

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1

Examination

Statement by Vale of White Horse District Council

Stage 1 – Main Strategic Issues

Matter 3 – Spatial Strategy and Housing Supply Ring Fence

August 2015

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Inspectors Question:

3.1: Is the proposed distribution of new housing and employment land (Policies CP4 and CP6) soundly based?

In particular:

- (a) Does the proposed distribution of housing set out in Policy CP4 appropriately reflect the settlement hierarchy (Policy CP3) and the core planning principles of the NPPF (Para 17) to actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable?
- (b) Does the distribution appropriately reflect the role of Oxford in providing for employment and services for the residents of Vale of White Horse?

3.1 a:

- 3.1.1 The Council considers that it's approach to the distribution of housing and employment not only reflects the proposed settlement hierarchy, but also fully reflects the wider Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire, and the core planning principles set out with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 3.1.2 The proposed Settlement Hierarchy is set out within Core Policy 3. This makes it clear that the district's three Market Towns have the greatest long-term potential for development, followed by the two Local Service Centre's. The district's Larger Villages form the third tier of settlement, followed by Smaller Villages, where development should be 'modest and proportionate in scale and primarily be to meet local needs'¹.
- 3.1.3 The Settlement Hierarchy itself has been informed by a detailed assessment of the services and facilities each settlement has to offer². The study clearly demonstrates that the Market Towns and Local Service Centre's feature the widest range of facilities. However, the proposed distribution of housing has been informed by a much wider evidence base and to meet a number of core principles, which include to:

¹ EIP Library Ref: DLPO1 - Vale of White Horse District Council (2014) Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – Core Policy 2, pg 18. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2014-1027%2001%20VOWHDC%20Local%20Plan%202031%20Contents-Chapters%201.pdf>

² EIP Library Ref: ECO03 - Vale of White Horse District Council (2014). Town and Village Facilities Study (Updated February 2014). Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=447616856&CODE=3318F74BF5E230ABD5D72F219B49E0B8

- Fully meet the identified Objectively Assessed Need of 20,560 homes as set out in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment³
- Accord with the wider strategies for Oxfordshire, including for example, the Oxford City Deal and Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan. In particular, to support the ‘accelerated’ growth of housing that is ‘fundamental’ to the delivery of innovation led growth⁴, and to focus on the locality priority of Science Vale, the southern arm of the ‘Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine’, the majority of which is located within the Vale of White Horse⁵, and
- Accord with national planning policy and guidance including the core principles of planning (NPPF Para 17).

3.1.4 The proposed distribution of housing is set out within Core Policy 4. This provides for 13,960 homes to be strategic allocations within the Local Plan Part 1. Of this number, 10,050 homes (72 %) are allocated at Market Towns or Local Service Centre’s (see **Appendix 1**)⁶, thus clearly demonstrating strong conformity with the Settlement Hierarchy.

3.1.5 The remaining 3,910 homes (28 %) are allocated at Larger Villages. However, of this number, 1,400 homes (10 %) are allocated at Harwell Campus and adjoin the Enterprise Zone, which is a highly sustainable location with excellent access to sustainable modes of transport.

3.1.6 The wider strategies for Oxfordshire, including the Oxford City Deal and Strategic Economic Plan are particularly pertinent, as described above, they highlight the ‘fundamental’ need to support housing delivery and the focus, within the Vale of White Horse, on Science Vale. Two further evidence strands are particularly relevant in this regard:

- Science Vale Housing and Employment Study (Oct 2014)⁷, and
- Meeting the ‘Objectively Assessed Need’ for Housing (Oct 2014)⁸.

³ **EIP Library Ref: HOU1** - GL Hearn Ltd. (2014) Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454436532&CODE=18AD275F4CA886534D066A0B3050E94F

⁴ **EIP Library Ref: TRA04** - Deputy Prime Minister's Office of State for the Cabinet (Cities and Constitution) The Rt Hon Nick Clegg MP Cabinet Office (2014) Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/city-deal-oxford-and-oxfordshire>

⁵ **EIP Library Ref: ECO10** - Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan (2014) Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan Driving Economic Growth Through Innovation. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=447617072&CODE=AAC65B5B887900C828455DC421EEA552

⁶ These allocations all adjoin the existing built edge of the Market Towns or Local Service Centre’s, however some fall within the administrative areas of adjoining parishes – this is illustrated more clearly within **Appendix 1**.

⁷ **EIP Library Ref DLPO1** - Vale of White Horse District Council (2014) Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – Core Policy 2, pg 18. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2014-10-27%2001%20VOWHD%20Local%20Plan%202031%20Contents-Chapters%201.pdf>

⁸ **EIP Library Ref: HOU2** - GL Hearn Ltd. (2014) Science Vale Housing and Employment Study. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454436530&CODE=18AD275F4CA886532CA39D55D2EE17C9

- 3.1.7 The first of these studies considers the need for housing within the Science Vale area (within the Vale District) to match the projected employment growth in this area. It is notable therefore that the Vale's proposed housing distribution is 'fully' meeting the identified need for housing within Science Vale, and 10,320 homes (74 %) are allocated on strategic sites to this area. The approach is therefore clearly in accordance with the objectives of the Oxford City Deal and Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan⁹.
- 3.1.8 The second of these studies considered the council's ability to deliver the Objectively Assessed Need for housing, a challenging task given the average annual delivery over the past five year period is 480, and the annual requirement for the plan period is 1,028. Nonetheless, the study concludes that with the 'wide range of sites in a range of locations – the Council will be maximizing the likelihood of delivery'¹⁰. In other words, the inclusion within the Local Plan of smaller strategic sites at Larger Villages, helps to make a valuable contribution to 'delivery' and thus forms an important component of the proposed housing distribution.
- 3.1.9 The proposed housing distribution can therefore be seen to be:
- highly consistent with the Settlement Hierarchy with 72 % of growth allocated to Market Towns or Local Service Centre's
 - in accordance with the Oxford City Deal and Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan by fully meeting the need for housing with the Science Vale area with 74 % of strategic growth allocated to this location, and
 - allocating a mix of sites, of different sizes, and at different locations, so as to support housing delivery. This is important to ensure the Objectively Assessed Need is met in full, and to meet the wider objectives of the Oxford City Deal and Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan to support innovation led growth.
- 3.1.10 Turning to the second part of Question 3.1 concerning the core planning principles of the NPPF (Para 17) and in particular, principle 11, which considers the use of sustainable modes of transport and 'focusing significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable'¹¹.

⁹ **EIP Library Ref: HOU03** - HDH Planning & Development Ltd (2014) Meeting Objectively Assessed Need for Housing. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454436539&CODE=18AD275F4CA88653E76B6C801AEAF6B7

¹⁰ **EIP Library Ref: HOU03** - HDH Planning & Development Ltd (2014) Meeting Objectively Assessed Need for Housing. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454436539&CODE=18AD275F4CA88653E76B6C801AEAF6B7

¹¹ **EIP Library Ref: LNP02** - Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Framework Policy Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454435957&CODE=D783542CC637214444B18CC070629BE5

- 3.1.11 It has already been demonstrated that 72 % of strategic growth is directed to the Market Towns and Local Services Centre's, which have been identified to have the greatest range of services and facilities, and are considered to offer greatest potential for the use of sustainable modes of transport¹².
- 3.1.12 Furthermore, 74 % of strategic growth is directed to Science Vale, the southern part of the 'Knowledge Spine' and one of the main localities for investment in Oxfordshire¹³, which includes a comprehensive programme of transport related investment¹⁴. An example includes 'Science Transit' an ambitious programme to connect sites across the Oxfordshire 'Knowledge Spine', including for example a minimum level of public transport between sites, of 4 per hour, with a maximum journey time of 30 minutes¹⁵.
- 3.1.13 The Council have worked in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), the local Highways Authority, to jointly prepare an Estimated Transport Impacts (ETI) Study, which has informed each stage of preparing the Local Plan. Furthermore, OCC have developed the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 4, which sets out a comprehensive programme of highway, public transport and cycling investment and enhancements, which in the Vale, are particularly focused on accessing Science Vale and Oxford¹⁶. Support for the proposed distribution of housing and its consistency with LTP 4 is also set out by OCC within the Statement of Common Ground between the Vale of White Horse and OCC¹⁷.
- 3.1.14 The strength of the proposed distribution within the plan for housing and employment to sustainable locations that are accessible to sustainable forms of transport, is supported by the fact that only 12 % of strategic growth is directed to Larger Villages outside of Science Vale. Of this figure, 7 % is allocated to four Larger Villages within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area that all benefit from

¹² **EIP Library Ref: COM04** - Vale of White Horse District Council. (2014). Town and Villages Facility Study (Updated February 2014) Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454435782&CODE=CD631B44A6652ECB8A225988A126F2E3

¹³ **EIP Library Ref: ECO10** - Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan (2014) Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan Driving Economic Growth Through Innovation. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=447617072&CODE=AAC65B5B887900C828455DC421EEA552

¹⁴ **EIP Library Ref: DLP07** – Vale of White Horse District Council (2014) Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=447617219&CODE=3A803AFD84F14E582B7E174FB0F355BC

¹⁵ **EIP Library Ref: ECO10** - Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan (2014) Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan Driving Economic Growth Through Innovation. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=447617072&CODE=AAC65B5B887900C828455DC421EEA552

¹⁶ **EIP Library Ref: TRA03** - Oxfordshire County Council (2014) Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2030. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=FolderView&ID=454436145&CODE=444985997D29C52CEA5EA89FB894E7F4&NAME=TRA03+Oxfordshire+Local+Transport+Plan+2011++2030&REF=LOCAL%20PLAN%202031%20PART%201%20EXAMINATION%20LIBRARY>

¹⁷ **EIP Library Ref: SCG01** Vale of White Horse District Council & Oxfordshire County Council (2015). Vale of White Horse Local (Part 1) 2011-2031 Stage 1 September 2015. Statement of Common Ground between Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxfordshire County Council. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk>

excellent public transport connectivity. Of the remaining 5 % of strategic growth, this is directed to two Larger Villages within the Western Vale Sub-Area, with 3.5 % at Shrivenham that benefits from the Route 66 Premium bus service between Swindon and Oxford. This service already operates three services an hour and is proposed to move to a four buses an hour service¹⁸.

3.1 b:

3.1.15 The Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1 does successfully reflect the role of Oxford. After the Science Vale area, which as described above accommodates 74 % of proposed strategic housing to reflect the wider strategies for Oxfordshire, including the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan (discussed further within Statement 3.1a); it is the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe area that takes the next highest level of proposed growth, around 15 %.

3.1.16 Indeed, the inclusion of the 'Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area', within the plan, as the name suggests, fully acknowledges the geographical proximity and role of Oxford city to this part of the Vale district, and this is clearly set out within the plan¹⁹. This functional relationship is perhaps strongest at Botley where the role of Oxford has been considered, including for example, informing proposals for the Harcourt Hill Campus of Oxford Brookes University and for retailing in the Botley Core area²⁰.

3.1.17 Within the Draft Local Plan published for consultation in 2013, it was stated that 'first consideration' should be given to the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area should additional sources of housing need to be identified²¹. Furthermore, the Council is now proposing that this area is considered, along with other appropriate options, for addressing any unmet need for Oxford City within the Vale district, providing the constraints to development in the area, such as the Oxford Green Belt, are appropriately addressed²².

¹⁸ **EIP Library Ref: TRA03** - Oxfordshire County Council (2014) Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2030. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=FolderView&ID=454436145&CODE=444985997D29C52CEA5EA89FB894E7F4&NAME=TRA03+Oxfordshire+Local+Transport+Plan+2011+-+2030&REF=LOCAL%20PLAN%202031%20PART%201%20EXAMINATION%20LIBRARY>

¹⁹ **EIP Library Ref DLPO1** - Vale of White Horse District Council (2014) Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 1. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2014-10-27%2001%20VOWHDC%20Local%20Plan%202031%20Contents-Chapters%201.pdf>

²⁰ **EIP Library Ref DLPO1** - Vale of White Horse District Council (2014) Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – Core Policy 9 & Core Policy 11. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2014-10-27%2001%20VOWHDC%20Local%20Plan%202031%20Contents-Chapters%201.pdf>

²¹ **EIP Library Ref DLPO1** - Vale of White Horse District Council (2014) Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 1. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2014-10-27%2001%20VOWHDC%20Local%20Plan%202031%20Contents-Chapters%201.pdf>

²² EIP Library Ref **COR02** Vale of White District Council (2015) Planning to address Oxford unmet housing need in Vale of White Horse. Available at: <http://democratic.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/documents/s26976/Report.pdf>

- 3.1.18 Furthermore, the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 seeks to fully meet the Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAN) for the Vale district, as identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment²³. For the Vale, the OAN is driven primarily by economic projections and the need to support 'Committed Economic Growth'²⁴. On this basis, the Vale is planning for housing and employment to fully meet it's own needs, within it's own district, in accordance with the NPPF ²⁵(discussed further within Statement 2).
- 3.1.19 The matter of addressing any identified unmet need for housing for Oxfordshire within the Vale of White Horse district, is yet to be determined, and is being progressed through a separate process where all Oxfordshire authorities are signatories to the approach²⁶. This is dealt with in the Local Plan Part 1 through Core Policy 2 (discussed further within Statement 4).
- 3.1.20 The Cherwell Local Plan, recently found to be sound, provides a relevant, local and recent precedent for the approach to basing the OAN within Oxfordshire on the high economic growth projection, and to progress the Local Plan Part 1 ahead of the development of the most appropriate strategy for meeting any unmet need²⁷.

²³ **EIP Library Ref: HOU1** - GL Hearn Ltd. (2014) Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454436532&CODE=18AD275F4CA886534D066A0B3050E94F

²⁴ **EIP Library Ref: HOU1** - GL Hearn Ltd. (2014) Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454436532&CODE=18AD275F4CA886534D066A0B3050E94F

²⁵ **EIP Library Ref: LNP02** - Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Framework Policy Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454435957&CODE=D783542CC637214444B18CC070629BE5

²⁶ **EIP Library Ref DUC01** Oxfordshire Growth Board (N/A). Oxfordshire Statement of Cooperation. Available at: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/communityandliving/ourworkwithcommunities/oxfordshirepartnership/spatialplanninginfrastructure/OxfordshireStatementofCooperation.pdf>

²⁷ **EIP Library Ref LNP13** The Planning Inspectorate (2015). Report to Cherwell District Council. Ref: PINS/C3105/429/4. Available at: http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/media/pdf/d/9/Cherwell_Local_Plan_Inspector's_Report_with_Main_Modifications_2015.pdf

Inspectors Question:

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

3.2.1 It is considered that a 'significantly' different distribution of housing development could not be delivered to that proposed. , The proposed distribution of housing has been informed by a comprehensive process of testing throughout the plan making process.

3.2.2 It has been demonstrated in response to Questions 3.1 (a and b; outlined above) that the proposed distribution of housing is highly consistent with the Plan's Settlement Hierarchy, national policy and guidance and the wider strategies for Oxfordshire, including the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and Local Transport Plan 4, both in terms of supporting the Science Vale locality and the fundamental need to 'deliver' housing.

3.2.3 The proposed distribution of housing, as set out within the plan, was informed by a comprehensive plan making process, encompassing several stages of public consultation and detailed evidence gathering. A summary of the process to inform the distribution is set out within Topic Paper 2: Spatial Strategy²⁸ and the Sustainability Appraisal Report²⁹; these are not repeated here in detail.

3.2.4 However, the pertinent matter is that a full range of reasonable and realistic options, for housing distribution, were both consulted upon and tested through Sustainability Appraisal, throughout the plan making process. Key stages include:

- Six broad options for housing distribution were considered through the 'Issues and Options' plan making stage (published for consultation in 2007). These were:
 - A) locate development within the existing towns and villages
 - B) locate development on brownfield or previously developed sites. This would include sites within towns and villages, but also in the countryside separate from existing communities
 - C) locate development as extensions to the edges of the main settlements of Abingdon-on-Thames, Botley, Faringdon, Grove, Wantage and within Harwell Parish to the west of Didcot

²⁸ **EIP Library Ref: TOP02** - Vale of White Horse District Council. (2014) Topic Paper 2 Spatial Strategy. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454436568&CODE=AB46179604A09A0FFB9FB812B6469E85

²⁹ **EIP Library Ref: DLP04** - URS Infrastructure & Environment UK Ltd. (2015) Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part One. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454436229&CODE=B1738D9E6F1D5F993D50EBD18D2C4CEF

- D) locate development as extensions to a small number of villages, to spread development across most of the Vale's villages
 - E) locate development in a new settlement which could be based around an existing village or be entirely free standing, and
 - F) locate development in settlements along public transport routes with at least an hourly service.
- Two refined housing distribution options were considered through the 'Preferred Options' plan making stage (published for consultation in 2009). These were:
 - A) 'Urban Concentration' – Preferred. Which would concentrate most housing development, including specialist housing and that for the elderly, at the main settlements of Abingdon-on-Thames, Botley, Faringdon, Grove and Wantage and within Harwell Parish to the west of Didcot.
 - B) 'Urban Focus' – Alternative. Which was similar to Option A, but would direct more development to the edges of villages.

and,

- A further refinement was made to the preferred approach for housing distribution (known as 'Building on our Strengths') through an 'Internal Review'³⁰ and was published at the 'Draft Plan' plan making stage (published for consultation in 2013)³¹.

3.2.5 On this basis, the proposed approach to housing distribution has been informed by comprehensively testing a range of alternatives with the approach clearly evidenced. The broad approach to housing distribution was further informed by comprehensively testing a range of individual development site options and housing target options. Again, these were tested through public consultation, evidence gathering and by SA. The Council's approach to site selection is summarized in Topic Paper 3: Strategic Site Selection³²; again this is not repeated here in detail. The pertinent matter is that a large number (121) sites were tested, as potential strategic housing sites, for inclusion within the Local Plan.

3.2.6 The alternatives most concentrated on by objectors to the Plan argue for greater reliance on smaller sites in Smaller Villages, or the inclusion of an entirely new settlement. Both of these options have been

³⁰ **EIP Library Ref: TOP02** - Vale of White Horse District Council. (2014) Topic Paper 2 Spatial Strategy. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454436568&CODE=AB46179604A09A0FFB9FB812B6469E85

³¹ **EIP Library Ref DLPO1** - Vale of White Horse District Council (2014) Draft Local Plan 2031 Part 1 –. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2014-10-27%2001%20VOWHDC%20Local%20Plan%202031%20Contents-Chapters%201.pdf>

³² **EIP Library Ref: TOP03** - Vale of White Horse District Council. (2014). Topic Paper 3 Strategic Sites Selection. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454436569&CODE=AB46179604A09A0FFB43F60CCCB7AAAD

considered, at the Issues and Options stage, and later during the plan making process (refer to Topic Paper 2: Spatial Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal Report for more details).

- 3.2.7 In summary, greater use of smaller sites in smaller villages would not accord with the NPPF, particularly the core principles of planning discussed in Question 3.1b, nor the wider strategies for Oxfordshire that require a Science Vale locality focus. The provision of an entirely new settlement is also problematic, both in principle, and in regard to a specific proposal (Oxford Garden City; see Topic Paper 3: Strategic Site Selection). The biggest issue with planning for a new settlement is the time needed to 'deliver' both housing and infrastructure and contribute to the accelerated housing delivery that has been demonstrated to be 'fundamental' within Oxfordshire to support innovation led growth.

Inspectors Question:

3.3: Is the 'housing supply ring fence' approach of Policy CP5 to the delivery of housing in the Science Vale area

- (a) Adequately explained in terms of its practical operation,
- (b) Justified,
- (c) Likely to be effective, and
- (d) In accordance with national policy?

3.3.1 The 'housing supply ring-fence' (Core Policy 5) is simple, both in concept and in practical operation, and the Council is confident its approach is adequately explained, justified, likely to be effective and in accordance with national policy.

3.3.2 Science Vale has one of the largest concentrations of multi-million pound science research facilities in Europe and is already one of the most successful science hotspots in the UK³³. It houses 13 % of research and development employment in the South East of the UK³⁴. Harwell Campus houses, amongst others, the European Space Agency's UK Research Centre, The Science and Technology Facilities Council Rutherford Appleton Laboratory and the Diamond Light Source (the national synchrotron that can project light as much as a billion times brighter than the sun)³⁵. Milton Park houses more than 60 high-tech businesses³⁶. Furthermore, these sites were designated as an Enterprise Zone in 2011³⁷.

3.3.3 Science Vale is one of the main localities for investment set out within the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and it has already been demonstrated how the Vale's Local Plan focuses growth on this area (74 % of proposed strategic housing which 'fully' meets the identified

³³ **EIP Library Ref: ECO010** - Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan (2014) Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan Driving Economic Growth Through Innovation. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=447617072&CODE=AAC65B5B887900C828455DC421EEA552

³⁴ **EIP Library Ref: ECO010** - Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan (2014) Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan Driving Economic Growth Through Innovation. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=447617072&CODE=AAC65B5B887900C828455DC421EEA552

³⁵ **EIP Library Ref: ECO010** - Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan (2014) Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan Driving Economic Growth Through Innovation. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=447617072&CODE=AAC65B5B887900C828455DC421EEA552

³⁶ **EIP Library Ref: ECO010** - Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan (2014) Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan Driving Economic Growth Through Innovation. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=447617072&CODE=AAC65B5B887900C828455DC421EEA552

³⁷ **EIP Library Ref: DLPO1** - Vale of White Horse District Council (2014) Draft Local Plan 2031 Part1. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2014-10-27%2001%20VOWHDC%20Local%20Plan%202031%20Contents-Chapters%201.pdf>

need)³⁸. This is important to support the housing delivery, which the Strategic Economic Plan identifies as ‘fundamental’ to innovation-led growth within Science Vale³⁹. In all 15,850 jobs are projected for the Science Vale area, within the Vale of White Horse, up to 2031⁴⁰.

- 3.3.4. Along with the proposed housing and employment, a significant package of infrastructure is also proposed, as set out within the Council’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan, amounting to over £300 Millions within Science Vale⁴¹. The Council is also working in partnership with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to prepare a joint Area Action Plan, focused on delivery and implementation, for Science Vale; thus demonstrating a strategic and joined-up approach to planning across administrative boundaries⁴².
- 3.3.5 The Council have sought to develop a proposed distribution of housing that will ‘deliver’ in reality and the inclusion of a mix of sites, in terms of size and location, has been shown to increase the chance of this delivery being achieved (discussed further under Question 3.1). However, given the scale of growth proposed and the importance of the integration between housing, employment and infrastructure within Science Vale, the ‘housing supply ring-fence’ has been proposed to provide an additional ‘safeguard’ incase a longer lead in time is required for some of the larger sites.

3.3.6 In response to the specific points outlined in Question 3.3:

a) adequately explained in terms of its practical operation

- 3.3.7 The ‘housing supply ring-fence’ is set out within Core Policy 5 and is explained in more detail within Topic Paper 4: Housing⁴³. The ‘housing supply ring-fence’ would simply function as a separate housing market area and would be monitored separately. This is in accordance with the

³⁸ **EIP Library Ref: ECO02** - Cambridge Economics & SQW (2014). Economic Forecasting to Inform the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and Strategic housing Market Assessment. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=447617061&CODE=BF6E569D1AD64448EB949A2648DF5817

³⁹ **EIP Library Ref: ECO010** - Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan (2014) Oxfordshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan Driving Economic Growth Through Innovation. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=447617072&CODE=AAC65B5B887900C828455DC421EEA552

⁴⁰ **EIP Library Ref: DLPO1** - Vale of White Horse District Council (2014) Draft Local Plan 2031 Part1. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2014-10-27%2001%20VOWHDC%20Local%20Plan%202031%20Contents-Chapters%201.pdf>

⁴¹ **EIP Library Ref: DLP07** -Vale of White Horse District Council. (2014) Vale of White Horse District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454436231&CODE=03369568B89589563F211C327DEDF621

⁴² **EIP Library Ref: LMP15** Vale of White Horse (2015) Science Vale Area Action Plan Issues and Scope Document. Available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2015-02-24%20In%20Design%20Doc%20v3%20A4.pdf>

⁴³ **EIP Library Ref: TOP04** - Vale of white Horse District Council. (2014) Topic Paper 4 Housing. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454436571&CODE=AABE7F596F314D56B674AD732E64339B

housing supply ring-fence operated by South Oxfordshire District Council, as set out in their adopted Core Strategy⁴⁴.

- 3.3.8 The loss of a five-year supply within the 'housing supply ring-fence' would ensure any speculative development was focused within the Science Vale area, thus supporting the proposed distribution of housing, Science Vale itself, and the wider strategy to support innovation-led growth at this locality.

b) Justified

- 3.3.9 The justification for the ring-fence is set out above. The justification for focusing development within Science Vale is clear and is clearly consistent with the Governments approach to support accelerated housing delivery to support economic growth⁴⁵.

c) likely to be effective

- 3.3.10 The Council's Local Plan is designed to support housing 'delivery' and demonstrates the achievement and maintenance of a five-year supply of housing for the whole district. The ring-fence is an additional policy safeguard to protect the Science Vale growth strategy and to ensure that if there were a loss of the five-year supply position in the future, any speculative applications would be focused on the area that has already been identified as the focus for growth and investment within the district. A ring-fence policy has operated successfully in South Oxfordshire for several years and thus it has been demonstrated the ring-fence approach can be effective. Many other authorities have disaggregated housing supply areas that are monitored separately and these include, for example Wiltshire.

d) in accordance with national policy

- 3.3.11 It is considered that Core Policy 5 is in accordance with the NPPF. In particular the policy is consistent with the need to:
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development – ensuring that sufficient land of the 'right type is available in the right places and at the right time' to support growth and innovation⁴⁶
 - be genuinely plan led – proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver homes, etc⁴⁷

⁴⁴ **EIP Library Ref: LNP01** - South Oxfordshire District Council. (2012). South Oxfordshire Core Strategy. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454435802&CODE=44DEED0E777586FE9F3C947E418C9881

⁴⁵ House of Commons, Mr Eric Pickles (2015). Housing and Planning Delivery: Written Statement – HCWS509. Available at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2015-03-26/HCWS509/>

⁴⁶ **EIP Library Ref: LNP02** - Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Framework Policy – Paragraph 6. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454435957&CODE=D783542CC637214444B18CC070629BE5

- boost significantly the supply of housing – should meet in full the identified objectively assessed need⁴⁸
- identify a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against the housing requirement (and make appropriate considerations for buffers), etc⁴⁹, and
- local planning authorities should ensure that their ‘strategies for housing, employment and other uses are integrated and that take full account of relevant market and economic signals’.⁵⁰

3.3.12 Two recent Appeal Decisions in South Oxfordshire refer to the ring-fence approach. In both cases the Planning Inspectors stated that there was nothing in national policy to rule out a disaggregated approach to land supply calculations or to a separate housing provision ring-fence⁵¹, ⁵². Although there is disagreement on some matters between these two reports, the areas of disagreement do not relate to the Vale proposals; the Planning Inspector stated in the Thames Farm Appeal Decision:

“The Council has chosen to identify one or more housing land supply requirements, it remains necessary for it to be able to demonstrate a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years worth of housing against all those housing requirements with an appropriate buffer”⁵³.

3.3.13 As it has already been stated, the Vale of White Horse Local Plan proposals will ensure a 5 year land supply is achieved and maintained.

⁴⁷ **EIP Library Ref: LNP02** - Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Framework Policy – Paragraph 17. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454435957&CODE=D783542CC637214444B18CC070629BE5

⁴⁸ **EIP Library Ref: LNP02** - Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Framework Policy – Paragraph 47. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454435957&CODE=D783542CC637214444B18CC070629BE5

⁴⁹ **EIP Library Ref: LNP02** - Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Framework Policy – Paragraph 47. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454435957&CODE=D783542CC637214444B18CC070629BE5

⁵⁰ **EIP Library Ref: LNP02** - Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Framework Policy – Paragraph 158. Available at: http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=454435957&CODE=D783542CC637214444B18CC070629BE5

⁵¹ The Planning Inspectorate, I Jenkins (2014). Thames Farm, Reading Road, Shiplake, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 3PH – Appeal Decision, Ref: APP/Q3115/A/14/2217931. Available at: <http://shiplakevillages.com/page-content/documents/1432122643-Decision.pdf>

⁵² The Planning Inspectorate, John Felgate (2015). Land at ‘Goats Gambol’, off Beech Land, Woodcote, Oxfordshire RG8 0PY – Appeal Decision, Ref: APP/Q3115/A/14/2223330. <http://cornerstonebarristers.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Appeal-Decision.pdf>

⁵³ The Planning Inspectorate, I Jenkins (2014). Thames Farm, Reading Road, Shiplake, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 3PH – Appeal Decision, Ref: APP/Q3115/A/14/2217931. Available at: <http://shiplakevillages.com/page-content/documents/1432122643-Decision.pdf>

Appendix 1: Relationship between housing sites and main centres

	Towns and service centres	Large villages	Employment locations	Notes
North Abingdon	800			
NW Abingdon	200			
E Hanney		200		
Kingston Bagpuize		280		
Radley		240		
Kennington		270		
Faringdon Park Rd	350			
Faringdon SW	200			
Gt Coxwell	200			Adjacent Faringdon
Gt Coxwell	200			Adjacent Faringdon
Shrivenham		500		
Stanford ITV		200		
Wantage	1500			
Grove Airfield	2500			
North Grove	750			
Valley Park	2550			Expansion to Didcot town
NW Valley Park	800			Expansion to Didcot town
Harwell campus N			550	
E of Harwell campus			850	
Harwell village		200		
Milton Heights		400		
Sutton Courtenay		220		
	10050	2510	1400	
			13960	
	72%	18%	10%	