campus would seek to rent if rental stock was added, this would indicate a demand for 1,350 new rental homes, close to the 1,400 advocated in total by the Council and the Partnership.

¹ Harwell Economic Review, January 2016, paragraph 2.30

² Stage 2 Examination submission by Frank Dumbleton

³ See page 5 of the Harwell Needs & Delivery Report (Appendix 3 to the Partnership's submission in respect of Matter 6.1)

7. The Partnership believes therefore that the demand for new homes is at least 1,400, particularly when account is taken of the unsatisfied demand from those already working on the Campus but currently living elsewhere. However, the proposed level of housing is constrained in two ways:
- a. by an analysis of the impact of development on the AONB. The Partnership does not believe that development outside the boundaries of Site 12 or the wider Campus is appropriate in AONB terms. Site 13 is, certainly, inappropriate; and
 - b. by the need for a balance to be drawn between the need for homes and the primary purpose of the Harwell Campus, which is to deliver circa 5,400 'net' additional jobs within the EZ.⁴ The master planning that has taken place shows that around 850 homes on the Campus (beyond Site 12) can be accommodated without prejudicing that main objective.
8. The Partnership has proposed that all new housing should be tailored, in terms of type and tenure, to meet the needs to the Campus. The proposed addition to Core Policy 4 was:
- "To ensure that the tenure and type of housing provided is tailored to meet the specific needs of the Campus"⁵*
9. At the Examination it was accepted that the timing of the release of land for housing development would need to be managed to reflect the growth in employment floorspace. The Partnership proposes an addition to the Policy:
- "To ensure that the tenure and type of housing provided is tailored to meet the specific needs of the Campus and the delivery programme is managed so that it is available to meet the demands of the growing workforce" (new wording underlined)*
10. Finally, in order to ensure that the requisite level of employment floorspace is maintained within the Enterprise Zone, to enable jobs to be delivered, we propose a further objective should be added to the Core Policy 4:

⁴ Harwell Economic Review (January 2016), pages 13 & 14, paragraphs 3.10 – 3.19 (Appendix 2 to the Partnership's submissions in respect of Matter 6.1

⁵ The Harwell Campus Partnership's submission on Matter 3, August 2015, Appendix A, page10

"To ensure that sufficient land is available for research, innovation and economic development in the Enterprise Zone to accommodate 5,400 'net' additional jobs in the plan period, together with other supporting uses, including housing where that would not prejudice the primary objective of delivering the expansion of the Campus' research and employment base. Housing within the Enterprise Zone will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it would not cause such prejudice."