

Western Vale Sub-Area Strategy

Introduction

- 5.109 The Western Vale Sub-Area is predominantly rural in character and extends from the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the River Thames (**Figure 5.8**). The historic Market Town of Faringdon is the largest settlement within the Sub-Area and functions as the main service centre of the surrounding rural catchment.
- 5.110 The area contains many attractive villages, which range in size from small isolated hamlets to Larger Villages, such as East Challow, Shrivenham, Stanford-in-the-Vale, Uffington and Watchfield. Shrivenham and Watchfield are located approximately five miles east of Swindon and house the Shrivenham Hundred Business Park and the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, which includes a campus of Cranfield University.
- 5.111 Significant growth is planned in the Eastern Villages area within the neighbouring borough of Swindon to the west of this Sub-Area. The Council is working positively with Swindon Borough Council, Oxfordshire County Council and other partners to ensure the growth in both areas is coordinated, particularly in relation to transport and the A420 corridor in accordance with an agreed Statement of Common Ground.
- 5.112 Our overall priority for the Western Vale Sub-Area is to ensure the service centre role of Faringdon is maintained and continues to meet the needs of the town and surrounding rural catchment. Future development should secure a housing and employment balance, thus helping to improve the self-sufficiency of the area. Development within the Sub-Area should also contribute towards upgrading the A420 to help reduce existing traffic congestion.
- 5.113 This section sets out:
- how the Sub-Area will change by 2031, and
 - our strategic policies to address the key challenges and opportunities identified in the Sub-Area in relation to our four thematic areas, along with other policy considerations:

Building healthy and sustainable communities

Core Policy 20: Spatial Strategy for the Western Vale Sub-Area – which sets out our strategic site allocations for this area

Supporting economic prosperity

Supporting sustainable transport and accessibility

Core Policy 21: Safeguarding of land for strategic highway improvements within the Western Vale Sub-Area

Protecting the environment and responding to climate change

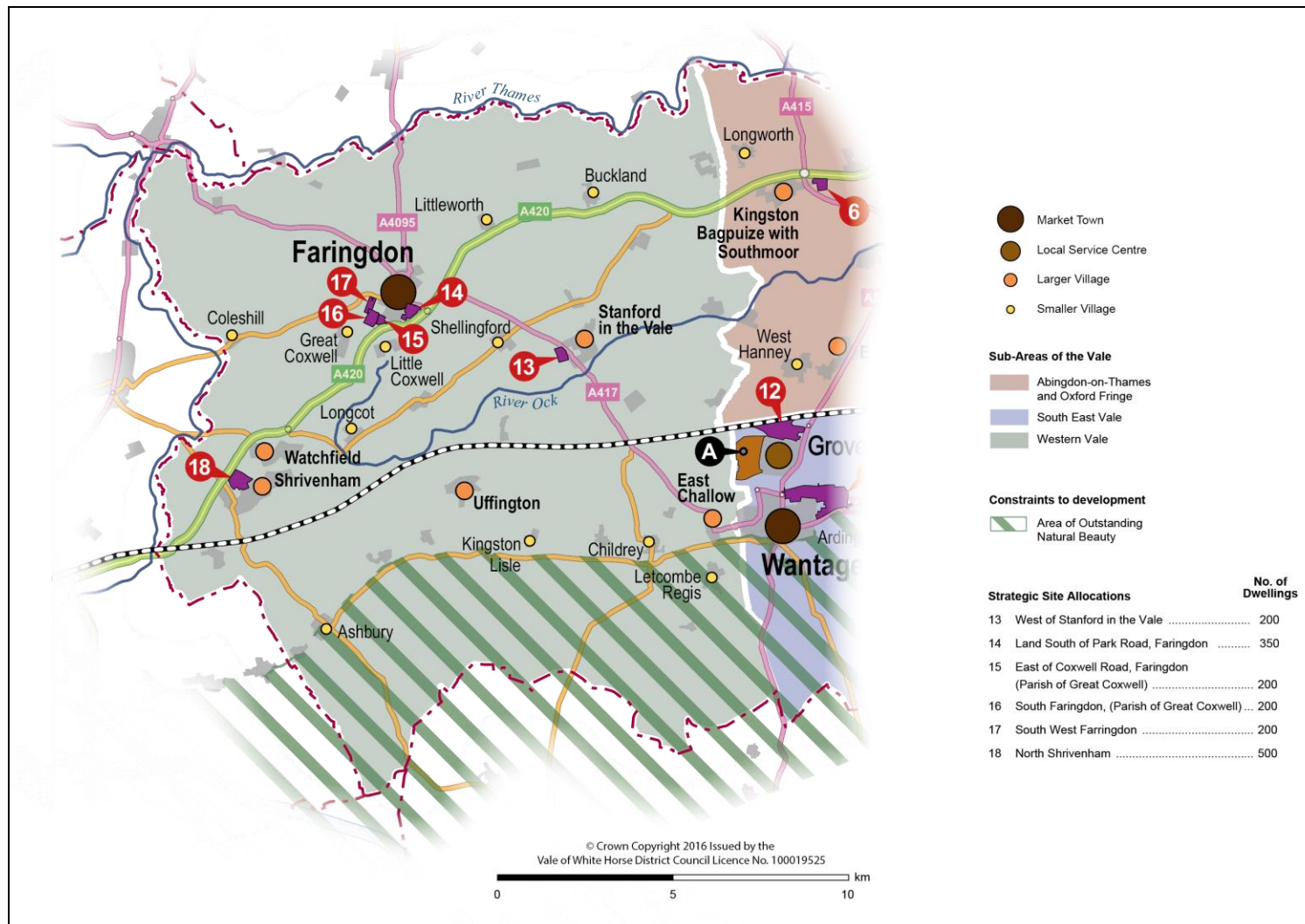


Figure 5.8: Western Vale Sub-Area

How the Western Vale Sub-Area will change by 2031

The Western Vale Sub-Area will continue to be an attractive and prosperous rural area. Development will have been focused at Faringdon with complementary growth in the Larger Villages, especially Shrivenham and Stanford-in-the-Vale. The quality of the rural environment will have been maintained.

Faringdon will continue to be a thriving Market Town providing an important service centre role for the surrounding rural catchment. Its historic character and attractive landscape setting will have been maintained. New development will have been successfully integrated with the town and will have been provided alongside additional employment, improving the self-sufficiency of the town. The high quality business park, at the junction of Park Road and the A420, will be thriving and provide an attractive entrance to the town

The quality of the public area in the centre of Faringdon will have been improved, along with the revitalisation of the shopping and tourism offer. The town will attract residents and visitors alike, serving as a gateway to the Cotswolds. The landscape setting of Faringdon will have been preserved along with ongoing protection for the AONB and Great Western Community Forest.

The countryside and villages will have maintained, conserved and enhanced their distinctive character. The Larger Villages will have retained their services and provide for residents' day-to-day needs. New residents in the villages will be helping to sustain the services and social life of the rural communities.

Strategic policies and other planning considerations for the Western Vale Sub-Area

Building healthy and sustainable communities

- 5.114 Faringdon is a sustainable Market Town that acts as a service centre for a large rural catchment to the west of the Vale. It has an excellent range of services and facilities and further development, adjoining Faringdon, including within Great Coxwell parish, will help to support the delivery of improvements to the town through developer contributions. These could include upgrades to the A420 Junction at Coxwell Road, provision of a new primary school, and increasing the frequency of public transport.
- 5.115 Land has been identified for strategic development on a number of sites at Faringdon. These are well related to the existing built form of Faringdon and provide an opportunity to help strengthen community facilities.
- 5.116 Strategic housing development is also proposed at Shrivenham and Stanford-in-the-Vale. These are sustainable Larger Villages with good services and facilities and good access to employment. Development will ensure the vitality and viability of these rural communities are maintained and facilitate the delivery of new infrastructure.
- 5.117 The strategic sites will be designed to integrate successfully with the local community and to minimise any harmful effects. Appropriate infrastructure, such as open space, leisure provision and new services and facilities will all be delivered alongside the housing.
- 5.118 Our strategy for meeting our housing needs in this Sub-Area is set out in **Core Policy 20: Spatial Strategy for the Western Vale Sub-Area**.
- 5.119 This Sub-Area neighbours the borough of Swindon to the west where significant development is proposed close to the borders of the Vale. Vale of White Horse District Council will continue to work positively with Swindon Borough Council, Oxfordshire County Council and the rural communities within the Western Vale Sub-Area to help ensure any planned growth to the east of Swindon does not adversely affect the west of the Vale and its rural villages to a significant extent⁷⁰.

⁷⁰ A Statement of Common Ground was agreed between Swindon Borough Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and the Western Vale Villages in April 2014.

Core Policy 20: Spatial Strategy for Western Vale Sub-Area

Our overarching priority for this Sub-Area is to protect the service centre role of Faringdon and deliver a balance of housing and employment to improve the self-sufficiency of the area and to protect the vitality and viability of our rural communities.

Development in the Western Vale Sub-Area should be in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy set out in **Core Policy 3**:

Western Vale Sub-Area

Market Town:	Faringdon
Larger Villages:	East Challow, Shrivenham, Stanford-in-the-Vale, Uffington and Watchfield
Smaller Villages:	Ashbury, Buckland, Childrey, Coleshill, Great Coxwell, Kingston Lisle, Little Coxwell, Littleworth, Longcot, Letcombe Regis and Shellingford

Housing Delivery

At least 3,173 new homes will be delivered in the plan period between 2011 and 2031. 1,650 dwellings will be delivered through strategic allocations. 462 dwellings remain to be identified and will be allocated through the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 or Neighbourhood Development Plans or through the Development Management process. The contribution of all sources of housing supply within this Sub-Area are shown by the following table:

Category		Number of Dwellings
Housing requirement for the full plan period (Apr 2011 to Mar 2031)		3,173 ^a
Housing Completions (Apr 2011 to Mar 2016)		860
Housing Supply (Apr 2016 to Mar 2031)	Known Commitments	732
	Local Plan 2031 Part 1 allocations	1,650
	Local Plan 2031 Part 2 allocations	222 ^b
	Windfalls	240

^a This target addresses needs arising in the Vale of White Horse. If or when required, needs arising elsewhere in the Housing Market Area, will be addressed in accordance with Core Policy 2.

^b The Local Plan Part 2 allocation will be reduced where dwellings are allocated in Neighbourhood Developments Plans or come forward through the Development Management Process.

Strategic Allocations

Development will be supported at the strategic allocations through a masterplanning process involving the community, local planning authority, developer and other stakeholders where development meets the requirements set out within the **Site Development Templates** shown by **Appendix A** and are in accordance with the Development Plan taken as a whole. The following table shows how the level of housing required within this Sub-Area through strategic development sites will be distributed:

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Core Policy 20: Spatial Strategy for Western Vale Sub-Area continued from previous page

Part 1 Allocations

Settlement/ Parish	Settlement Type	Site Name	Number of Dwellings
Faringdon	Market Town	Land South of Park Road, Faringdon ^c	350
		South-West of Faringdon	200
Great Coxwell Parish	Adjoining Faringdon Market Town	East of Coxwell Road, Faringdon ^c	200
		South of Faringdon	200
Shrivenham	Larger Villages	North of Shrivenham	500
Stanford-in-the-Vale		West of Stanford-in-the- Vale	200
Total			1,650

^c These sites have 'Resolution to Grant' planning permission subject to completion of a legal agreement, as at Sept 2014.

Employment

7.38 hectares of employment land will be provided for business and employment growth in accordance with **Core Policy 6**. In addition, the following strategic employment sites will be safeguarded for employment use in line with **Core Policy 29**.

Strategic employment sites:

Faringdon Park Road Industrial Estate
Land adjacent to A420, Faringdon

Supporting economic prosperity

5.120 The provision of employment in Faringdon is a key priority for the Sub-Area; helping to improve the self-sufficiency of the town and reduce the need for out-commuting.

5.121 The employment development to be provided on the strategic allocation to the South of Park Road will complement the saved Local Plan 2011 allocation at the 4&20 Business Park of 4.2 hectares.

5.122 A number of employment allocations from the former Local Plan 2011 will also be saved. Some other smaller employment sites are no longer fit for purpose (for example, Pioneer Road/south of Willes Close and north of Park Road / east of Volunteer Way) and it may be appropriate for these sites to be redeveloped in accordance with **Core Policy 29**⁷¹.

⁷¹ <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence>

5.123 Faringdon town centre has a mix of shops and services that meet day-to-day and local shopping needs, but the range and choice of shops could be improved. However, the 2013 Retail Needs Assessment for the Vale of White Horse District indicates that the need for additional convenience floorspace in Faringdon in the foreseeable future can largely be met by the new food store on Park Road⁷².

Supporting sustainable transport and accessibility

Safeguarding of land for strategic highway improvements within the Western Vale Sub-Area

5.124 The Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) Study⁷³ that has been prepared to inform the Vale Local Plan 2031 Part 1 has identified that some capacity issues on the A420 are likely to occur later in the plan period. This impact is partly as a result of the development proposed in the Sub-Area and will particularly affect junctions accessing Faringdon and Shrivenham.

5.125 Oxfordshire County Council has worked with partners, including Vale of White Horse District Council and Swindon Borough Council to develop a Route Strategy for the A420 (between the A419 and A34) as part of the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The strategy helps to ensure this important and strategic route continues to operate with minimal congestion and to avoid rat runs on minor roads.

5.126 The ETI has identified that revised junctions are needed on the A420 at both Faringdon and Shrivenham. For this reason, land is safeguarded at these locations to ensure these necessary upgrades can be delivered alongside the planned growth at these settlements in accordance with **Core Policy 21**.

⁷² Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners (NLP) (2012) Retail and Town Centre Study – Vale of White Horse District Council, March 2013

⁷³ www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence

Core Policy 21: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements within the Western Vale Sub-Area

Land is safeguarded to support the delivery of the following identified transport schemes:

- junction enhancement on the A420 at Faringdon and Shrivenham

New development in these areas should be carefully designed, having regard to matters such as building layout, noise insulation, landscaping and means of access.

Any proposals for development that may reasonably be considered to impact the delivery of the identified schemes (as shown by maps in **Appendix E** and the **Adopted Policies Map**)* should demonstrate the proposal would not harm their delivery.

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice the construction or effective operation of the transport schemes listed above.

* the area shown on the Adopted Policies Map illustrates where policy CP21 will apply. It does not seek to show a precise alignment for the transport scheme, which will need to be informed by detailed design work, carried out in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council and other relevant parties.

Protecting the environment and responding to climate change

5.127 The North Wessex Downs AONB extends across part of the Sub-Area and this area will continue to be protected because of its high quality landscape and setting in accordance with Core Policy 44.

5.128 The Great Western Community Forest covers an area of 168 square miles around Swindon and extends as far as Faringdon to the east. The project aims to produce long-term environmental improvements by promoting tree planting and woodland management and has supported the regeneration of woodland around Faringdon Folly. Development proposals in the forest area should demonstrate how they will contribute to the objectives of the project.