

Harwell Parish Council Response to HEAR 4

Thank you for the email and the opportunity to comment – in this case on HEAR4, Item 3, which was in response to a question raised by me on behalf of Harwell Parish Council.

To add to the list of references provided by the Vale, I would add:

The Statement of Common Ground between the Vale and SODC, says

5.3. The Councils' agree that, as per paragraph 6.18 ** of South Oxfordshire's adopted Core Strategy 2027 (LNP17), a cross boundary allocation of 6.5 hectares of land remains at Milton Park to meet the employment needs of residents in Didcot. The Councils' agree that this strategic growth across boundaries is delivered most effectively through the emerging Science Vale Area Action Plan. Science Vale Housing Supply Ring Fence

And in turn para 6.18 of the SODC CS says:

6.18. Most housing growth will be in Didcot. Our strategy makes a strong link between the housing growth in Didcot and the business growth needs of Science Vale UK, including at Harwell Oxford54 and Milton Park outside the district. We are seeking with Vale of White Horse District Council to provide enough B class jobs to cater for Didcot's increased population, as well as catering for the increased population in the Vale of White Horse District. We have agreed with Vale of White Horse District Council that there will be a cross boundary allocation and 6.5 hectares of land will be allocated there to meet our needs for Didcot. Policies CSEM2 and CSEM3 show how we will distribute the remaining 13.5 hectares through new allocations and job growth.

I understand the difference between employment land and jobs and household forecasts, and as such accept paras HEAR4 #3.1-#3.3.

HEAR4 #3.6 refers to table K.3 in ECO.02, and I note the comment in the table "The adopted plan identifies 6.5 ha of the employment land (and 500 jobs) to be accommodated in the EZ in VoWH District which is regarded as part of S Oxon's allocation." The text mentions 500 jobs, but I seem to recall the SODC representative at the hearing saying that 1000 jobs were associated with this land. I accept that this is reiterated in table 6.2 of ECO.02.

I further note the SODC CS inspector's comments (#3.7) that the land is not specifically associated with Didcot A, and that he requested an amendment to make sure it was not linked specifically to Harwell Oxford and Milton Park.

Given that comment, I don't understand why the land is specifically identified by the Vale as being at Milton Park.

Para 3.8 of HEAR4 says:

3.8 The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 (Part 1) clarifies how it has been treated in its land calculations at Paragraph 4.31, which states:

"Policy CSEM2 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Core Strategy indicates that 6.5 hectares of employment land will be provided at Didcot, within the Vale of White Horse District, in order to help meet the town's needs. This 6.5 hectares is included within the 28 hectares to be provided at Milton Park and contributes towards the identified requirement of 219 hectares for the Vale of White Horse District."

I suggest that, in keeping with the SODC inspectors recommendation, an amendment to this section and the associated tables in Core Policy 6 is required to ensure that the 6.5 hectare allocated to SODC is not included in an totals of land allocation for the Vale, and the total for the Vale should be $219-6.5= 212.5$ ha.

Hence Paragraph 4.31, could be amended to say:

“Policy CSEM2 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Core Strategy indicates that 6.5 hectares of employment land will be provided at Didcot, within the Vale of White Horse District, in order to help meet the town’s needs. This 6.5 hectares is not allocated specifically and has been excluded from the identified requirement of 212.5 hectares for the Vale of White Horse District.”

And an extra row added to CP6 table of left hand side of page and the table adjusted accordingly

Land allocated to SODC and not available to the Vale	(6.5)
Total	212.5

Finally, if I may, a comment arising from HEAR4 section 4, relating to land at Harwell Campus. Harwell Campus is the current branding for what used to be called Harwell Oxford, and prior to that, many other names. Sometimes, and confusingly, it is called just “Harwell”. All these refer to the research and employment site, split between the parishes of Harwell, Chilton and E.Hendred.

“Harwell” can also refer to the settlement/village of Harwell (approx. 1000 houses), a mile or so from the campus, and of course to the civic parish of Harwell. Mr. Rivett may also be amused to know that the northern boundary of Harwell Parish has recently been aligned to the railway line.

David Marsh

Chair, Harwell Parish Council