

# **Examination in Public Statement Stage 1 - Matters and Questions**

**In respect of:**  
Matter 3 - Spatial Strategy and Housing Supply Ring Fence

**On behalf of:**  
Welbeck Strategic Land



# 1.0 Response

1.1. McLoughlin Planning is instructed by Welbeck Strategic Land (WSL) to make written representations to the Vale of White Horse (VoWH) Local Plan Examination in respect of its land and development interests in Shrivenham.

1.2. This document sets out WSL's position in respect of the Stage 1 questions posed by the Inspector for Matter 3

## **Question 3.1 (a) Is the proposed distribution of new housing and employment land (policies CP4 and CP6) soundly based?**

1.3. In terms of WSL's interests at North Shrivenham, it considers that the approach is soundly based.

1.4. The level and distribution of new housing has been proposed to meet the tests of soundness as follows:

### *Positively Prepared*

1.5. The distribution strategy is positively prepared in that it directs 500 homes to WSL's North Shrivenham allocation. The allocation of the site will assist the Council in meeting its OAN as set out in the Oxfordshire SHMA. As part of the preparation of this SHMA, the Oxfordshire Authorities have acknowledged that Oxford City may have difficulties meeting their housing need. Within the Local Plan, the Council have included a consideration for assisting the City in meeting their need if it is required.

### *Justified*

1.6. The evidence base has assessed the suitability of the strategy and the distribution of housing. A number of scenarios were put forward as part of the Issues and Options stage, with the preferred being set out in the Preferred Options Consultation in 2009 (Core Document TOP02 section 3). These were followed by internal reviews within the Council due to the revised evidence base and the increased need for housing. This revised housing need and distribution has been subject to a number of public consultations since 2013 that have justified the need and locations of allocations.

### *Effective*

1.7. In order for the distribution strategy to be sound, it has to be effective and this means that allocations have to be deliverable. In respect of North Shrivenham, part of the allocation already benefits from a resolution to grant consent in accordance with this emerging plan. Once consented, the site will be sold to a developer and built out at 50 to 100 dwellings per annum. This means that the site can be delivered within the plan period.

### *Consistent with National Policy*



- 1.8. The allocation of land at North Shrivenham will constitute sustainable development. As set out within the outline planning applications for the site, the development of the site has been found to be consistent with the three dimensions of sustainable development.

**In particular: (a) Does the proposed distribution of housing set out in policy CP4 appropriately reflect the settlement hierarchy (policy CP3)...**

- 1.9. WSL supports the settlement hierarchy as set out within CP3. The hierarchy has been based on the evidence base developed by the Council to support the Local Plan (Core Documents TOP02 and COM04). The purpose of the hierarchy is to consider all settlements within the District and identify the most sustainable locations for development. The assessment of the settlements, as part of a series of topics, has assisted the Council in defining a hierarchy of the most suitable locations for new development. The settlements have been classified on their facilities, characteristics and functional relationship with the surrounding area. Within the Local Plan (para. 4.14), the Council state that the selection process for the strategic allocations is contained within the topic papers. For WSL's allocation at North Shrivenham, Figure 5.2 in Topic Paper 02 identified that the 'Building on our Strengths' sustainable strategy supported allocating strategic housing growth in Shrivenham to help maintain the vibrant community.
- 1.10. Within the evidence base, Shrivenham has been identified as suitable to accommodate additional growth. This is due to the existing level of services and facilities within the village and its connectivity (evidence base COM4).
- 1.11. The 2031 Local Plan sees a significant change for Shrivenham, when compared to the current 2011 Local Plan. Within the previous local plan, the level of development for Shrivenham was limited to locations within the settlement. However, to maintain such an approach is not in accordance with paragraph 55 of the Framework or the need for the Plan to meet its OAN. Due to the current five year housing land supply situation, this has seen speculative development sites around the village being considered. Through the 2031 Local Plan, the Council is seeking to address this through the allocation of North Shrivenham and support it as a sustainable urban extension. This approach accords with paragraph 55 of the NPPF as it will locate housing in a sustainable location where it will enhance the vitality of the existing community and the provision of services within the settlement.



...and the core planning principle of the NPPF (para 17) to actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling,

- 1.12. In respect of North Shrivenham, WSL consider that the distribution strategy in CP4 and CP6 is soundly based when assessed against the above core planning principle. In supporting this position, WSL wish to make the following points.
- 1.13. The North Shrivenham allocation has already been subject to a considerable program of discussions and a planning application for the southern half of the allocation. At the outset, the connectivity of the allocation was a key factor in determining the design of development. During these stages, the connectivity has been discussed. The approved masterplan for the southern half of the allocation has includes pedestrian and cycle links connecting the development to the village and the wider area. The site is well located in terms of existing facilities, being located within walking and cycling distance of the High Street which has a range of existing services and facilities. These include, but are not limited to the following:
- A primary school
  - Convenience store
  - Church
  - Restaurant
  - Post office
  - Bank
  - GP practice
  - Village hall
  - Accessible local employment
  - Accessible public transport.
- 1.14. On site, a considerable amount of public open space has been planned, this will be open for existing and new residents to use for recreation purposes. Around Shrivenham, the Parish Council have set up a number of recreational walks, including some that use the public rights of way that cross the allocated site. It is proposed that these routes will not be affected by the development, and an additional circular



walk will be created linking the existing footpaths and proposed areas of public open space together.

- 1.15. The design of the layout of the allocation has sought to promote access to the village centre and school by walking and cycling means. Routes will follow desire lines and provide realistic and logical alternatives to the private car to access the day-to-day services provided within Shrivenham.
- 1.16. The surrounding highway network is suitable for safe cycle journeys, providing sustainable access to Shrivenham and beyond, including employment in Watchfield.
- 1.17. A regular public transport service already exists that this allocation will further support. Bus stops are located within 400m of the southern edge of the allocation, and additionally, the allocation will deliver improvements to local bus stops to make them even more attractive to residents and provide financial contributions to facilitate continued enhancements to service frequency.

**...and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable?**

- 1.18. The delivering of 500 new dwellings this allocation will increase the dwelling stock by approximately 50% over the number of households identified in the 2011 census. This significant increase, has the benefit of maintaining Shrivenham as a sustainable location for development. The wide range of existing services and facilities within the village are identified within the Town and Village Facilities Study, February 2014 update (Core Document COM4). This rated Shrivenham as the 7<sup>th</sup> most sustainable settlement within the District.
- 1.19. Topic Paper 3, Strategic Sites Selection (Core Document TOP03) includes a summary of the methodology undertaken for all the sites considered. As part of the 2013 site selection methodology and the Draft Local Plan 2029 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies (Core Document PLP02), Shrivenham was identified as one of the more sustainable villages in the Vale. The confirmation of Shrivenham as an existing sustainable location has carried through the Housing Delivery Update (PLP01.1) in February 2014 and the Submission Version of the Local Plan.
- 1.20. The allocation is in accordance with paragraph 55 of the NPPF in this respect, and 28 as the allocated site will support economic growth in this settlement, and, retain the existing local services as well as develop additional facilities and services.

**3.3 Is it feasible that a significantly different distribution of housing development from that proposed could be delivered?**

- 1.21. For Shrivenham, there are a number of infrastructure issues that limit the location where new development can be accommodated.



- 1.22. The main benefit of the North Shrivenham allocation to the village and the surrounding area is the delivery of a larger school site. The Council have looked creatively into the North Shrivenham allocation. The allocation will deal with an acute primary education shortage within the settlement and catchment area. This solution only came about through the security that WSL can provide in delivering this allocation. This has already been secured through the resolution to grant of the southern half of the allocation and will be delivered as part of the allocation.
- 1.23. The site is not subject to any other technical barriers to development and therefore, its allocation is beneficial to the Council to meet their housing supply as well as supporting the local community.
- 1.24. The allocation will not be constrained by the existing foul drainage network within the village. A new direct foul drainage connection to Faringdon Road will provide adequate capacity without detrimentally impacting on the existing foul drainage network.
- 1.25. The allocation will facilitate improved access to the A420 .
- 1.26. The masterplan of the allocation is landscape led and will provide a significant amount of public open space. This will provide areas for recreation, both formal and informal. Additionally, wildlife corridors are being incorporated along existing transition routes in and around the site.
- 1.27. The allocation of North Shrivenham has been recognised by the local Parish Council, through engagement with the local Community, it is understood that this site is the preferred location in the village for new development. It is well connected to the existing settlement and services and facilities within it. The allocation will maximise this connectivity through multiple pedestrian and cycle links through to the village core and deliver improvements to local public transport infrastructure and service provision.
- 1.28. In addition to the school area, the allocation will provide sports pitch areas within the POS to the south. These will be for the benefit of the existing population as well as those moving to the allocation. The additional pitches will support those already provided within the village and managed by the Parish Council. They will be of benefit to the existing clubs in the village who have requested that additional pitches are provided as the existing are heavily used and conflicts exist between sports trying to use the existing available space.





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