

VALE OF WHITE HORSE LOCAL PLAN 2031 (Part 1 Strategic Sites and Policies) EXAMINATION

Stage 1 Matters and Questions (to be considered by the Examiner)

Faringdon Town Council does not believe that the conditions set out in the following Matters are met.

Matter 1 - Duty to Co-operate and Other Legal Requirements

Matter 1.2

Objective 3 in Table 8.1 of the Local Plan's Sustainability Appraisal states: *Reduce the need to travel and improve provisions for walking, cycling and public transport and reduce road congestion.* There is no indication that under the Plan this objective, when applied to Faringdon, would be met.

With little if any increase in employment provision, Faringdon has seen a 15% increase in population between the 2001 and 2011 censuses compared to the national average of 6.9% while the Vale as a whole had only a 4.6% increase; since 2011, housing numbers have grown by a further 12% and, if and when the proposed housing allocations are built, the housing stock will have increased by 50% since the 2011 census. Although this future development cannot take place until after April 2017 when the sewage treatment works is to be upgraded, the additional housing will increase the population from 7,121 in 2011 to around 11,000 with currently no identified employment opportunities (or, it has to be said, no commensurate improvements in infrastructure and facilities apart from a new primary school).

Although it has been suggested that there will be significant increases in employment opportunities within the Vale as a whole it should be noted that these housing allocations are located some 20 miles away from the proposed major employment sites in the Science Vale Oxford area and there is no direct public transport link between there and Faringdon. It appears that Objective 3 cannot be met if Option G of the Plan allocates 950 houses to Faringdon, but only 1,000 to Abingdon which is significantly closer to the proposed employment growth and is a more sustainable town with a population some four times greater than Faringdon's.