

16 December 2014

Planning Policy Team

Vale of White Horse District Council

Benson Lane

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Dear Sir/ Madam

Representations on Local Plan 2031 Part 1

The representations are produced with our interest in land in the site West of Stanford in the Vale. We look forward to working with the Council to ensure the early delivery of this sustainable site.

Paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that there is a need for local planning authorities to “*boost significantly the supply of housing*”. The NPPF goes on to state that local planning authorities should “*use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the market area*”.

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) underlines this position and states that “*the local plan should aim to meet the objectively assessed development needs of the area, including the unmet needs of neighbouring areas...*” (Reference 12-002-20140306).

Inspectors have confirmed that in order to meet the aim of boosting significantly the supply of housing in an area that Councils should adopt the higher level of housing whenever a range is set out. Within Oxfordshire this position has been supported by the Inspector at the recent Cherwell Local Plan examination and is a matter that needs to be resolved through this plan period.

The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) published in March 2014 identifies a need for up to 20,560 new homes within the District over the period 2011 – 2031 (1,028 dwellings per annum). Additional housing demand also arises from the housing need unable to be met within Oxford City Council. The emerging plan should take account of this rising demand.

There is ongoing work that will probably require a review of the Local Plan and an increase in housing numbers, and the Council should therefore consider any uplift in housing numbers within identified sites in a positive manner.

Core Policy 4: Meeting our Housing Needs identifies the scale and location of housing to be delivered through strategic sites (more than 200 dwellings) through the plan period. We welcome the support of land to the West of Stanford in the Vale.

Strategic Sites and Policies

Appendix A of the consultation document proposes a series of development templates for strategic sites identified within the emerging Local Plan, including for Land to the West of Stanford in the Vale (Appendix A page 47). It should be noted that initially this land was allocated for 250 homes. There is no technical evidence to suggest that the land cannot accommodate housing numbers in excess of the 200 figure suggested.

Urban design principles

In terms of linkages the south of the site is best place to provide sustainable vehicular/ pedestrian and cycling linkages to the rest of the village. Linkages to the houses to the south of the site will be limited due to the existing planning permission, now under construction, allows for no linkage.

The landscape mitigation should acknowledge the relationship with White Horse Business Park and how development to the west of the allocated land can add to the landscape character of the area.

Utilities

A requirement to 'upgrade the sewer network' needs to be considered through the development control process and not be presented in policy without the necessary evidence.

Access and highways

Access from Ware Road needs to be allowed for to enable good linkages to the employment uses nearby and to allow good links to the High Street.

Financial contributions are anticipated to ensure the improvement to the sustainability credentials of the village and these new homes.

Environmental Health

Assessments will be carried out to carry out environmental assessment to gauge the potential opportunities or constraints in terms of this site.

Landscape Considerations

The need for specific landscape requirements to be imposed in such a broad brush policy. Clearly the landscape strategy for the site will be a respond to analysis and technical constraints.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Will be considered and sustainable urban drainage will be incorporated into any future housing development.

Conclusion

The Local Plan Part 1 accords with the principles of the NPPF in that it will boost significantly the supply of housing in the District. We feel that the overall aim of the development template should be supported however feel that there should be some minor amendments set out above, the allocation could be increased to at least 250 units.

Gleeson intends to consult widely on the proposals in the first part of 2015, with the intention of submitting an outline planning application in 2015.

I look forward to being informed of further progress with the Local Plan.

Yours sincerely

Mark Jackson