

Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1: Sustainability Appraisal Report

Addendum

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Addendum

REVISION SCHEDULE

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1	July 2016	SA Report Addendum to inform consideration of proposed Main Modifications to the VoWH Local Plan	Alex White Associate Director	Nick Chisholm Principal Consultant	Steven Smith Technical Director

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Contents

Introduction	7
What is the scope of the SA?	8
What has plan-making / SA involved up to this point?.....	11
What are the SA findings at this stage?.....	12
Next steps.....	28
Appendix A: Main modifications SA screening	30
Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Schedule of Main Modifications.....	31

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Introduction

Background

On Wednesday 18 March 2015, Vale of White Horse District Council (the 'Council') submitted Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies (the Plan), and associated documents, for independent examination by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. One of the 'associated documents' submitted alongside the Plan was the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report.

Examination hearings were held from September 2015 – February 2016, subsequent to which the Council published a first draft of proposed modifications to the submitted plan. The Council has subsequently received the Inspector's Interim Findings on 7 June 2016 and will be publishing the proposed main modifications identified by the Inspector on 20 July 2016.

This SA Report Addendum

The aim of this SA Report Addendum is to present an appraisal of the main modifications, with a view to informing discussion of their merits and subsequent finalisation of the Plan.

First and foremost, this SA Report Addendum presents an appraisal of the main modifications, with a view to ascertaining whether they will result in any significant effects in terms of sustainability issues / objectives. Subsequently, consideration is given to the effects of 'the Plan as modified', i.e. consideration is given to whether the Plan, with the main modifications, would result in any changes to the SA of the Submission Plan.

Structure of the SA Report Addendum

This SA Report Addendum (as well as this Non-Technical Summary) answers the following four questions:

- What is the scope of the SA?
- What has plan-making / SA involved up to this point?
- What are the SA findings at this stage?
- What happens next?

What is the scope of the SA?

An important first step in the SA process involves establishing the 'scope', i.e. those sustainability issues and objectives which should be a focus of the SA, and those that should not.

The broad scope of SA work, with respect to the LPP1, is introduced within the SA Scoping Report published in 2012. Essentially, the scope is reflected in a list of sustainability topics and objectives, which collectively provide a methodological 'framework' for undertaking appraisal. The discussion within the SA Report explains that the scope was established following a review of the sustainability 'context' and 'baseline', as well as a period of consultation. The SA framework is shown below.

Sustainability objective	Sustainability issues	Appraisal Questions Does the alternative...
1. Provide sufficient suitable homes including affordable homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortage of housing, including affordable, market and supported living • Need to preserve and enhance the quality of built environments • Pressure for development, particularly housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ enough homes ○ of appropriate types ○ in appropriate locations ○ at the appropriate times • Provide enough affordable homes
2. Ensure the availability of high quality services and facilities in the Vale's towns and rural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural isolation and limited access to services • Deprivation in some parts of the Vale • Protection and provision of recreational facilities including natural greenspace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ appropriate facilities and services; ○ in appropriate locations; ○ at the appropriate times • These should be well designed and inclusive and should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ health; ○ education; ○ recreation and sport; ○ community, cultural and leisure; and ○ other essential services.
3. Reduce the need to travel and Improve provisions for walking, cycling and public transport and reduce road congestion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congestion on strategic and local road network • Lack of alternatives to the private car • Rural isolation and limited access to services • Need to mitigate/reduce effects of noise, air and light pollution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the need to travel through more sustainable patterns of land use and development • Encourage modal shift to more sustainable forms of travel • Enable key transport infrastructure improvements
4. Improve the health and well-being of Vale residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health of Vale residents • Deprivation in some parts of the Vale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide and enhance the provision of community access to green infrastructure, in accordance with national standards • Reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social activities, and reduce fear of crime
5. Reduce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low levels of educational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote regeneration of deprived areas

inequality, poverty and social exclusion in the Vale, and raise educational achievement and skills levels.

achievement

- Improve opportunities and facilities for all types of learning
- Encourage an available and skilled workforce which:
 - meets the needs of existing and future employers;
 - reduces skills inequalities;
 - helps address skills shortages.

6. Support a strong and sustainable economy within the Vale’s towns and rural areas.

- Provision of employment opportunities for residents
- Declining proportion of economically active population
- Low levels of educational achievement

- Promote economic growth and a diverse and resilient economy
- Provide opportunities for all employers to access:
 - different types and sizes of accommodation;
 - flexible employment space;
 - high quality communications infrastructure.
- Build on the knowledge-based and high tech economy in the Central Oxfordshire and Science Vale UK area, including the Science Vale UK Enterprise Zone
- Promote and support a strong network of towns and villages and the rural economy

7. Improve and protect the natural environment including biodiversity, water and soil quality

- Protection and improvement of biodiversity, particularly Special Areas of Conservation

- Protect and enhance natural habitats, wildlife, biodiversity and geodiversity
- Protect the integrity of European sites and other designated nature conservation sites
- Encourage the creation of new habitats and features for wildlife
- Prevent isolation/fragmentation and re-connect / de-fragment habitats
- Enhance water quality and help to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive
- Protect groundwater resources
- Minimise and reduce the potential for exposure of people to ground pollution

8. Protect the cultural heritage and provide a high quality townscape and landscape.

- Protection of valued landscapes
- Need to preserve and enhance the quality of built environments
- Protection and provision of recreational facilities including natural greenspace

- Protect and enhance archaeology and heritage assets, and areas of sensitive landscape including AONB and Green Belt.
- Improve access to, and enjoyment, understanding and use of cultural assets where this will not cause harm

9. Reduce air,

- Need to mitigate/reduce effects of

- Minimise and reduce the potential for

<p>noise and light pollution</p>	<p>noise, air and light pollution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to reduce use of fossil fuels and encourage development of renewables 	<p>exposure of people to noise, air and light pollution.</p>
<p>10. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the use of resources and improve resource efficiency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to reduce use of fossil fuels and encourage development of renewables • Action to mitigate the causes and adapt to the effects of climate change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce greenhouse gas emissions • Re-use existing buildings • Promote development on previously developed land and minimise land use • Encourage sustainable, low carbon building practices and design • Reduce energy use • Promote renewable energy generation • Reduce water use • Provide adequate infrastructure to ensure the sustainable supply of water and disposal of sewerage • Maximise opportunities for reuse, recycling and minimising waste
<p>11. Increase resilience to climate change and flooding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction and prevention of flooding • Action to mitigate the causes and adapt to the effects of climate change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise and reduce flood risk to people and property • Respond to the likelihood of future warmer summers, wetter winters, and more extreme weather events • Minimise development on high quality agricultural land • Provide for local needs locally

What has plan-making / SA involved up to this point?

To date there have been seven main stages that have informed Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – three stages in the previous LDF/Core Strategy process; followed by a fourth and fifth Local Plan 2031 Part 1 consultation stage followed by an Examination in Public (EiP):

1. Issues and Options (2007);
2. Preferred Options (2009);
3. Additional Consultation (2009 but the additional consultation closed on 29/01/2010);
4. Local Plan 2031 Part 1 Consultation Draft (2013); and
5. Housing Delivery Update (2014).
6. Local Plan 2031 Part 1 Submission Version (November 2014)
7. Examination in Public (Q4 2015 / Q1 2016)

These documents and the EiP have explored a number of issues, setting out options and preferred options that the Council has made public over the last seven years.

What reasonable alternatives were considered?

The SA Report 2014 explains in detail how the Plan was developed subsequent to appraisal of reasonable alternatives. Specifically, it explains how alternatives were appraised for a range of policy issues, both area-wide/thematic, for specific geographical areas, and for the allocation of strategic sites. Providing this information in the SA Report is important, given regulatory requirements.

With regard to the main modifications concerning the removal of sites, it was considered that there was no scope for the consideration of reasonable alternatives. There are two reasons for this; first, if the sites were retained the Plan would likely be found 'unsound'; and second, there is no need for the Council to identify further sites for development as they are confident that a five year land supply can be demonstrated without them. Indeed the Inspector in his Interim Findings Report sets out that *"even without these sites the plan would provide for a five year supply of deliverable housing land, and sufficient dwellings district-wide for the plan period as a whole"*. The Inspector goes on to state *"There would be little reason to delay adoption of the Part 1 plan by seeking to allocate replacement sites at this stage"* (Para 9.12). Therefore, no information on alternatives is presented in this report. It was recognised at an early stage, upon examining the policy issues that were set to be a focus of proposed modifications, that the potential for 'significant effects' was limited and hence formal alternatives appraisal would not be necessary or proportionate.

It is important to emphasise that this is an addendum to the 2014 SA Report, and hence the two should be read together. At the time of Plan adoption, an 'SA Adoption Statement' will be published that explains in full how the Plan (as modified) is justified on the basis of reasonable alternatives appraisal.

What are the SA findings at this stage?

This section presents appraisal findings in relation to the proposed main modifications which are to be the subject of public consultation Winter 2016.

Methodology

The appraisal is structured under the SA Objectives used in the 2014 SA Report and established through the scoping process:

1. Provide sufficient suitable homes including affordable homes.
2. Ensure the availability of high quality services and facilities in the Vale's towns and rural areas.
3. Reduce the need to travel and improve provisions for walking, cycling and public transport and reduce road congestion.
4. Improve the health and wellbeing of Vale residents.
5. Reduce inequality, poverty and social exclusion in the Vale, and raise educational achievement and skills levels.
6. Support a strong and sustainable economy within the Vale's towns and rural areas.
7. Improve and protect the natural environment including biodiversity, water and soil quality.
8. Protect the cultural heritage and provide a high quality townscape and landscape.
9. Reduce air, noise and light pollution.
10. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the use of resources and improve resource efficiency.
11. Increase resilience to climate change and flooding.

The SA Objectives and sustainability themes and objectives provide a methodological 'framework' for the appraisal of likely significant effects on the baseline (as set out in the Scoping Report and updated for the purposes of the SA Report).

To reiterate, the focus of the appraisal is on the proposed modifications; however, explicit consideration is also given to the effects of 'the Plan as modified'.

Screening the main modifications

The first point to make is that only proposed 'main' modifications need be the focus of appraisal.

Of the 81 proposed modifications the following have been 'screened in', i.e. should be a focus of appraisal:

- MM5: Removal of East Harwell Campus and North-West Harwell Campus allocations from the South East Vale Sub-Area in Core Policy 4 and associated site templates in Appendix A of the 'Strikethrough Plan' (i.e. the version of the Plan that has been modified).
- MM6: supporting text at Paragraphs 4.21 and 4.22 with regard to the Didcot 'ring-fence'
- MM12: removal of South of East Hanney allocation in CP8
- MM20: CP24 be modified to reflect the change in national policy
- MM22: deletion of criterion on Lifetime Homes

All other modifications are considered to be either not material or negligible with respect to the SA objectives such that appraisal would add little value (e.g. clarifications / re-numbering). See **Appendix A** for comments against all modifications in the schedule.

Provide sufficient suitable homes including affordable homes.

The sustainability questions that underpin this objective are set out below; will the Plan provide:

- enough homes;
- of appropriate types;
- in appropriate locations;
- at the appropriate times
- enough affordable homes.

Appraisal of proposed modifications

MM5 and MM12 propose the removal of strategic sites at East Harwell Campus, North-West of Harwell Campus and South of East Hanney. With regard to the two Harwell Campus sites, the Inspector in his Interim Findings letter sets out his views at some length. His conclusion is that *"...given that the need for housing in the AONB has not been demonstrated I conclude that the exceptional circumstances necessary to approve such a development would also be unlikely to exist."* With regard to East Hanney, the Inspector concluded that Site 6 should be reconsidered given recent findings of the Town and Facilities Study (2014) and the refusal of an application for c. 200 dwellings on the site.

In total, sites accounting for 1,600 homes (East Harwell Campus, 850 homes, North-West of Harwell Campus, 550 homes, and South of East Hanney, 200 homes) have been struck out of the Plan through the main modifications. It should be noted that the overall quantum of development has not changed i.e. the Plan seeks to deliver 20,560 over the plan period 2011-2031.

The key factor to consider in terms of the main modifications is not the effect on the Plan housing figure but on the effect on the local communities and the environment in the vicinity of these sites of not allocating development at these sites. It is useful to turn to the Submission SA Report (2014) to determine what the effects of reversing this policy might be.

With regard to East Harwell Campus, the SA concluded that:

*"The site was appraised to lead to **major positive** effects in terms of housing through delivering a number of homes in an accessible edge of town location, which would contribute towards meeting both market and affordable housing need in the district."*

The removal of the site would negate these positive effects but in itself would likely not result in any overall effects as the overarching housing figure for the Plan is unchanged. The SA indicates that the site would contribute to *"housing need in the district"* and therefore from a local level perspective there would be **no effects**. Indeed the baseline conditions would remain.

With regard to North-West Harwell Campus, the SA concluded that:

*"The site was appraised to lead to **minor positive** effects in terms of housing through delivering a number of homes in an accessible edge of town location, which would contribute towards meeting both market and affordable housing need in the district."*

The removal of the site would negate these positive effects but in itself would likely not result in any overall effects as the overarching housing figure for the Plan is unchanged. The SA indicates that the site would contribute to *"housing need in the district"* and therefore from a local level perspective there would be no effects. Indeed the baseline conditions would remain.

With regard to East Hanney, the SA concluded that:

"The site was appraised to lead to minor positive effects in terms of housing through delivering a number of homes in an accessible edge of town location, which would contribute towards meeting both market and affordable housing need in the district."

The removal of the site would negate these positive effects but in itself would likely not result in any overall effects as the overarching housing figure for the Plan is unchanged. The SA indicates that the site would contribute to *"housing need in the district"* and therefore from a local level perspective there would be no effects. Indeed the baseline conditions would remain.

MM6 has clarified Core Policy 5 'Housing Supply Ring Fence' and made it more flexible through the inclusion of sites immediately adjacent to the 'ring-fence. The SA Report indicated that: **"Significant positive effects due to ensuring that, should allocated sites not be delivered, the plan continues to follow the preferred spatial strategy and delivers housing alongside employment growth."** It is considered that the additional clarification in the background text does not alter this conclusion.

MM20 alters Core Policy 24 'Affordable Housing' by 'upping' the threshold under which a 35% requirement for affordable housing would be applied (from three to 11 net increase in dwellings). The 2014 SA Report provides no appraisal of the threshold with respect to the policy. It is considered that raising the threshold to 11 might result in less (small) development sites delivering affordable housing and perhaps an overall reduction in affordable housing being provided. However, it is considered that this is not significant as the proportion of affordable housing being provided by these sites would be relatively small and the bigger gains are to be found through the delivery of the strategic sites.

MM22 deletes the mention of Lifetime Homes in Core Policy 26 'Accommodating current and future needs of the aging population'. The 2014 SA Report concluded that: *"Policy sets out the requirements for all new homes (excluding flats above ground level) to be built to Lifetime Homes standards. Policy also provides support for people with disabilities and for specialist accommodation to be provided in close proximity to services. **Significant positive impacts.**"* The removal of this criterion may affect the delivery of Lifetime Homes should legislation not be forthcoming from government. The remaining elements of the policy should still result in a **significant positive effect**.

Appraisal of the plan as modified

The SA of the Plan concluded that:

*"In terms of Major Positive Effects (i.e. significant effects) on this objective, the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 as appraised achieves a number of these. Specifically, the plan would have **significant positive** effects on housing delivery, affordable housing, rural housing, gypsy and traveller accommodation and design. These effects are likely to occur over the medium to long-term essentially due to the state of the market and would make up for the historic undersupply of housing.*

The Plan as appraised would not have any significant negative effects on this objective.

The policy approach should lead to positive effects in terms of housing delivery by frontloading housing delivery to the beginning of the plan period, and setting out a strong design policy."

Given that neither the amount of housing set to be delivered during the plan period, nor the spatial strategy have changed, the proposed modifications have **no implications** for the conclusions reached in 2014.

Ensure the availability of high quality services and facilities in the Vale's towns and rural areas.

The sustainability questions that underpin this objective are set out below; will the Plan provide:

- appropriate facilities and services;
- in appropriate locations;
- at the appropriate times.

These should be well designed and inclusive and should include:

- health;
- education;
- recreation and sport;
- community, cultural and leisure; and
- other essential services.

Appraisal of proposed modifications

With regard to East Harwell Campus, the SA concluded that there would be *"minor positive effects in terms of availability of services and facilities"*. It is considered that, given the modest effect this allocation would have had, there is likely to be **no effect** associated with the site's removal. This conclusion is also applicable to North Harwell Campus and South of East Hanney.

Appraisal of the plan as modified

The SA of the Plan concluded that:

*"In terms of Major Positive Effects (i.e. significant effects) on this objective, the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 as appraised achieves a number of these. Specifically, the plan would have **significant effects** on this objective through providing infrastructure, and community facilities. Furthermore the provision of increased and further higher education facilities should have major positive effects on this objective.*

These effects are likely to occur over the medium to long-term, essentially due to their dependence on delivery of housing which is dependent on not only to the market status but also through making up the historic undersupply of housing supply.

The geographic spread of development should assist in terms of service provision in urban and rural areas within the District, ensuring that the benefits of development are shared. With an increased population, a greater number of facilities and services should be able to be sustained.

The Plan as appraised would not have any significant negative effects on this objective. "

Given that neither the amount of housing set to be delivered during the plan period, nor the spatial strategy have changed (and assuming that the services and facilities to be provided are linked to the scale of development and consequential contributions) the proposed modifications have **no implications** for the conclusions reached in 2014.

Reduce the need to travel and improve provisions for walking, cycling and public transport and reduce road congestion.

The sustainability questions that underpin this objective are set out below; will the Plan

- Reduce the need to travel through more sustainable patterns of land use and development
- Encourage modal shift to more sustainable forms of travel
- Enable key transport infrastructure improvements

Appraisal of proposed modifications

For East Harwell Campus, the SA Report identified major **positive effects** in that the site “has reasonably good access to shops and services, Didcot town centre and bus routes”. West Harwell Campus and East Hanney were given **minor positive effects** for the same reasons.

The appraisal largely considered the effects allocating these sites might have on the transport system and network. Without the sites being allocated, there is effectively **no effect**, either positive or negative.

Appraisal of the plan as modified

The SA of the Plan concluded that:

*“In terms of Major Positive Effects (i.e. significant effects) on this objective, the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 as appraised achieves a number of these. Specifically, the plan would have **significant effects** on this objective through delivering housing through the settlement hierarchy and in sustainable locations.*

Developments will also deliver transport infrastructure including footpaths, cycleways and other upgrades. These effects are likely to occur over the medium to long-term, essentially due to their dependence on delivery of housing which is dependent on not only to the market status but also through making up the historic undersupply of housing supply.

*The Plan as appraised would have a number of **significant negative effects** on this objective specifically; unallocated sites may be in unsustainable locations; the sliding scale of facilities supports larger facilities in larger settlements (such as employment land and tourism), therefore there may be inducement of traffic via cars to these facilities. These effects are likely to be long-term due to the market status but also to the prioritisation of other strategic sites.*

*A further **negative** (though not significant) change is that the Didcot A policy does not retain reference to its strategic position as a railhead on the Great Western Main Line, which should be retained if possible in order to use sustainable transport for freight.”*

It is considered that the proposed main modifications to the Plan do not materially affect the outcome of the Plan policies or the findings of the SA. This is because many of the effects originally predicted through the SA were caused by development; ergo the lack of development on the omitted sites would result in no change to the baseline.

Improve the health and wellbeing of Vale residents.

The sustainability questions that underpin this objective are set out below; will the Plan:

- Provide and enhance the provision of community access to green infrastructure, in accordance with national standards?
- Reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social activities, and reduce fear of crime?

Appraisal of proposed modifications

In the 2014 SA Report, the allocation of East Harwell Campus was considered to have **minor positive effects** whilst the allocation of East Hanney was considered to have **neutral effects**. In both cases, the removal of the sites from the Plan would mean **no effect**. Receptors around the sites might forgo benefits that would have arisen from development but there is a high level of uncertainty as to the significance of these.

With regard to North West Harwell Campus, the SA Report had identified that there would likely be **major negative** effects due to "...reasonably poor access to a GP, open space and Leisure Centre." As above, the removal of potential development essentially means there is no effect and the negative effects it allocations may have generated have been avoided.

Appraisal of the plan as modified

The SA of the Plan concluded that:

*"In terms of Major Positive Effects (i.e. significant effects) on this objective, the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 as appraised achieves a number of these. Specifically, the plan would have **significant effects** on this objective through creating improved living conditions, greater housing choice, increased access to employment and correlating improvements to health; and a net gain in green infrastructure. These effects are likely to occur over the medium to long-term, essentially due to the delivery of housing which is dependent on not only to the market status but also through making up the historic undersupply of housing supply. The policies in LPP1 are considered to lead to positive effects in terms of health and wellbeing through delivering appropriate levels of infrastructure to address deficiencies in the Vale. This should result in significant positive effects.*

The Plan as appraised would not have any significant negative effects on this objective."

It is considered that the proposed main modifications to the Plan do not materially affect the outcome of the Plan policies or the findings of the SA. This is because many of the effects originally predicted through the SA were caused by development; ergo the lack of development on the omitted sites would result in no change to the baseline.

Reduce inequality, poverty and social exclusion in the Vale, and raise educational achievement and skills levels.

The sustainability questions that underpin this objective are set out below; will the Plan:

- Promote regeneration of deprived areas;
- Improve opportunities and facilities for all types of learning;
- Encourage an available and skilled workforce which:
 - meets the needs of existing and future employers;
 - reduces skills inequalities;
 - helps address skills shortages.

Appraisal of proposed modifications

It is not considered that any of the proposed Main Modifications would have any material effect on the Plan outcomes relating to this objective (i.e. they all scored minor negative, neutral or no effect in the 2014 SA Report).

Appraisal of the plan as modified

The SA of the Plan concluded that:

*"In terms of Major Positive Effects (i.e. significant effects) on this objective, the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 as appraised achieves a number of these. Specifically, the plan would have **significant effects** through providing a significant quantum of housing in mixed communities. The plan would also provide employment land and should lead to job creation in the Vale. The provision of affordable housing should result in reductions in housing deprivation. The plan in allowing additional job creation across the vale should address the deprivation at the edge of settlements. The plan will also address education and social exclusion through access to services and facilities. These effects are likely to occur over the medium to long-term.*

The plan would strengthen regeneration efforts through allocating development at a number of settlements. Additionally, through seeking to meet housing need in full, the delivery of and contribution towards education facilities should help to increase access to education across the Vale. The major and strategic sites coming forward through the plan will be required to contribute towards infrastructure provision which should improve access to education, as well as other social and community facilities.

The Plan as appraised would not have any significant negative effects on this objective."

It is considered that the proposed main modifications to the Plan do not materially affect the outcome of the Plan policies or the findings of the SA.

Support a strong and sustainable economy within the Vale's towns and rural areas.

The sustainability questions that underpin this objective are set out below; will the Plan:

- Promote economic growth and a diverse and resilient economy;
- Provide opportunities for all employers to access:
 - different types and sizes of accommodation;
 - flexible employment space; and
 - high quality communications infrastructure.
- Build on the knowledge-based and high tech economy in the Central Oxfordshire and Science Vale UK area, including the Science Vale UK Enterprise Zone; and
- Promote and support a strong network of towns and villages and the rural economy.

Appraisal of proposed modifications

The allocation of East Harwell Campus and North of Harwell Campus were considered in the 2014 SA to have "...**major positive effects** in terms of the economy as it is well-located for access to employment sites and Didcot town centre." The allocation of East Hanney was considered to have **minor positive effects** as "...it is well-located for access to employment sites and Wantage town centre." In regard to the effects of removing these allocations, there would be **no effect** and the baseline conditions would remain.

Appraisal of the plan as modified

The SA of the Plan concluded that:

*"In terms of Major Positive Effects (i.e. significant effects) on this objective, the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 as appraised achieves a number of these. Specifically, the plan would have **significant effects** through; sufficient good quality houses encouraging more skilled workers to the Vale; provision of additional jobs in Wantage, Grove and Faringdon; delivering and enabling infrastructure; retaining flexibility and capturing overnight spend. These effects are likely to occur over the medium to long-term, essentially due to their dependence on delivery of housing which is dependent on not only to the market status but also through making up the historic undersupply of housing supply.*

The LPP1 policies support the economy through delivering an increased number of houses. This should increase local spending power (through an increased local population) and also support affordability, with benefits in terms of increased disposable income. The strategic sites allow growth at a number of the larger settlements in the District, which should spread the benefits of growth across a wider area than was previously the case.

The Plan as appraised would not have any significant negative effects on this objective."

It is considered that the proposed main modifications to the Plan do not materially affect the outcome of the Plan policies or the findings of the SA.

Improve and protect the natural environment including biodiversity, water and soil quality.

The sustainability questions that underpin this objective are set out below; will the Plan:

- Protect and enhance natural habitats, wildlife, biodiversity and geodiversity;
- Protect the integrity of European sites and other designated nature conservation sites;
- Encourage the creation of new habitats and features for wildlife;
- Prevent isolation/fragmentation and re-connect / de-fragment habitats;
- Enhance water quality and help to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive;
- Protect groundwater resources; and
- Minimise and reduce the potential for exposure of people to ground pollution.

Appraisal of proposed modifications

The allocation of the East Harwell Campus and North Harwell Campus sites was appraised in the 2014 SA Report as having a **neutral effect**. East Hanney was appraised as having a "...**major negative effect** in terms of the natural environment. It is in close proximity to an important wildlife corridor" in either case, the effect of the proposed Main Modifications is 'no effect' and the baseline conditions would prevail.

Appraisal of the plan as modified

The SA of the Plan concluded that:

*"In terms of Major Positive Effects (i.e. significant effects) on this objective, the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 as appraised achieves a number of these. Specifically, the plan would have **significant effects** through: the provision of text naming amenity greenspace in the definition of 'necessary infrastructure'; specifying that there should be 'net gains' in biodiversity and green infrastructure not only with regard to individual sites but also through connecting and restoring habitats. These effects are likely to occur over the medium to long-term, essentially due to their dependence on delivery of housing which is dependent on not only to the market status but also through making up the historic undersupply of housing supply.*

The LPP1 policies are considered to result in benefits in terms of biodiversity through providing opportunities to create new habitat and strategic green infrastructure linkages to re-connect habitats. The strategic sites have detailed site templates which require mitigation to lead to no adverse effects and contribute to a net gain in biodiversity.

The Plan as appraised would not have any significant negative effects on this objective."

It is considered that the proposed main modifications to the Plan do not materially affect the outcome of the Plan policies or the findings of the SA.

Protect the cultural heritage and provide a high quality townscape and landscape.

The sustainability questions that underpin this objective are set out below; will the Plan:

- Protect and enhance archaeology and heritage assets, and areas of sensitive landscape including AONB and Green Belt.
- Improve access to, and enjoyment, understanding and use of cultural assets where this will not cause harm

Appraisal of proposed modifications

The allocation of East Harwell Campus and North Harwell Campus sites was considered to have a **major negative effect** and **minor negative effect** respectively in the 2014 SA Report. East Harwell Campus "...has a low landscape capacity and is located partly within the AONB." East Hanney was considered to have a "...**major negative effect** in terms of cultural heritage, townscape and landscape. It is in close proximity to listed building and development would lead to visual impacts to the wider landscape."

In either case, the effect of the main modifications is 'no effect' and the baseline conditions would prevail.

Appraisal of the plan as modified

The SA of the Plan concluded that:

*"In terms of Major Positive Effects (i.e. significant effects) on this objective, the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 as appraised achieves a number of these. Specifically, the plan would have **significant effects** through ensuring a higher quality townscape and more sympathetic development; an improved townscape in the Botley area; provision of green infrastructure and achieving a net gain in biodiversity. These effects are likely to occur over the medium to long-term, as they are (in part) dependent on the improvement of Botley town centre and development at Harwell Oxford Campus which are strategic schemes that will likely to take longer to deliver.*

The Plan has been appraised to have no significant negative effects."

It is considered that the proposed main modifications to the Plan do not materially affect the outcome of the Plan policies or the findings of the 2014 SA Report.

Reduce air, noise and light pollution.

The sustainability questions that underpin this objective are set out below; will the Plan:

- Minimise and reduce the potential for exposure of people to noise, air and light pollution.

Appraisal of proposed modifications

The SA Report 2014 concluded for East Harwell Campus and North Harwell Campus that allocating the site would result in "...a **major negative effect** in terms of air, noise and light pollution. The scale of growth would likely increase traffic and air, noise and light pollution however they are not appraised to be significant due to other mitigating policies in the plan." and "The site [North Harwell Campus] was appraised to have a **major negative effect** in terms of air, noise and light pollution. The scale of growth would likely increase traffic and air, noise and light pollution however they are not appraised to be significant due to other mitigating policies in the plan. Any development would have a significant impact on the tranquillity on the AONB." With regard to East Hanney, the SA Report 2014 identified **minor negative effects**.

By removing these allocations the negative effects identified are negated and there is **no effect** identified; baseline conditions would continue.

Appraisal of the plan as modified

The SA of the Plan concluded that:

"The policies in LPP1 have the potential to increase air pollution within the District's AQMAs; however mitigation measures should prevent this from being a major effect. Additionally, the decision to allocate development at East Harwell Oxford Campus (in the AONB) would likely result in residual negative effects in terms of light and noise pollution in a tranquil area, even after the extensive mitigation measures proposed in the site template and LVIA mitigation strategy are implemented.

The Local Plan 2031 Part 1 is unlikely to have significant effects, either positive or negative, for this objective."

It is considered that the proposed main modifications to the Plan do not materially affect the outcome of the Plan policies or the findings of the 2014 SA Report.

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the use of resources and improve resource efficiency.

The sustainability questions that underpin this objective are set out below; will the Plan:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Re-use existing buildings;
- Promote development on previously developed land and minimise land use;
- Encourage sustainable, low carbon building practices and design;
- Reduce energy use;
- Promote renewable energy generation;
- Reduce water use;
- Provide adequate infrastructure to ensure the sustainable supply of water and disposal of sewerage; and
- Maximise opportunities for reuse, recycling and minimising waste.

Appraisal of proposed modifications

The allocation of East Harwell Campus was predicted in the 2014 SA Report to result in “...**minor negative effects** in terms of climate change and flooding. The site would result in the loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land. The site contains a small area of flood risk and is required to undergo a site-specific flood risk assessment in order to ensure flood risk is not increased.” The allocation of land North of Harwell Campus would result in “...a **minor negative effect** due to the loss of greenfield land and by increasing the local population which is likely to increase resource use; although mitigating policies are likely to improve resource efficiency as a result.” The allocation of East Hanney was predicted to result in “...a **minor negative effect** due to the loss of greenfield land and by increasing the local population which is likely to increase resource use; although mitigating policies are likely to improve resource efficiency as a result.”

The result of not allocating these sites is that the baseline conditions will remain. This would result in **no effect**.

Appraisal of the plan as modified

The SA of the Plan concluded that:

“In terms of Major Positive Effects (i.e. significant effects) on this objective, the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 as appraised achieves a number of these. Specifically, the plan would have significant effects through building at a higher density; using brownfield land where possible and the promotion of renewable energy. These effects are likely to occur over the medium to long-term, essentially due to their dependence on delivery of housing which is dependent on not only to the market status but also through making up the historic undersupply of housing supply. The policies in LPP1 are considered to lead to an increase in the total emissions and resource use of the Vale through an increased population; however per capita use is likely to decrease with the policy approach of LPP1. The design policies should help reduce emissions from transport by encouraging sustainable transport and promoting buildings that minimise energy consumption. Some of the additional sites have the potential to lead to negative effects in terms of sterilising mineral resources.

The Plan has been appraised to not have any significant negative effects.”

It is considered that the proposed main modifications to the Plan do not materially affect the outcome of the Plan policies or the findings of the SA.

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Increase resilience to climate change and flooding.

The sustainability questions that underpin this objective are set out below; will the Plan:

- Minimise and reduce flood risk to people and property;
- Respond to the likelihood of future warmer summers, wetter winters, and more extreme weather events;
- Minimise development on high quality agricultural land; and
- Provide for local needs locally.

Appraisal of proposed modifications

The allocation of East Harwell Campus was predicted to lead to “...**minor negative effects** in terms of climate change and flooding. The site would result in the loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land. The site contains a small area of flood risk and is required to undergo a site-specific flood risk assessment in order to ensure flood risk is not increased.”

The allocation of North Harwell Campus was predicted to “...lead to **minor negative effects** in terms of climate change and flooding. The site would result in the loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land. The site contains a small area of flood risk and is required to undergo a site-specific flood risk assessment in order to ensure flood risk is not increased.”

The allocation of East Hanney was predicted to “...lead to a neutral effect in terms of climate change and flooding. The site could result in the loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land. The site contains a small area of flood risk and is required to undergo a site-specific flood risk assessment in order to ensure flood risk is not increased.”

The removal of these allocations will remove two minor negative effects on one neutral effect. Given that these sites will not now be allocated there is **no effect** and baseline conditions will remain.

Appraisal of the plan as modified

The SA of the Plan concluded that:

“In terms of Major Positive Effects (i.e. significant effects) on this objective, the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 as appraised achieves a number of these. Specifically, the plan would have significant effects through: the adoption of sustainable design techniques and the implementation of green infrastructure. These effects may be felt from the short-term through to the longer term. However, the greater the level of development the greater the effects will be. A number of sites are allocated on the Best and Most Versatile land in the District. The decision to allocate sites on such land will require careful justification.”

It is considered that the proposed main modifications to the Plan do not materially affect the outcome of the Plan policies or the findings of the SA.

Conclusions at this stage

The overall conclusions of the 2014 SA Report were set out in Table 33.1 'Identified significant negative effects and mitigation measures'. There were two significant effects of the Plan identified, neither of which is relevant to the policies subject to appraisal in this SA Addendum. It is concluded that the main modifications have **no effect** on the conclusion of the 2014 SA Report.

Monitoring

No further significant effects have been identified therefore the monitoring proposals set out in Table 36.1: 'Measures envisaged concerning monitoring' of the 2014 SA Report remains unchanged.

Next steps

The next step is for the Inspector to consider the representations raised as part of the consultation, alongside this SA Report Addendum, before deciding whether he is in a position to write his report on the Plan's soundness.

Assuming that the Inspector is able to find the Plan 'sound', it will then be formally adopted by the Council. At the time of adoption an 'SA Adoption Statement' will be published that explains the process of plan-making / SA in full and presents 'measures decided concerning monitoring' for the Plan. There are no implications for monitoring related to the main modifications.

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Appendix A: Main modifications SA screening

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Schedule of Main Modifications

Chapter 1

MainModNo.	Category	Core Policy No.	Para No.	Page No. of Strike-through Plan	Reason for Change	SA implications
MM1	Paragraph 1.1	N/A	1.1	Local Plan 13	To accord with the Council's updated Local Development Scheme.	None. This is a clarification of the content of LPP2
MM2	Paragraph 1.1	N/A	1.1	Local Plan 13	To accord with the Council's updated Local Development Scheme.	None. Added reference to another DPD.
MM3	Policy wording	CP2	1.24 – 1.28	Local Plan 19 - 24	To reflect the request from the Inspector to the Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxford City Council to consider the timing in which the Council would be able to prepare a plan, whether or not the reference to completion refers to submission or adoption and the implications if a plan was not prepared by the given timeframe.	None. This is an issue of timing rather than outcome

Chapter 4

Main ModNo.	Category	Core Policy No.	Para No.	Page No. of Strike-through Plan	Reason for Change	SA implications
MM4	Policy Wording	Core Policy 3	N/A	Local Plan 48-49	To provide clarity and consistency.	None. This is a clarification.
MM5	Policy Wording – Table	Core Policy 4	N/A	Local Plan 51 - 52	To reflect the Inspector's Interim Findings	Yes. This main modification (with MM12) removes three sites from the plan and 1,600 dwellings. This will need to be considered in the SA.
MM5	CP4 – Meeting our housing needs	CP4	Para 3	Local Plan 53	To provide clarity.	None. This is a clarification.
MM5	CP4 – Meeting our housing needs	CP4	New paragraph	Local Plan 53	To provide clarity in relation to the role of the Open Countryside.	None. This is a clarification.
MM6	Policy wording	CP5	4.21 & 4.22	Local Plan 55 - 56	To provide flexibility and clarity over how the ring-fence will be implemented.	Yes. The 'extension of the 'ring-fence' to adjacent areas should be considered in the SA.
MM6	Policy Wording	CP5	N/A	Local Plan 56	To provide flexibility and clarity over how the ring-fence will be implemented.	Yes. The 'extension of the 'ring-fence' to adjacent areas should be considered in the SA.

MM7	Vale of White Horse District Council	N/A	4.23	Local Plan 58 - 60	To provide clarity following a detailed assessment of employment land.	None. This is a clarification.
MM8	Supporting employment text	N/A	4.25	Local Plan 58	To accord with the Council's updated Local Development Scheme and provide clarity.	None. This is a clarification.
MM9	Policy Wording	CP6	N/A	Local Plan 60	To provide clarity.	None. This is a clarification.
MM10	Providing supporting infrastructure and services	N/A	4.41	Local Plan 63	To provide clarity.	None. This is simply a clarification / description of types of infrastructure.
MM11	CP7 – Policy Wording	CP7	N/A	Local Plan 66	To provide clarity.	None. This is a clarification.
MM11	CP7 – Policy Wording	CP7	N/A	Local Plan 66	To provide clarity.	None. This is a clarification.

Chapter 5

Main Mod No.	Category	Core Policy No.	Para No.	Page No. of Strike-through Plan	Reason for Change	SA implications
MM12	Policy Wording – CP8	CP8	N/A	76	To reflect the Inspector's Interim Findings	Yes. See comments for

						MM5.
MM13	Policy Wording – CP9	CP9	N/A	Local Plan 78 – 79	To provide clarity.	None No effect on outcome as a procedural issue
MM14	Core Policy 11: Botley Central Area	CP11	N/A	Local Plan 82 – 83	To provide clarity.	None. This is a clarification.
MM15	Policy Wording	CP12	N/A	Local Plan 85	To provide consistency with the publishing of map E16 in Appendix E.	None. This is a clarification.
MM16	The Oxford Green Belt	N/A	5.41- 5.42	Local Plan 86 – 88	To reflect the Inspector's Interim Findings	None. This is a clarification.
MM16	Policy Wording	CP13	N/A	Local Plan 86 – 88	To provide clarity and consistency.	None. This is a clarification.
MM17	Abingdon and Oxford Fringe Sub Area supporting text	N/A	5.45 – 5.52	Local Plan 88 – 91	To reflect discussion with Thames Water.	None. No links identified in the 2014 SA Report between safeguarding policies and SA Objectives
MM18	Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub – Area	Core Policy 15	N/A	Local Plan 100	To reflect the Inspector's Interim Findings	None. See comments for MM5.
MM19	Didcot A Power Station	Core Policy 16	N/A	Local Plan 104 – 105		None. Criteria added but it is not considered this would materially affect

the SA findings to date.

Chapter 6

MainModNo.	Category	Core Policy No.	Para No.	Page No. of Strike-through Plan	Reason for Change	SA amendments
MM20	Affordable Housing	CP24	N/A	Local Plan 135	To reflect the Inspector's Interim Findings	Yes. Potential effect on affordable housing delivery
MM21	Policy Wording – CP25: Rural Exception Sites	CP25	N/A	Local Plan 136 – 137	To provide clarity.	None. This is a clarification.
MM22	Accommodating current and future needs of the ageing population	CP26		Local Plan 138 – 139	To ensure the Policy is in accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG, section 56).	Yes. Potential effect on quality of new housing.
MM23	Policy Wording CP28: New Employment Development on Unallocated Sites	CP28	N/A	Local Plan 143	To reflect the Inspector's Interim Findings	None. This is a clarification.
MM24	Policy Wording – CP29	CP29	N/A	Local Plan 145 - 146	To enhance the effectiveness of the policy.	None. This is a clarification.
MM25	Policy Wording	CP31	N/A	Local Plan 148	To provide clarity.	None. This is a clarification.
MM26	Policy Wording – CP32	CP32	N/A	Local Plan 150 – 151	To provide greater compatibility between the Local Plan and	None. This is a clarification.

					Neighbourhood plans.	
MM27	Policy Wording	CP33	N/A	Local Plan 154	To provide clarity.	None. This is a clarification.
MM28	Policy Wording	CP37	N/A	Local Plan 163	To ensure consistency with the NPPF (paragraphs 126 and 157).	None. This is a clarification.
MM29	Policy Wording	CP38	N/A	Local Plan 164	To improve how the policy addresses equality matters.	None. Modest improvement to policy but not considered significant enough to subject to SA.
MM30	Policy Wording – CP39	CP39	N/A	Local Plan 166 – 167	To provide clarity.	None. This is a clarification.
MM31	Responding to Climate Change – CP40	CP40		Local Plan 169	To reflect the Inspector's Interim Findings	None. This is a clarification.
MM32	Policy Wording – CP41	CP41	N/A	Local Plan 170	To reflect the House of Commons Written Statement (HCWS42) 18 June 2015.	None. This is a clarification.
MM33	CP43: Natural Resources	CP43	N/A	Local Plan 173	To reflect the Inspectors interim findings	None. This is a clarification.

Chapter 7

Main ModNo.	Category	Core Policy No.	Para No.	Page No. of Strike-through Plan	Reason for Change	SA amendments
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MM34	CP47: Monitoring Framework and supporting text	CP47	7.1 – 7.7	Local Plan 185	To reflect the Inspectors interim findings	None. Procedural change rather than outcome.
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It has been assumed that the changes to the appendices simply articulate the policy main modifications and thus have not been included in this schedule.

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