



**Vale
of White Horse**
District Council



Help us Shape the Future

Draft Interim Housing Supply Policy

Your Vale - Your Future

October 2011

Draft Interim Housing Supply Policy

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Please contact

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Preface

The Government requires that councils maintain a supply of deliverable housing sites sufficient to meet house building targets for the next five years. Due primarily to the slow progress on large Vale housing sites caused by the recession we are now in a position where we no longer have a five year housing land supply, despite our longer term housing land reserves.

The council has decided to respond proactively by preparing an Interim Housing Supply Policy (IHSP) to boost our housing supply in the short term to catch up with our existing housing delivery target. It will operate until the Core Strategy is adopted anticipated 2013, or until 1,000 homes are permitted under the IHSP approach (whichever comes first).

The IHSP will relax certain Vale Local Plan 2011 policies on qualifying sites to encourage additional housing growth within or directly adjoining Vale towns and villages. The policy outlines a set of guiding principles and tests for potential new sites, to ensure they are both sustainable and deliverable, and that the level of growth proposed is proportionate for the location.

We are inviting the public and other interested parties to comment on the proposed interim policy.

We are also inviting land owners and developers wishing to promote land for housing development to consider whether their site and development intentions meet IHSP requirements, and if so to submit the site for a screening opinion for suitability to proceed (using the form annexed to the draft policy). Screening requests can be submitted in the consultation period. Suitable proposals would be invited to submit a planning application when the final version of the IHSP is formally adopted.

Next steps

Public consultation starts 21 October 2011

The closing deadline for comments is 4:00 pm Friday 25 November 2011

We anticipate that the final IHSP will be formally adopted in January or February 2012

Please respond using the consultation form provided at the end of this document and return it by email or post to:

Planning Policy Team
IHSP consultation
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Abingdon OX14 3JE

planning.policy@whitehorsedc.gov.uk
Subject: IHSP consultation

Housing Supply Statement

Introduction

1. National guidance in Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (PPS3) requires that local authorities maintain a supply of deliverable (available, suitable and achievable) sites sufficient to deliver their housing supply objectives for the next five years.
2. Taking a cautious view of likely future housing completions, the Vale of White Horse has a deliverable supply of sites for 2.8 of the next 5 years. Although extant permissions and local plan allocations show a possible supply of 8.5¹ years, many of these sites will not deliver much housing within the five years to 2016.
3. The five year housing land supply of deliverable sites (5YHLS) will be restored when the emerging core strategy is adopted, anticipated in the second half of 2013. Draft site allocations are not counted for housing supply, but if the current draft core strategy preferred option sites were included, the current land supply would be 16² years. See Annexes A and B respectively for 5YHLS commentary and our housing delivery expectations for the district supply of current and proposed housing sites.
4. PPS3 goes on to say at paragraph 71: "Where Local Planning Authorities cannot demonstrate an up-to-date five year supply of deliverable sites... or there is less than five years supply of deliverable sites, they should consider favourably planning applications for housing having regard to the policies in this PPS including the considerations in paragraph 69." Paragraph 69 sets out the general matters councils should consider when determining planning applications for housing.
5. The Interim Housing Supply Policy (IHSP) sets out how the council proposes, in accordance with PPS3 paragraphs 71 and 69, to give favourable consideration to housing development proposals given the current lack of a 5YHLS in the district.

IHSP approach

6. A response to the 5YHLS situation needs to take into account the advanced stage of the emerging core strategy and the fact that the shortfall is more a matter of short-term deliverability than a lack of suitable housing sites. It is therefore important that the approach is both quick to implement and quick in delivering the homes needed to address the supply shortfall.
7. The IHSP would vary and supplement selected policies in the Vale Local Plan 2011, to enable some sites to be favourably considered for housing that would otherwise be contrary to Local Plan policy. It provides guidelines to ensure that proposals are readily deliverable and proportionate to their host communities, complementing existing policies that ensure development takes place in suitable and sustainable locations.
8. The IHSP does not identify specific sites, and it is pursuant to delivering the existing housing target of 578 homes per annum 2006-2026, rather than adding to it.

¹ This figure is calculated using the 578 homes per annum housing target over the plan period. The housing supply reduces to 7.9 years if the cumulative annualised target is used.

² Or 15 years of housing supply if using the cumulative annualised target.

9. The final bullet point of PPS3 paragraph 69 confirms that in considering planning applications for housing (regardless of 5-year housing land supply position), councils should have regard to the spatial vision for their area. The Vale Local Plan and emerging core strategy both aim to focus housing development on the five main settlements, enable some, more limited provision in villages and to generally resist housing development in the open countryside.
10. The IHSP will operate as a managed process starting with developer self assessment, request for a site screening opinion, site screening and where appropriate invitation to proceed.

IHSP status

11. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act says, 'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan *unless material considerations indicate otherwise.*' The lack of a 5YHLS is one such material consideration.
12. The IHSP is not a statutory planning document because there is no specific mechanism in national planning legislation or guidance for this type of approach. However it is being prepared in an equivalent manner, including sustainability appraisal (annex G), public consultation, and in due course formal adoption by council. It is put forward under local authority powers for the promotion of well-being³ in the Local Government Act 2000 Part 1(2)1, whereby:

Every local authority are to have power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve any one or more of the following objectives –
 - a. *the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area,*
 - b. *the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area...*
13. Addressing a shortfall of housing and affordable housing provision meets these tests. On this basis, the IHSP will be accorded weight as a material consideration for the determination of qualifying planning applications for housing that would otherwise not be in accordance with saved Local Plan policy.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework

14. The Localism Bill and draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) propose a presumption in favour of sustainable development, whereby local planning authorities should plan positively for new development, and approve proposals wherever possible. Under this proposed presumption, local planning authorities should grant permission where the plan is absent, silent, indeterminate or where relevant policies are out of date. This should apply except where the adverse impacts of allowing development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

³ The Localism Bill includes draft provisions for a general power of competence for local government specifically intended to bolster the powers for the promotion of well-being under the Local Government Act 2000.

15. The NPPF consultation proposes to maintain the 5YHLS requirement and to add a 20% five year land supply contingency.
16. The draft NPPF also asserts that 'planning should be genuinely plan-led'⁴.
17. In this emerging context, the IHSP also responds to the publication of the draft National Planning Policy Framework, in that it provides interim guidance as to how, within a plan-led system, the emerging presumption in favour of sustainable development would be given effect locally⁵ for housing proposals. On an interim basis it provides policy guidance for bringing forward housing sites whilst the core strategy is finalised, in circumstances where existing plans might otherwise be silent, indeterminate or out-of-date.

Relationship to the emerging core strategy and its progress

18. As part of the work to progress the core strategy, the council is undertaking an internal review of work to date. So far the review has concluded that it remains appropriate to plan for the current housing target of 578 homes per annum beyond the pending abolition of the South East Plan. The core strategy will also need to look further ahead to provide the minimum 15 years policy coverage, and thus to plan for additional housing provision to 2028/9.
19. The core strategy strategic housing sites will be large scale developments that would accommodate most of the planned housing growth in the district. It is important that the selection of preferred strategic housing sites is progressed through the core strategy process to ensure due process including consultation, full comparative evidence testing including sustainability appraisal, comprehensive assessment of deliverability and joined-up planning for infrastructure requirements.
20. The IHSP approach is intended to complement the emerging core strategy and is explicitly not a route for large sites to circumvent proper consideration through the remaining stages of the core strategy process.
21. The next stage of the internal review is to revisit the eleven sites considered as potential preferred options. The promoters of these sites will be provided an opportunity to make their case to the council in the Autumn of 2011.
22. Once this internal review is complete (late 2011), a new draft core strategy will be produced followed by a further round of public consultation (provisionally late Spring 2012), before being finalised for submission (including a final consultation stage, late 2012). We anticipate adopting the core strategy in the second half of 2013.
23. A consequence of the extended preparation period for the core strategy is the delay to work on bringing forward smaller housing sites that do not have strategic-level implications, through the Managing Development, development plan document (MD DPD). The IHSP provides an opportunity to bring forward sites that are strong candidates for future allocation in the MD DPD, by demonstrating their fit to the IHSP tests and criteria.

⁴ Draft NPPF paragraph 19

⁵ Draft NPPF paragraph 15

24. Potential small to medium sites that do not meet the IHSP tests can be given further consideration as possible housing allocations when the MD DPD is prepared.

Other measures to address housing supply

25. We are also investigating and helping to unblock delivery of the current planning pipeline. Significant progress has recently been made with some longstanding delivery problems (summarised at Annex D).

IHSP effectiveness and effects

26. In responding positively to the five year housing land supply shortfall, the IHSP should both bring forward appropriate development and assist the council to resist developer-led proposals in unsustainable locations
27. A draft sustainability appraisal of the IHSP approach is attached as Annex G. Overall, giving more weight to the most relevant sustainability objectives, implementing the IHSP will provide a more sustainable approach than taking no action to address housing supply shortfall.
28. Annex B itemises the district supply of current and proposed housing sites and our expectations for delivery, expressed cautiously.
29. Annex B also models the impact of the IHSP, showing that it is capable of rapidly restoring the 5YHLS and, once the core strategy is adopted, providing a land supply contingency margin of at least 20% as proposed in the emerging NPPF⁶.
30. Annex E summarises the potential effects of the IHSP by policy relaxation and class of settlement.

⁶ Draft NPPF paragraph 109

The Interim Housing Supply Policy

IHSP Objectives and scope

Primary objective

31. To increase *actual housing and affordable housing completions by 31 March 2014* in a sustainable manner by encouraging suitable, deliverable and proportionate housing development in sustainable locations and in broad accordance with the spatial approach to development in the Vale Local Plan and emerging Core Strategy.

Extant Period

32. Until the Core Strategy is adopted or 1,000 additional homes are permitted under the IHSP approach, whichever comes first and to be kept under review.

Scope

33. All national planning guidance, the South East Plan (until revoked) and all saved Local Plan policies not varied in the IHSP that apply to the form and location of the development remain in force (including relevant adopted Vale SPD/SPG). Housing sites proposed should be on land suitable for housing development, and provide an acceptable living environment and standards of design and detailing.

IHSP operation

34. The IHSP will be operated as a managed process as follows.

- i. **Initial self assessment:** Interested parties should first make their own initial assessment as to whether their proposal is likely to meet the IHSP policy requirements and tests. Once the policy is formally adopted, policy officers can first advise whether the proportionate growth level has already been achieved in the location of interest.
- ii. **Request for a screening opinion:** If self assessment suggests the proposal is likely to meet the IHSP tests, and provided that the promoter is prepared to proceed in accordance with the IHSP conditions, the promoter should submit a request for a screening opinion to confirm suitability for determination under the IHSP approach, using the form attached at Appendix C.
- iii. **Screening:** Screening by planning officers will consider general IHSP compliance. If the level of expressions of interest in a given settlement exceeds the identified level of proportionate housing growth, the screening process will also determine which proposal(s) will be invited to proceed taking into account: existing land use, planning designations, relationship to the settlement boundary, settlement facilities, site access and potential deliverability.
- iv. **Invitation to proceed:** this will be provided in writing. Other national and Vale planning standards and policies remain in force and will need to be satisfactorily addressed to secure planning permission. A pre-application meeting or discussion is highly recommended at this stage to secure the best outcome in a timely manner.

35. Requests for a screening opinion in accordance with the above approach can be submitted during the consultation period closing 25 November 2011. The results of screening and invitations to proceed where appropriate would follow upon formal adoption of the IHSP, anticipated January/February 2012.
36. IHSP relaxations will neither be applied to nor be taken into account in determining applications submitted in the normal manner without prior IHSP screening and invitation to proceed.

IHSP Guiding principles and tests

37. Development proposals for consideration under the IHSP will need to demonstrate their suitability and deliverability against three tests.

IHSP 1 Local spatial strategy tests

In the context of a plan-led system sites for additional homes proposed under the IHSP should broadly adhere to, and do not undermine, the council's vision and spatial strategy for housing development in the Vale in the adopted Local Plan and emerging Vale core strategy, by focussing development primarily on towns and larger villages.

Strategic-scale development proposals require detailed consideration and should be promoted and tested through the core strategy process, especially where they may prejudice or delay the delivery of strategic housing sites allocated in the Local Plan, or potential strategic housing sites currently identified as core strategy preferred options.

38. The IHSP approach is intended to complement the emerging core strategy and is explicitly not a route for potential strategic sites including currently preferred and alternative option sites to circumvent proper consideration through the core strategy process. Strategic sites will generally be able to accommodate 200 or more homes.
39. The four currently preferred strategic housing sites in the draft core strategy are: land south of Park Road, Faringdon; land at Harwell Oxford campus; Valley Park Harwell parish west of Didcot Great Western Park, and land at Crab Hill, north east Wantage⁷. Some of these sites have complex infrastructure and deliverability linkages with two large local plan site allocations at Grove Airfield and Didcot Great Western Park.
40. Delays on these two local plan sites are the main reason that the district no longer has a deliverable five year land supply, and the five year land supply position will not be improved by delaying them further. The deliverability of Valley Park for instance relies in part on the completion of Didcot Great Western Park whilst Crab Hill is reliant in part upon certain services and facilities being enabled by, or provided as part of, the proposed Grove Airfield development.
41. All these sites, excluding Faringdon, will help deliver a complex package of transport schemes within the Science Vale UK area⁸, needed to support the level of housing and other growth expected by 2026.

⁷ Alternatives considered at Core Strategy Preferred Options stage include land west of Wantage, north of Grove, south of Abingdon and west of Faringdon.

⁸ Southern Central Oxfordshire Transport Study. The SVUK area stretches from Wantage and Grove in the west to Didcot and Culham in the east.

IHSP 2 Proportionate settlement growth test

To complement the spatial approach of the adopted Local Plan and emerging Vale Core Strategy, the level of housing development promoted in any given settlement should not significantly exceed the identified level of 'proportionate growth' for that settlement. For IHSP purposes this is defined in the context of declining average household size, as: **the level of housing provision sufficient to maintain at 2026 the 2011 settlement population, at the average Vale household size projected for 2026.** These levels are listed by settlement at Table IHSP1 taking into account any unimplemented planning commitments.

42. In general rather than site specific terms, proportionate growth should be broadly sustainable in that it would help settlements to sustain their current level of facilities and services by stabilising their current population, without unduly adding to pressures on services and infrastructure over the emerging core strategy period. Proposals that would more significantly alter the size of existing settlements should be promoted through the Local Development Framework process to ensure they are sustainable, fully tested against credible alternatives and are widely consulted upon.
43. The proportionate growth figures are guidelines based on district average household sizes. On average, 9% more homes will be needed in 2026 just to accommodate the existing 2011 population, due to long term trends towards smaller household sizes (there will also be population growth, which is being addressed through the core strategy).
44. The proportionate capacity of settlements calculated on this basis is provided in Table 1 below (workings at Annex F), expressed net of existing planning commitments (permissions granted and Local Plan allocations). A negative capacity indicates that the settlement is already accommodating more than proportionate growth, usually due to Local Plan housing allocations, and is not considered suitable for additional housing under the IHSP approach. This applies to the towns of Botley, Faringdon and Grove; and to the villages of Chilton, Cumnor, Harwell and at Harwell Oxford campus.
45. Whilst the proportionate growth figures are neither absolute caps nor targets, we do not intend that the guideline capacity figures will be significantly exceeded in any given settlement, especially through development outside its current boundary. If development proposals (individually or in combination) appear likely to moderately exceed the proportionate growth level the nature and capacity of settlement facilities and services will be taken into account at screening opinion stage, as will the effective use of suitable and available sites especially if previously developed land or land within the defined settlement boundary.
46. We do not seek or expect to achieve the proportionate growth guideline in every settlement, nor do we need to do so to restore the five year housing land supply. Some settlements such as Abingdon are significantly constrained by factors such as Green Belt and areas of flood risk that we would not expect them to be able to accommodate the proportionate level of housing indicated..

Table IHSP1: Proportionate settlement growth: net additional housing required by 2026 to maintain 2011 population

Parish/ settlement	Settlement type	Net homes needed by 2026 to house 2011 population	Parish/ settlement	Settlement type	Net homes needed by 2026 to house 2011 population
Abingdon	Town, part Green Belt	1,126	Kingston Bagpuize	Large village	67
Appleford	Smaller village	13	Kingston Lisle	Smaller village	8
Appleton	Large village, Green Belt	29	Letcombe Bassett	Smaller village	5
Ardington	Smaller village	11	Letcombe Regis	Smaller village	21
Ashbury	Large village	19	Little Coxwell	Smaller village	5
Baulking	Other village	4	Littleworth	Smaller village	5
Besselsleigh	Other village	4	Lockinge	Smaller village	5
Blewbury	Large village	43	Longcot	Smaller village	14
Bourton	Other village	11	Longworth	Smaller village	27
Buckland	Smaller village	23	Lyford	Other village	1
Buscot	Other village	7	Marcham	Large village	62
Charney Bassett	Other village	10	Milton	Large village	43
Childrey	Large village	16	North Hinksey / Botley	Town, Green Belt	-48
Chilton	Smaller village	-245	Pusey	Other village	-2
Compton Beauchamp	Other village	1	Radley	Large village, Green Belt	80
Cumnor	Large village, Green Belt	-52	Shellingford	Smaller village	3
Denchworth	Other village	7	Shrivenham	Large village	67
Denchworth	Other village	7	South Hinksey	Other village, Green Belt	10
Drayton	Large village	68	Sparsholt	Other village	9
East Challow	Large village	26	St Helen Without	Other village, Green Belt	60
East Hanney	Large village	31	Stanford in the Vale	Large village	74
East Hendred	Large village	33	Steventon	Large village	55
Eaton Hastings	Other village	3	Sunningwell	Large village, Green Belt	47
Fernham	Other village	-1	Sutton Courtenay	Large village	57
Frilford	Other village	10	Uffington	Large village	26
Fyfield & Tubney	Smaller village	15	Upton	Smaller village	12
Garford	Other village	5	Wantage	Town	261
Goosey	Other village	3	Watchfield	Large village	70
Great Coxwell	Other village	6	West Challow	Other village	1
Great Faringdon	Town	-73	West Hanney	Smaller village	13
Grove	Town	-2,239	West Hendred	Smaller village	9
Harwell	Large village	-516	Woolstone	Other village	4
Hatford	Other village	2	Wootton	Large village, Green Belt	101
Hinton Waldrist	Other village	8	Wytham	Other village, Green Belt	4
Kennington	Large village, Green Belt	139			

Source: Annex F

IHSP 3 Deliverability test

Proposals invoking the IHSP must be applications for full planning permission that are demonstrably capable of starting on-site within 12 months of gaining planning permission, and of delivering completed homes before 31 March 2014 on a stand-alone and self-funded basis in terms of site preparation and (as applicable) supporting infrastructure/ utilities, any necessary mitigation measures and services/ amenities required for its future residents. Planning permissions granted under this interim policy approach will expire in twelve months.

The demonstration of deliverability must include a development timetable and written confirmation at the point of application that:

- (i) the site is owned outright by the developer, or confirmation from the owner(s) that it is available on agreed terms to the developer to develop if planning permission is secured for the scheme proposed; **and**
- (ii) the development as proposed is viable including provision of access and services to the site; **and**
- (iii) there is a developer and sufficient funding in place ready to commence the development if the site is accepted and planning permission is granted. .

- 47. The primary purpose of the IHSP is to increase housing supply in a sustainable manner by 2014. This purpose, and the community and economic benefits of making up housing provision shortfalls, are not served by simply increasing the size of the already significant longer term district planning pipeline and housing land bank.
- 48. The 5YHLS shortfall arose in the Vale due to slow progress on a small number of large and complex sites. In our view the solution lies in bringing forward a number of smaller and less complex sites, sites that can be developed quickly and will also increase local choice and competition including opportunities for smaller and local house builders.
- 49. Planning permissions granted under this interim policy approach will expire in twelve months – use it or lose it. Sites that officers adjudge likely to take longer to progress, including outline planning applications, will not qualify for IHSP consideration at screening stage. The applicant will have the option to either withdraw or to proceed for determination against Vale Local Plan policy without the IHSP relaxations. If not in accordance with Local Plan policy or the IHSP the site should instead be promoted through the Core Strategy and/or Managing Development Document preparation process.
- 50. Promoters of sites that may qualify for determination under the IHSP must first request a site screening opinion.

IHSP relaxation of saved Local Plan policies

51. Subject to the proposal satisfying all three IHSP tests, development proposals invited to proceed following screening will be determined against the Vale Local Plan with the following policy relaxations.

Policy H11 Development in the larger villages

Policy H12 Development in the smaller villages

Policy H13 Development elsewhere

52. These policies respectively limit development as follows

- Up to 15 homes or sites under about 0.5 ha. within the built up area of larger villages, subject to criteria
- Up to 4 homes within the built up area of smaller villages, subject to the same criteria as H11
- Outside the built up areas of the towns and villages defined in policies H11 and H12, to (a) one or two homes within the built-up area of other small villages (not listed), or (b) to meet essential needs of rural enterprises, again subject to criteria.

IHSP 4 Relaxation to H11, H12 and H13

To remove the size thresholds currently permitted under Local Plan policy at individual site level on sites within the built up area of villages and instead apply the IHSP 2 principle of proportionate growth to the settlement as a whole, to the villages listed in the policies plus other smaller villages as identified in Table 1 and Annex F.

53. The other criteria to policies H11-H13 would remain. Policy H10 already enables suitable sites to come forward within the built up area of towns. It is not part of the IHSP thus not subject to its tests.

Policy GS2 Development in the countryside

54. This policy essentially presumes against built development on land outside settlements unless allocated for development in the Local Plan or enabled by a more specific Local Plan policy. The IHSP objectives would be difficult to achieve without relaxing this policy, but its relaxation presents the greatest risks to the Vale's spatial strategy for development and for ensuring development occurs in sustainable locations.

IHSP 5 Relaxation to GS2

To favourably consider market and mixed housing development on sites outside but abutting the defined settlement boundary of the towns or the built up area of the larger and smaller villages which are not located within the Green Belt as identified in Table 1 (but not in 'other settlements'). This is subject to other applicable Local Plan policies and IHSP tests, and provided that **either** criteria (i) **and** (ii) below are both met, **or** the proposal is supported by the relevant town or parish council:

- (i) The settlement has a positive proportionate growth capacity figure
- (ii) There are no suitable, deliverable and available site(s) within the settlement boundary that could accommodate all or most of the settlement's proportionate growth capacity, or all or most of the site is previously developed land. This will be assessed when IHSP expressions of interest are screened.

55. For market or mixed housing, in settlements with a negative capacity figure, development outside the town boundary or village built-up area will only be considered through the LDF process, as a negative indicates that the settlement is already accommodating or planned to accommodate more than its proportionate growth (see IHSP 2 section above).
56. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (December 2009) identifies potentially suitable sites for housing within and adjoining towns and larger villages. However it did not go so far as to assess their availability and this would need to be done separately in order to satisfy criterion (ii) above.
57. In the spirit of localism, permissive exceptions will be made where supported in writing by the relevant host town or parish council(s) at the time of application, other planning considerations being satisfactory.
58. Saved Local Plan policy H18 already provides scope for development on the edges of villages for small rural exception sites for affordable housing.

Protecting sites for business:

Policy E11 Rural Multi-user sites

Policy E12 Large campus-style sites

Policy E14 The retention of small-scale commercial premises in settlements

59. Policies E11 and E12 seek to prevent the loss of sites that are important for business and local employment, but less significant than the strategic employment locations identified in policy E10 (within which consideration of alternative uses should properly be addressed through the LDF process, so not part of the IHSP). The aim of Policy E14 is to prevent the incremental loss of small employment opportunities through redevelopment, particularly within villages, unless specified criteria are met.

IHSP 6 Relaxation to E11, E12, E14

Housing will be favourably considered on currently vacant, former employment sites/premises that are wholly within or directly adjacent to a residential area within a settlement, subject to the other IHSP tests and provided that at least one of the following criteria is demonstrated:

- (i) Lack of demand for the permissible uses evidenced by proof of active marketing for those uses on fair and realistic terms for at least 12 months
- (ii) A robust viability appraisal shows that the site/premises cannot be viably developed or redeveloped for continued business use
- (iii) The site is unsuitable for its permissible uses by virtue of topography, access or neighbouring activities or habitats
- (iv) The site is identified as surplus to employment needs in the Vale Employment Land Review (2008)
- (v) The proposal is supported by the relevant town or parish council

60. The relaxations aim to strike a balance between the need to provide housing on the one hand, and on the other the ongoing importance of supporting and providing for local economic growth and employment opportunities. This is the case generally but most specifically for the sustainability of local and rural communities more peripheral to the main strategic employment sites.
61. The Employment Land Review (2008) identifies that alternative uses should be considered for the Amey site in Sutton Courtenay (housing development recently agreed), and for several small sites on the north east side of Park Road in Faringdon, around Pioneer Way which have not been specifically assessed for suitability for housing.
62. In the spirit of localism, permissive exceptions will be made where supported in writing by the host town or parish council(s) at the time of application, other planning considerations being satisfactory.

IHSP checklist for applicants

63. If the answer to any of the following questions is 'no' or unclear, the application will be determined without regard to the IHSP in accordance with the saved Vale Local Plan and national policy.
64. If at pre-application stage -
 - Have you submitted an Expression of Interest using the form at Appendix C?
65. If at planning application stage -
 - Have you received written Invitation to Proceed under the IHSP approach in response to your Expression of Interest?
 - Is the application for full planning permission?
 - Have you provided deliverability statements with the application that satisfy the requirements of IHSP 3?
 - If the site proposed for housing is outside a settlement boundary, does it meet IHSP 5 criterion (i), AND have you provided evidence with the application to demonstrate compliance with criterion (ii)? Alternatively have you provided a letter of support from the town or parish council?
 - If the site proposed for housing is on employment land covered by Local Plan policies E11, E12 or E14, have you provided evidence with the application to demonstrate compliance with one of the five tests in IHSP 6?

Annex A: Future housing supply in the Vale

- A.1. The Vale has a pipeline of housing permissions and allocations sufficient in quantitative terms to meet its current cumulative housing target of 623⁹ homes per annum for eight years, to 2018/9. Current Core Strategy preferred option sites would, if adopted, extend the identified housing land supply to 2025/6.
- A.2. Despite this apparently healthy long-term housing land supply position, the Vale as a whole no longer has a supply of *deliverable* housing sites for the five years 2011/12 – 2015/16 inclusive. This appears primarily due to the recession and resultant delays to progress on Local Plan (2011) site allocations at Grove Airfield, Botley and Great Western Park, Didcot.
- A.3. At present, taking a cautious view of likely future housing completions, there is a deliverable supply of 2.8 years. Within this broader picture, there is 2.4 years supply in the eastern half of the Vale within the (South East Plan) Central Oxfordshire sub-region, and 6.6 years supply in the rest of the Vale.
- A.4. There is also a case¹⁰ for ring-fencing Didcot given it is a new growth point expected to be delivered over a longer timeframe. This improves the Vale position to 3.8 years supply (3.3 years Central excluding Didcot, 'Rest of District' unchanged). The full 5YHLS and housing trajectory position is tabulated in Annex B.
- A.5. The 5YHLS situation will also improve as current strategic allocations progress and once the core strategy is adopted, anticipated in the second half of 2013. Once adopted, allocations can be factored into the housing trajectory. If the current preferred option sites were agreed as allocations in 2013, and the existing pipeline delivers broadly as we anticipate in the next 2-3 years, there would be a five year land supply for the Vale as a whole in place from 2015/16.
- A.6. The assessment in this annex does **not** include: any additional supply achieved by this IHSP, additional housing sites that might be allocated in finalising the core strategy, smaller sites to be allocated in future DPDs or windfalls.
- A.7. The assessment in Annex B shows IHSP effects, also excluding smaller sites to be allocated in future DPDs or windfalls. The final section of Annex B shows that in combination with the anticipated adoption of the Core Strategy the IHSP is capable of restoring the five year land supply from anticipated adoption in 2013/14 onwards, including a 20% supply contingency margin proposed in the draft NPPF.

⁹ 578 homes per annum target plus backlog averaged over the plan period.

¹⁰ This approach is consistent with that employed at South Oxfordshire District Council, where it has been tested at appeal and confirmed by letter from the Planning Inspectorate to be the preferred approach for dealing with housing land supply.

Annex B: Future housing supply in the Vale tables and five-year land supply calculations

Site	Permission	Local Plan site	Core Strategy Pref option	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Central Oxfordshire																					
Abingdon																					
Champion House	10				10																
The Old Gaol	61				30	31															
Blewbury																					
Bessels Way	14			14																	
Chilton																					
Chilton Fields	275				50	90	90	45													
Cumnor																					
Timbmet Ltd	165				40	100	25														
East Challow																					
Challow Country Club	14					14															
Grove																					
Air Field		2,500					50	150	200	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	100			
St Johns Ct	10				10																
Harwell																					
Harwell Oxford Campus			400				75	100	100	100	25										
North Hinksey																					
Tilbury Lane Botley		150						50	100												
Lime Rd		130				40	90														
Sutton Courtenay																					
Amev Site	15					15															
Wantage																					
NE Wantage			1,500					70	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	110
St Mary's School	56			56																	
Abbey Hs, Stirlings Rd	10			10																	
Limborough Rd	14					14															
Wallingford St	12				12																
Permissions on small sites [1]	439			63	63	63	63	63	62	62											
Didcot																					
West of GWP			2,150								230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	230	80
Great Western Park	600								125	125	125	125	100								
Rest of the Vale																					
Great Faringdon																					
South of Park Rd			400					50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50						
Park Rd	18				18																
Land at Winslow & Coxwell	35						35														
Cricket & former Nursery	277			70	69	69	69														
Permissions on small sites [1]	114			17	17	17	17	17	17	12											

Annex B continued

Site	Permission	Local Plan site	Core Strategy Pref option	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Totals																					
With core strategy draft preferred options sites [2]																					
Sub total Central Oxon				143	215	367	393	478	707	657	750	725	700	600	600	600	600	450	350	190	0
Central Oxon excl Didcot				143	215	367	393	478	582	532	395	370	370	370	370	370	370	220	120	110	0
Sub total Rest of the Vale				87	104	86	121	67	67	62	50	50	50	50	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vale total				230	319	453	514	545	774	719	800	775	750	650	650	600	600	450	350	190	0
Without core strategy																					
Sub total Central Oxon				143	215	367	318	308	487	437	375	375	350	250	250	250	250	100	0	0	0
Central Oxon excl Didcot				143	215	367	318	308	362	312	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	100	0	0	0
Sub total Rest of the Vale				87	104	86	121	17	17	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vale total				230	319	453	439	325	504	449	375	375	350	250	250	250	250	100	0	0	0
5 year land supply																					
Vale 5YHLS with core strategy draft preferred options sites [2]				3.3	4.0	4.5	4.9	5.2	5.4	5.3	5.0	5.0	4.8	4.4	4.0	3.3	2.3	5YHLS calculation not applicable as no sites currently allocated or proposed would deliver homes beyond the expected core strategy horizon of 2028/9 (based on anticipated adoption in 2013)			
Projected supply in 5 years commencing				2,061	2,605	3,005	3,352	3,613	3,818	3,694	3,625	3,425	3,250	2,950	2,650	2,190	1,590				
Cumulative annualised target 2006/7 - 2028/9 [3]				623	646	666	681	693	704	698	727	686	676	667	669	672	687				
Central Oxon [4]				2.9	3.7	4.3	4.8	5.2	5.4	5.3	5.1	5.1	4.9	4.6	4.2	3.5	2.5				
Central excl Didcot [5]				3.9	4.8	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.1	4.8	4.3	4.4	4.3	3.9	3.3	2.6	1.7				
Rest of Vale [4]				7.4	7.2	6.8	6.4	5.6	5.4	5.2	4.2	4.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	0.0	0.0				
Vale current 5YHLS, without core strategy sites				2.8	3.2	3.3	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.4	2.0	1.8	1.6	1.2	0.8	0.5	0.3				
Projected supply in 5 years commencing				1,766	2,040	2,170	2,092	2,028	2,053	1,799	1,600	1,475	1,350	1,100	850	600	350				
Cumulative annualised target 2006/7 - 2028/9 [3]				623	646	666	681	698	727	745	802	812	860	924	1,020	1,149	1,329				
Central Oxon [4]				2.4	2.9	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.0	2.6	2.2	2.0	1.7	1.3	0.9	0.6	0.3				
Central excl Didcot [5]				3.3	4.4	4.6	4.3	4.1	4.0	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.1	2.4	1.7	1.0				
Rest of Vale [4]				6.6	5.6	4.3	2.9	0.9	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0				
Effect of IHSP on 5YHLS																					
Assumed additional completions from IHSP				0	100	200	300	200	200	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Vale, with core strategy draft preferred options sites [2]				4.6	5.6	5.9	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.0	5.7	5.8	5.8	5.4	5.0	4.3	3.3				
Vale, without core strategy				4.1	4.7	4.7	4.2	3.7	3.4	2.7	2.2	2.1	1.8	1.4	1.0	0.6	0.3				
				5YHLS within 10%				5YHLS in place				5YHLS with margin of 20%+ (draft NPPF)									
<p>[1] The small site trend is the amount of outstanding small site permissions at 1 April 2010 at 80% of historic small site build rates (1996 - 2011)</p> <p>[2] The draft preferred option sites are work in progress towards meeting the full housing target of 578 homes per annum. Other sources of supply will be identified in the final document</p> <p>[3] The cumulative annualised target adjusts for past over or under provision against the 578 homes per annum target over the plan period of 2006/7 - 2028/9.</p> <p>[4] Supply position based on SE Plan split of the annual target, 512 for Vale land in centralOxfordshire, 66 for rest of (western) Vale. Annualised as at [3]</p> <p>[3] Total requirement for Central Oxfordshire to 2028/29 less 2750 (the total planned for Didcot) annualised as at [3]</p>																					

Annex C:

Interim Housing Supply Policy



Planning Policy Team
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Tel: 01235 540 499
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Request for a site screening opinion

- Screening requests are invited at any stage including during the consultation period.
- Screening requests must be made with the knowledge and consent of the land owner(s).
- Site promoters should first carry out their own assessment against the IHSP tests and requirements
- You are encouraged to apply by email.
- Screening opinions will be issued after the final policy is formally adopted, anticipated early in 2012.

Your details			
Contact name	Organisation (if applicable)	Telephone/mobile	Email
Address for correspondence			Post code

Site details (Enclose a plan or aerial photo clearly identifying the location and boundaries of the site and proposed point(s) of vehicular access)				
Address or description of location			Town/village name	Post code (if applicable)
Site area (hectares)	Current use	Permitted use(s) if any	Land use designations e.g. AONB	Is the site previously developed land? If in part, specify PDL area.

Indicative development proposal (You may attach supporting documents but if hard copies these will not be returned)	
Estimated number and type of homes	Other uses (approximate area or floorspace, for information only)
Describe how and where you propose to provide vehicular access to the site. Informal discussion with Oxfordshire County Council is recommended.	

Annex C continued

If invited to proceed, when would you envisage submitting a full planning application (allowing sufficient time for detailed design work and preparation of any necessary technical reports)?

Provide a justification if you consider that the site / proposal meets some but not all of the IHSP requirements but should still be considered under the IHSP approach.

Statement of self assessment of compliance with IHSP policy requirements

I/ we have assessed the above site against the IHSP tests and consider that it meets them and submit it for a screening opinion on suitability for determination under the Interim Housing Supply Policy approach.

I/ we understand that if invited to proceed following screening that a planning application would need to include at the point of application statements to satisfy the three deliverability tests of Policy IHSP 3, and any relevant technical reports.

I/we understand that if invited to proceed following screening that the application must be for full planning permission, which if granted will be for a fixed 12 month period and would not be renewed if development does not commence within that 12 months.

I/we confirm that this expression of interest is made with the knowledge and consent of the land owner(s).

Signed

Name

Date

Annex D: Housing delivery progress on sites > 50 homes with planning permission or allocated in the local plan

Location	Site	Number of homes	Extent of Delay	Obstacle/issue	What can be done/ actions already taken
Grove	Grove airfield	2,500	5 years. Allocation in 2006 Local Plan. Planning application has been subject to repeated delays.	Renegotiation (recently completed) between scheme partners after the original development agreement lapsed.	Maintain pressure on developers and keep dialogue open regarding current situation.
Harwell (Didcot)	Great Western Park	600	8 years. Now on-site but first completions in Vale sections not expected before 2016	Financial restructuring of lead developer	N/A Now on-site, homes completed in South Oxfordshire
Faringdon	Cricket ground and former nursery	400	N/A – progressing as planned	123 homes completed	N/A Progressing well
Harwell	Chilton Fields	275	Determined 2004, permission 2009. Awaiting revised scheme.	Legal agreement now completed and the site has been bought by house builders	Revised outline application in discussion with Development Management
Wantage	St Mary's	168	As planned, 2008 permission	Progressing, 112 homes completed	N/A Progressing well
Botley/ Cumnor Hill	Timbmet	182	2008 planning permission	Embargo on new housing connections to sewers due to lack of waste water treatment capacity	Issue pursued with Thames Water. Provision of additional waste water treatment facilities now financially committed. Development can start now. New homes can be connected to the sewer network by December 2012 at the latest.
Botley	Tilbury Lane	150	Allocation in 2006 Local Plan		
Botley	Lime Road	130	Allocation in 2006 Local Plan		
Abingdon	The old gaol	61	First homes expected 2012/13	Under construction	N/A Progressing well

4,466

Annex E: Assessment of IHSP policy relaxation effects

E.1. The policy relaxations proposed are sufficient to achieve and exceed the IHSP objective of 1,000 homes, based on sites identified as potentially suitable for housing within the Vale Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (December 2009).

Policies H11-H13 and Policy GS2

E.2. Relaxation to policies H11-H13 is likely to make a modest contribution to increasing supply, although the housing potential of smaller and other villages was not considered in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

E.3. Relaxation of policy GS2 is likely to be the main source of new housing.

E.4. Taken together these relaxations could yield up to 1,200 homes based on sites identified in the SHLAA as potentially suitable for housing (note the SHLAA does not cover smaller villages). The sum of potential proportionate growth capacities is approximately 2,900 homes or 1,300 if settlements in Green Belt are excluded.

E.5. The likely range of potential growth in villages is as follows.

- Larger villages (average size 780 homes in 2011): average proportionate growth capacity 50 homes or 6%, range 0-139 or up to 9%. A number of larger villages are significantly constrained by Green Belt. Excluding these, the average proportionate growth capacity is 44 homes or 7% and range 0-74 or up to 9%.
- Smaller villages (average size 172 homes in 2011): average proportionate growth capacity 11 homes or 6%, range 0-27 or up to 12%. None are constrained by Green Belt.

Policies E11, E12, E14

E.6. If the sites identified as surplus to employment use in the Employment Land Review are suitable for housing, they might accommodate around 220 homes. Potential elsewhere has not been assessed.

Annex F: Assessment of proportionate growth potential by settlement

Parish/settlement	Settlement type	SE Plan subregion	Households (2001 census)	Net homes built 2001-11	Households 2011	Population 2011 (@2.46*/ HH)	Total homes needed 2026 (@ 2.25*/ HH)	Extra homes to house 2011 popn	Homes permitted/all ocatod	Net homes needed by 2026 to house 2011 popn
Abingdon	Town, Green Belt	Central Oxon	12,566	1,332	13,898	34,189	15,195	1,297	171	1,126
Appleford	Smaller village	Central Oxon	138	0	138	339	151	13	0	13
Appleton	Large village, Green Belt	Central Oxon	369	5	374	920	409	35	6	29
Ardington	Smaller village	Central Oxon	131	10	141	347	154	13	2	11
Ashbury	Large village	Rest of Vale	206	17	223	549	244	21	2	19
Baulking	Other village	Rest of Vale	41	1	42	103	46	4	0	4
Besselsleigh	Other village	Central Oxon	40	0	40	98	44	4	0	4
Blewbury	Large village	Central Oxon	693	30	723	1,779	790	67	24	43
Bourton	Other village	Rest of Vale	124	4	128	315	140	12	1	11
Buckland	Smaller village	Central Oxon	223	22	245	603	268	23	0	23
Buscot	Other village	Rest of Vale	77	1	78	192	85	7	0	7
Charney Bassett	Other village	Central Oxon	115	2	117	288	128	11	1	10
Childrey	Large village	Rest of Vale	202	10	212	522	232	20	4	16
Chilton	Smaller village	Central Oxon	331	23	354	871	387	33	278	-245
Compton Beauchamp	Other village	Rest of Vale	21	0	21	52	23	2	1	1
Cumnor	Large village, Green Belt	Central Oxon	2,236	131	2,367	5,823	2,588	221	273	-52
Denchworth	Other village	Central Oxon	71	0	71	175	78	7	0	7
Denchworth	Other village	Central Oxon	71	5	76	187	83	7	0	7
Drayton	Large village	Central Oxon	896	44	940	2,312	1,028	88	20	68
East Challow	Large village	Central Oxon	427	1	428	1,053	468	40	14	26
East Hanney	Large village	Central Oxon	313	14	327	804	358	31	0	31
East Hendred	Large village	Central Oxon	411	23	434	1,068	475	41	8	33
Eaton Hastings	Other village	Central Oxon	31	0	31	76	34	3	0	3
Fernham	Other village	Rest of Vale	80	2	82	202	90	8	9	-1
Frilford	Other village	Central Oxon	84	0	84	207	92	8	-2	10
Fyfield & Tubney	Smaller village	Central Oxon	202	2	204	502	223	19	4	15
Garford	Other village	Central Oxon	52	8	60	148	66	6	1	5
Goosey	Other village	Central Oxon	46	7	53	130	58	5	2	3
Great Coxwell	Other village	Rest of Vale	110	6	116	285	127	11	5	6
Great Faringdon	Town	Rest of Vale	2,627	454	3,081	7,579	3,369	288	361	-73
Grove	Town	Central Oxon	2,985	148	3,133	7,707	3,425	292	2,531	-2,239
Harwell	Large village	Central Oxon	977	22	999	2,458	1,092	93	609	-516
Hatford	Other village	Central Oxon	31	1	32	79	35	3	1	2
Hinton Waldrist	Other village	Central Oxon	135	2	137	337	150	13	5	8
Kennington	Large village, Green Belt	Central Oxon	1,580	94	1,674	4,118	1,830	156	17	139

Annex F continued

Parish/settlement	Settlement type	SE Plan subregion	Households (2001 census)	Net homes built 2001-11	Households 2011	Population 2011 (@2.46*/ HH)	Total homes needed 2026 (@ 2.25*/ HH)	Extra homes to house 2011 popn	Homes permitted/all ocatod	Net homes needed by 2026 to house 2011 popn
Kingston Bagpuize	Large village	Central Oxon	751	38	789	1,941	863	74	7	67
Kingston Lisle	Smaller village	Rest of Vale	97	2	99	244	108	9	1	8
Letcombe Bassett	Smaller village	Rest of Vale	67	3	70	172	77	7	2	5
Letcombe Regis	Smaller village	Rest of Vale	217	76	293	721	320	27	6	21
Little Coxwell	Smaller village	Rest of Vale	62	2	64	157	70	6	1	5
Littleworth	Smaller village	Rest of Vale	77	10	87	214	95	8	3	5
Lockinge	Smaller village	Central Oxon	78	1	79	194	86	7	2	5
Longcot	Smaller village	Rest of Vale	220	5	225	554	246	21	7	14
Longworth	Smaller village	Central Oxon	326	3	329	809	360	31	4	27
Lyford	Other village	Central Oxon	20	0	20	49	22	2	1	1
Marcham	Large village	Central Oxon	647	34	681	1,675	745	64	2	62
Milton	Large village	Central Oxon	456	49	505	1,242	552	47	4	43
North Hinksey (Botley)	Town, Green Belt	Central Oxon	1,713	145	1,858	4,571	2,031	173	221	-48
Pusey	Other village	Central Oxon	23	3	26	64	28	2	4	-2
Radley	Large village, Green Belt	Central Oxon	932	27	959	2,359	1,049	90	10	80
Shellingford	Smaller village	Rest of Vale	65	2	67	165	73	6	3	3
Shrivenham	Large village	Rest of Vale	878	59	937	2,305	1,024	87	20	67
South Hinksey	Other village, Green Belt	Central Oxon	152	12	164	403	179	15	5	10
Sparsholt	Other village	Rest of Vale	111	12	123	303	134	11	2	9
St Helen Without	Other village, Green Belt	Central Oxon	719	6	725	1,784	793	68	8	60
Stanford in the Vale	Large village	Rest of Vale	758	129	887	2,182	970	83	9	74
Steventon	Large village	Central Oxon	617	30	647	1,592	707	60	5	55
Sunningwell	Large village, Green Belt	Central Oxon	547	12	559	1,375	611	52	5	47
Sutton Courtenay	Large village	Central Oxon	931	76	1,007	2,477	1,101	94	37	57
Uffington	Large village	Rest of Vale	287	20	307	755	336	29	3	26
Upton	Smaller village	Central Oxon	169	3	172	423	188	16	4	12
Wantage	Town	Central Oxon	3,803	728	4,531	11,146	4,954	423	162	261
Watchfield	Large village	Rest of Vale	782	2	784	1,929	857	73	3	70
West Challow	Other village	Central Oxon	71	2	73	180	80	7	6	1
West Hanney	Smaller village	Central Oxon	208	8	216	531	236	20	7	13
West Hendred	Smaller village	Central Oxon	141	1	142	349	155	13	4	9
Woolstone	Other village	Rest of Vale	55	0	55	135	60	5	1	4
Wootton	Large village, Green Belt	Central Oxon	1,072	114	1,186	2,918	1,297	111	10	101
Wytham	Other village, Green Belt	Central Oxon	63	0	63	155	69	6	2	4

*Average household size data for the Oxfordshire demographic projections (GLA, June 2010)

** Planning permission or Vale Local Plan 2011 allocation

Annex G: Sustainability Appraisal of the Interim Housing Supply Policy

Introduction

1. Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing requires that planning authorities identify a supply of deliverable housing sites sufficient to meet their housing provision targets for the next five years. Whilst the Vale has at least 8 years supply of housing land (extant permissions and local plan allocations), many will not deliver homes in the next five years, so insufficient homes are likely to be delivered in the next five years to meet targets. At the current time, the Vale of White Horse District has 2.8 year supply of deliverable housing sites.
2. In order to address this issue, the council is consulting on an Interim Housing Supply Policy (IHSP) for use prior to the adoption of the Core Strategy, anticipated 2013. The IHSP aims to bring sites forward for development to improve progress towards providing the current Vale housing target, and to restore the five-year housing land supply.
3. The interim approach proposes to relax the following selected Saved Local Plan Policies:
 - Policy H11 - Development in larger villages
 - Policy H12 - Development in smaller villages
 - Policy H13 - Development elsewhere
 - Policy GS2 - Development in the countryside
 - Policy E11 - E12 - Protecting sites for business use
 - Policy E14 - Retention of small scale commercial premises.
4. Whilst not itself a statutory planning document, once adopted the IHSP will be a material consideration for development management purposes. It will therefore have wider impacts on the environment, economy and society. This sustainability appraisal identifies these effects to help ensure that potentially negative effects are prevented or minimised and mitigated.

Methodology

5. The March 2007 Scoping Report for the Core Strategy developed a sustainability framework of 21 sustainability objectives for the appraisal of Core Strategy options (set out in appendix 1). This framework builds on the over-arching sustainability framework for the South East Plan, by
 - Identifying sustainability objectives relevant to the Vale in other plans and programmes, including local strategies (Vale or Oxfordshire)
 - Collecting baseline social, economic and environmental information about the Vale to identify the most important local sustainability issues and problems
6. In total there are 21 sustainability objectives, but some are more relevant than others for the issue of housing provision. The following objectives are considered to have no clear link to the issue and have therefore been 'scoped out' meaning they will not be assessed in this appraisal.

SA Objective	
2	Improved accessibility to high quality services and involvement in decision making for the public
3	Improved community safety
5	Raised educational achievement and skills levels
7	Establish a dynamic, diverse and knowledge-based economy with high value low impact activities
8	Develop a strong and sustainable tourism sector
12	Greater engagement in cultural activity
15	Improve and protect the built environment
18	Increased generation of energy by renewables

7. The remaining sustainability objectives have been divided into two groups; those most relevant to housing supply, and those that are of indirect relevance. These are set out in the assessment below.
8. To assess the likely sustainability effects and implications of adopting the IHSP, it is compared with the principal alternative, to take no specific action to rectify the 5YHLS ('do nothing'). Other options, such as preparing a development plan document to allocate sites formally, were ruled out because amongst other reasons they could not be put into effect any faster than the core strategy in progress, and a policy response is needed that can improve housing supply in the short term.
9. The IHSP is considered against each sustainability objective using the following assessment framework, a refinement of the approach taken to date in the core strategy preferred options. The assessment is based on whether the IHSP would have a positive or negative effect on the objectives, compared to doing nothing. Where there are negative effects recommendations are made to minimise or mitigate them.

IHSP SA assessment framework

The policy will have:	
++	a significant positive effect on the objective
+	a minor positive effect on the objective
-	a minor negative effect on the objective
--	a significant negative effect on the objective
?	an uncertain or indeterminate effect on the objective
0	no effect or there is no clear link with the objective

10. There are two important points to bear in mind in assessing the sustainability implications of the IHSP. The first is that it operates within the strategic context of the South East Plan. For the time being this remains part of the statutory Vale development plan and sets the current house-building target – which has already been tested and shown to be sustainable. The IHSP does not alter the amount of housing to be built in the district. Whilst it seeks to increase the level of housing development in the short term, this is a response to rates of delivery that have been lower and slower than anticipated when the SE Plan was produced. Thus the general effects of the approach are not 'new' and unlikely to be significantly adverse.
11. Second, because the IHSP identifies types of site rather than specific development locations, the assessment of effects is high-level and generalised. Site promoters

putting forward proposals for consideration under the IHSP will still need to demonstrate that their specific proposals are in sustainable locations for housing development and accord with PPS3 paragraph 69.

Sustainability Assessment

Scores and commentary for the more relevant sustainability objectives:

SA Objective		Assessment
1	Access to decent, sustainably constructed and affordable homes	+
4	Increasing quality of life for Vale residents	+
6	Establish a strong and stable economy within the Vale	+
9	Reducing road congestion and associated pollution	-
11	Creating vibrant communities	+

12. Objective 1: By relaxing certain housing policies in the Local Plan, providing access to decent homes will be easier to achieve because more homes will be able to be built sooner. Therefore the IHSP has a minor positive effect on this objective compared with doing nothing. It must be stressed that the policies to be relaxed are those that constrain development of housing on certain types of site. The policies that ensure high quality design, sustainable construction and seek community benefits including where applicable a percentage of affordable homes, will remain.
13. Objective 4: Compared with doing nothing, the IHSP will have a minor positive effect on quality of life for Vale residents as it will provide access to more decent, sustainably constructed and affordable homes to residents more quickly. Although there are adverse affects associated with building new houses (such as the loss of undeveloped land, and incrementally increased road congestion and busier local schools), in the longer term these are not worsened by the IHSP as the number of homes to be built in the plan period has not changed. Whilst the effects will occur earlier under the IHSP, they can be mitigated by ensuring that new housing is well designed and carefully integrated into the built environment and/or landscape, and either includes measures to offset the adverse effects or contributes to the provision of additional services and facilities in the area.
14. Objective 6: By enabling more homes to be built sooner, there will be more people potentially available to work in the district, contributing indirectly to establishing a strong and stable economy within the Vale. On this basis the IHSP has a minor positive effect on this objective compared with doing nothing. This is based on the assumption that there are enough jobs for new residents and that out commuting to other districts is minimised. This is a reasonable assumption because evidence suggests that there is currently an excess of local jobs over available local labour in the Vale¹¹.
15. Objective 9: Building more homes will almost always lead to more traffic. Although homes to be bought forward are not additional to those already planned for, the faster development takes place the sooner this effect will be manifested. The IHSP therefore has a minor negative effect on the objective compared with doing nothing.

¹¹ NOMIS, 2010 data www.nomisweb.co.uk

However, this negative impact is likely to be diffuse and cumulative but where locally significant could be mitigated at least in part by developer contributions to improving the highway network or public transport services. Within the eastern half of the Vale the SCOTS¹² package of transport schemes (including a range of public transport initiatives) will help mitigate the adverse traffic impacts anticipated from the level of housing development planned for in this area. Bringing this development forward could enable some developer contributions to be collected sooner.

16. Objective 11: The IHSP may have a minor positive effect compared with doing nothing on creating vibrant communities. Although new homes will not necessarily have any effect on community vibrancy in some locations, in certain circumstances they may help to stabilise or revitalise a community in decline – for example by generating enough population to keep a local school or shop open, or by providing new facilities not already locally available.

Scores for sustainability objectives indirectly relevant to housing supply

SA Objective		Assessment
10	Reduced poverty and social exclusion with disadvantaged groups achieving potential	+
13	Improved health and wellbeing	?/+
14	Improve and protect the natural environment (including biodiversity)	-
16	Sustainable use of land, buildings and resources	-
17	Effective action on climate change	-
19	Reduced risk of flooding	-
20	Maintained and improved river quality and water resources	-
21	Reduced air, noise and light pollution	-

17. Whilst the following sustainability objectives are not directly relevant to assessment of the IHSP approach to bring forward housing (and difficult to meaningfully assess), the manner in which that housing is implemented will have a bearing on these objectives and its eventual sustainability. This is a matter for consideration at planning application stage, where locationally specific adverse effects could be designed out, reduced or mitigated.
18. Objective 10: Compared with doing nothing, the IHSP has a minor positive effect on objective 10 because earlier provision of housing would enable additional affordable housing, which can help address social exclusion and the existing housing need earlier than might otherwise have been achieved.
19. Objective 13: This can be indirectly linked to sustainability objective 4 as increasing the quality of life of Vale residents is likely to also increase their health and wellbeing. As objective 4 has scored a minor positive effect compared with doing nothing, the same could be awarded to objective 13 for residents occupying new homes. However, the effect is indeterminate for existing residents.

¹² SCOTS (Southern Central Oxfordshire Transport Study) Oxfordshire County Council, 2008

20. Objective 14: Almost all built development is likely to have some negative impact on the natural environment initially, however minor this impact may be for individual sites. Under the IHSP, these negative impacts are likely to occur earlier than if no effort was made to bring forward housing more quickly. Measures to minimise or mitigate these effects include existing policies to protect sensitive sites and important habitats, and provision of compensatory open space and landscaping within developments.
21. Objectives 16, 17: Residential development is likely to have a minor adverse impact on the use of land and other natural resources where that land is not previously developed (albeit earlier use rather than additional use relative to delivering the plan as a whole). This would be mitigated by policies to ensure high standards of sustainable design and construction, as set out in the Vale Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Document on this topic. Bringing forward new homes would bring forward a rise in energy and resource demands, leading to a minor negative effect on climate change and resource use given the role of non-renewables in national energy supply. This would be mitigated in part by Building Regulations standards for new development, and could be mitigated further by contributions to, or on-site provision of, renewable energy generation capacity. New homes would similarly bring forward water demand.
22. Objective 19: Hard landscaping associated with development could contribute to increasing surface water run-off, a potential flooding source, and bringing forward housing supply could bring forward any such effects. General mitigation measures include existing policies controlling development in the flood plain and introducing flood defence mechanisms where appropriate. Site-level mitigation measures can be applied where necessary, for example sustainable urban drainage systems. In sum the IHSP could have a minor negative effect on objective 19 compared with doing nothing.
23. Objectives 20, 21: The IHSP may also bring forward minor negative effects on river quality and water resources, and increase air, noise and light pollution. This can be mitigated by ensuring that new housing is well integrated into existing towns and villages, in order to minimise this pollution in rural areas where it is most evident.

Conclusions

24. The results of the sustainability appraisal show that implementing the IHSP will have a number of benefits in sustainability terms, particularly with regards to the most relevant sustainability objectives. Primarily, the IHSP will provide social and economic benefits by encouraging and facilitating faster delivery of housing in the context of a supply shortfall relative to targets.
25. Although the IHSP has mostly positive impacts on the most relevant sustainability objectives, depending on how and where development is implemented there is still potential for it to have an adverse impact on some issues such as biodiversity, resource use, climate change, flooding, water quality, and noise, air and light pollution. These are not 'additional' as the homes would have been provided anyway, but are 'brought forward' relative to housing delivery progress without the IHSP approach (bearing in mind the IHSP is a response to slower than expected housing delivery).

26. Nonetheless it is important that any negative impacts are minimised as far as possible. This can be achieved by applying the existing planning framework and building regulation standards in addition to measures such as developer contributions to infrastructure and provision of services, and by site-specific mitigation of individual effects.
27. Overall, giving more weight to the most relevant sustainability objectives, implementing the IHSP will provide a more sustainable approach than taking no action to address the housing supply shortfall.

Interim Housing Supply Policy

Draft for consultation



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Public consultation questionnaire

Please return this form by email if possible, to arrive by 4:00pm 25 November 2011.

Please email the address above for a copy of questionnaire in electronic form.

A. Your contact details

Contact name	Organisation (if applicable)	Telephone	Email	Mobile
Address for correspondence				Post code

B. Are you promoting or looking to promote a particular site or sites for housing development?

Yes / No

If YES please indicate the site area hectares

And the name of the host or nearest town or village

C. Do you intend to submit a request for a site screening opinion for possible interim policy consideration (form at IHSP annex C)?

Yes / No

Consultation Questions

Continue on an additional sheet if necessary

1. The council should relax selected local plan policies to improve housing supply

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral or unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Reasons/comments.				

2. To boost housing completions and improve the five year housing land supply it is important that housing sites brought forward by the interim policy are capable of delivering homes quickly.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral or unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Reasons/comments.				

3. Bringing forward a number of smaller sites is more likely to improve short to medium term housing delivery than bringing forward additional large sites (200+ homes).

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral or unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Reasons/comments.				

4. Large/strategic housing sites (200+ homes) should be tested and allocated through the core strategy process and not considered under the IHSP.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral or unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Reasons/comments.				

5. As a general principle, 'proportionate growth'¹³ should be broadly sustainable in that it would help settlements sustain their current level of facilities and services by stabilising their population, without unduly adding to pressures on services and infrastructure over the emerging core strategy period

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral or unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Reasons/comments.				
5(a). If you disagree, what additional or alternative tests or indicators of sustainability do you suggest be applied?				

6. Proposals that significantly exceed the host settlement's identified level of proportionate growth should be screened out from the interim policy approach and instead considered through the formal plan-making process.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral or unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Reasons/comments.				
6(a). If you disagree, what additional tests or considerations might be applied to justify exceeding the level of proportionate growth?				

7. What are your views on the policy relaxations proposed?

Support / Object	Policies H11, H12 and H13, relaxation to the size thresholds currently permitted on sites within the built up area of towns and villages
Support / Object	Policy GS2, relaxation to consider housing on sites outside but abutting the defined settlement boundary of the towns or the built up area of the larger and smaller villages which are not located within the Green Belt
Support / Object	Policies E11, E12, E14, relaxation to consider housing on currently vacant, former employment sites within or adjoining a settlement
Reasons/comments.	

¹³ For IHSP purposes this is defined in the context of declining average household size, as: the level of housing provision sufficient to maintain at 2026 the 2011 settlement population, at the average Vale household size projected for 2026.

7(a). Are there any other saved Vale Local Plan policies that should be considered for relaxation?

8. The proposed policy relaxation to enable some edge-of-settlement development would not apply when the settlement edge is located in the Green Belt. Should the same restriction be applied to edge of settlement land designated AONB?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral or unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Reasons/comments.				

9. How could the IHSP be improved?
Any other comments?

- Thank you for participating -