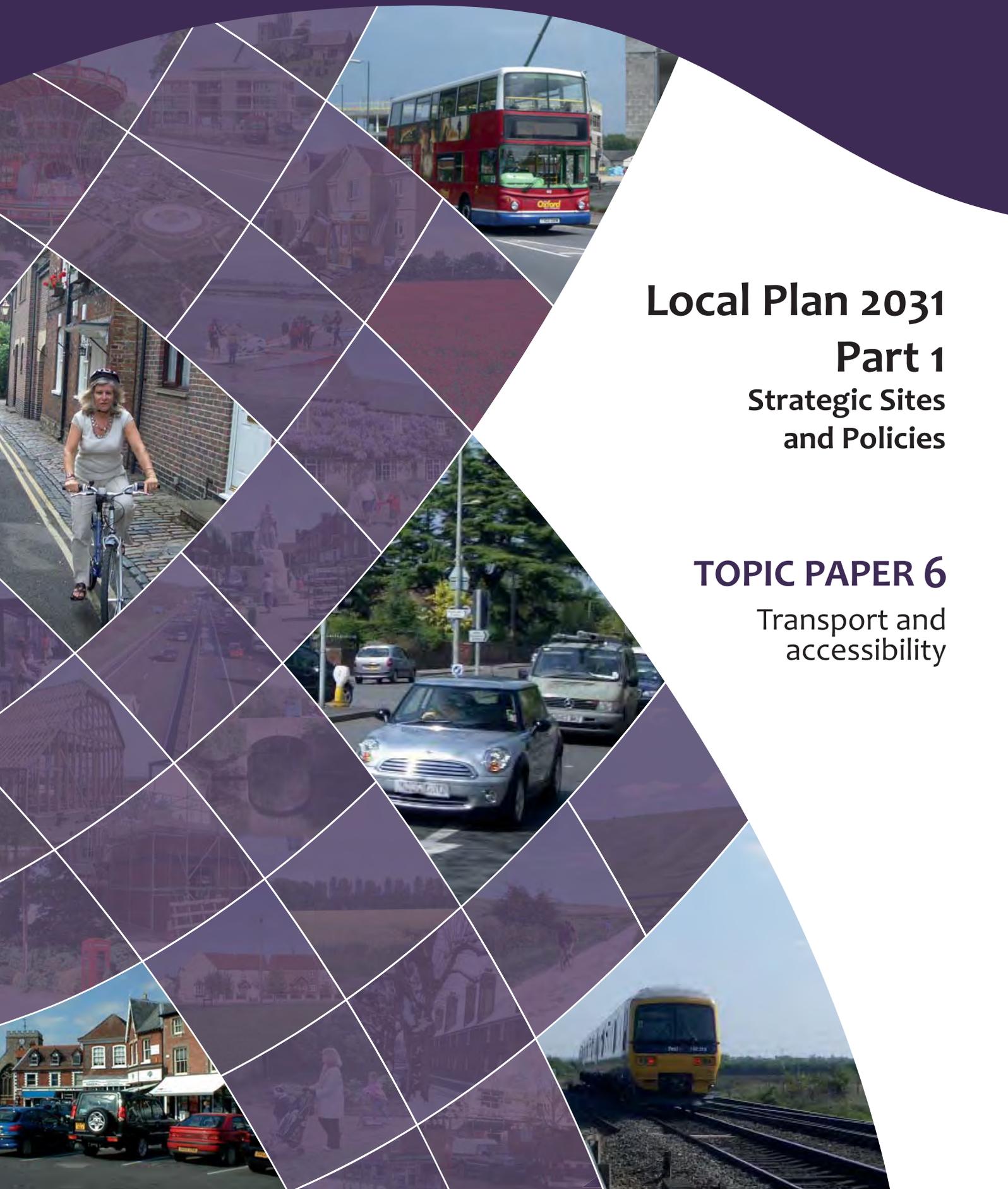




**Vale
of White Horse**
District Council

Publication Version
November 2014



Local Plan 2031
Part 1
Strategic Sites
and Policies

TOPIC PAPER 6
Transport and
accessibility

This paper is one of 9 topic papers, listed below, which form part of the evidence base in support of the Publication Version of Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031: Part 1 – Strategic Sites and Policies.

These topic papers have been produced to present a coordinated view of the evidence that has been considered in drafting the Local Plan. It is hoped that this will make it easier to understand how we have reached our conclusions.

The papers are all available from the council website:

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence

Topic Papers

1. Duty to cooperate and cross boundary issues
2. Spatial strategy
3. Strategic sites selection
4. Housing
5. Supporting economic prosperity
6. Transport and accessibility
7. Responding to climate change
8. The built and historic environment
9. The natural environment

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Introduction

- 1.1 This topic paper summarises the evidence we have used, with particular focus on transport and accessibility, to inform the preparation of the Publication Version of the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1 – Strategic Sites and Policies.
- 1.2 The Local Plan 2031 Part 1 sets the strategic priorities for the district to deliver sustainable development. It identifies the number of new homes and jobs to be provided in the area for the plan period up to 2031. It also makes appropriate provision for retail, leisure and commercial development and for the infrastructure needed to support them.
- 1.3 Significant work has been carried out to inform the Local Plan 2031, starting in 2007, and several stages of consultation have been undertaken with the public and stakeholders over the last few years. These stages include:
 - Issues and Options (November 2007) – which identified a range of options for how we should plan for the Vale
 - Preferred Options (January 2009) – which outlined the council’s preferred approach for planning for the Vale
 - Additional Consultation (January 2010) – which consulted on a few additional policies relating to specific issues
 - Draft Local Plan Consultation (February 2013) – which consulted on a complete draft of the Local Plan 2031: Part 1, and
 - Housing Delivery Update (February 2014) – which set out the updated housing target for the district and the strategic sites package needed to meet the new target.
- 1.4 Transport and accessibility forms an important part of our plan. New development should be located to be easily accessible to services and facilities, especially by public transport. Ease of movement around the district is important to support our proposals for economic growth and accessibility is a key part of our commitment to deliver sustainable development in accordance with national policy requirements.
- 1.5 The purpose of this topic paper is to summarise key evidence that has informed the drafting of policies to be included in the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1 relating to transport and accessibility.

1.6 This topic paper is arranged into the following sections:

- Section 2: Policy review** – a brief summary of how any national, regional and local policies have influenced the preparation of the Local Plan 2031
- Section 3: Evidence** – a short summary of any key issues identified from previous stages of consultation and any other evidence that informed plan preparation
- Section 4: Issues (challenges and opportunities)** – a brief summary of any issues identified from Sections 2 and 3 of the paper that the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1 will need to respond to
- Section 5: Policy options** – an overview of those policy options which have been tested for possible inclusion within the Local Plan 2031
- Section 6: Conclusions** – the key conclusions for how this topic area is being addressed in the Local Plan 2031

Policy review - national policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

2.0 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. At its heart is the need to ensure planning contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development, which should encompass economic, social and environmental considerations in equal measure.

2.1 The NPPF states that:

“Local plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people”.¹

“Developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised”.²

“For larger scale residential developments in particular, planning policies should promote a mix of uses in order to provide opportunities to undertake day-to-day activities including work on site. Where practical, particularly within larger-scale developments, key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within walking distance of most properties”.³

2.2 The NPPF also makes it clear that any developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan, but also that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe⁴.

National Planning Practice Guidance 2013

2.3 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) sets out planning guidance to support practitioners and complements the NPPF.

2.4 The NPPG sets out some detail for the need for, and how to, prepare an assessment of transport implications in developing or reviewing local plans. This includes setting out details for what the evidence should consist of, what issues it should address and what baseline information should be established. Importantly, the NPPG states that:

¹ CLG (2012). National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 35.

² CLG (2012). National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 34.

³ CLG (2012). National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 38.

⁴ CLG (2012). National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 32.

“The transport evidence base should identify the opportunities for encouraging a shift to more sustainable transport usage, where reasonable to do so; and highlight the infrastructure requirements for inclusion in the infrastructure spending plans linked to the Community Infrastructure Levy, section 106 provisions and other funding sources”.⁵

Department for Transport Circular 02/2013: The strategic road network and the delivery of sustainable development

- 2.5 This document includes guidance from the Highways Agency for those involved with development that may result in traffic or other impact on the strategic road network. It includes guidance to inform the preparation of local plans. It states that:

“Development should be promoted at locations that are or can be made sustainable, that allow for uptake of sustainable transport modes and support wider social and health objectives, and which support existing business sectors as well as enabling new growth”.⁶

“Local plans provide an opportunity to identify and support a pattern of development that minimises trip generation at source and encourages the use of sustainable modes of transport, minimises journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and their activities, and promotes accessibility for all”.⁷

Policy review - local policy

South East Plan 2009⁸

- 2.6 Until 2013, the overarching policies for individual regions across the UK were set out within Regional Strategies, such as the South East Plan, which included Oxfordshire. These were used to inform local plans and set out how many homes and jobs needed to be provided in each local authority area.
- 2.7 Regional Strategies were abolished in 2013 and the responsibility for spatial planning now falls more fully with individual local authorities.
- 2.8 However, the South East Plan has still been an important influencing document during the preparation of early stages of the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1.

⁵ CLG (2013). National Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 54-002-20141010. Revision Date 10.10.2014.

⁶ DfT (2013). Circular 02/2013. Paragraph 16.

⁷ DfT (2013). Circular 02/2013. Paragraph 12.

⁸

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100528142817/http://www.gos.gov.uk/gose/planning/regionalplanning/815640/>

- 2.9 Importantly, the South East Plan set out a spatial strategy, which identified where the main focus of growth should be located and this informed the original proposals included within the Local Plan 2031. This is discussed more within our Spatial Strategy Topic Paper⁹.
- 2.10 Policy CO1 within the South East Plan set out the 'Core Strategy' for Central Oxfordshire, which included the requirements to:
- ensure the provision of infrastructure which is essential to the proper functioning and future development of the area, and
 - concentrate development where the need to travel, particularly by single occupancy car use, can be reduced.
- 2.11 Whilst the South East Plan no longer forms part of the 'Development Plan' for the Vale, it is important that any policy detail that it included, that is still relevant, is not lost. For this reason and where appropriate, policies have been carried forward into the Local Plan 2031. An assessment has been carried out into the consistency of the South East Plan policies within the NPPF, and to consider if they should be incorporated into the Local Plan 2031 (**Appendix 1**).

Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2030 (Revised 2012)

- 2.12 The Local Transport Plan (LTP) 3 sets out the policy framework for transport planning for the county up to 2030. It sets out four high level transport goals for Oxfordshire, which are:
- to support the local economy and the growth and competitiveness of the county
 - to make it easier to get around the county and improve access to jobs and services for all by offering real choice
 - to reduce the impact of transport on the environment and help tackle climate change, and
 - to promote healthy, safe and sustainable travel.
- 2.13 LTP 3 includes area strategies for each part of Oxfordshire, including three within the Vale of White Horse; namely for Abingdon-on-Thames, Science Vale and for Faringdon. These strategies include commitments to continue working to improve public transport, facilities for cycling and for highway infrastructure directly.
- 2.14 Of the three area strategies included within LTP 3 that relate to the Vale, it is the Science Vale Area Strategy that is most detailed and developed. This is because LTP 3 was informed by the housing growth set out within the South East Plan and Science Vale being the focus for development within the district. Science Vale also forms an important part of the Oxfordshire Growth Arc, encompassing Bicester, Oxford and Science Vale.

⁹ www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence

2.15 The Science Vale Area Strategy includes a series of detailed proposals for transport improvements within the Science Vale area and these include a number of specific highway and infrastructure schemes¹⁰. These provided an important framework to inform preparation of the Local Plan 2031. Examples include:

- **Improving capacity at A34 Milton Interchange** – to improve capacity, to relieve congestion and accommodate additional traffic from planned development.
- **Delivering north facing slip roads at A34 Chilton Interchange** – to enable full movement to and from Harwell Campus from the A34, helping attract investment and to relieve local roads.
- **Entrance improvements to Harwell Campus** – to facilitate additional trips into/ from the site and supplement the improved Chilton Interchange.
- **Promoting the Wantage Eastern Link Road** – to support developments in Wantage and Grove and provide relief to central Wantage.
- **Delivering improvements along the A417 corridor** – to improve the capacity of the road, and improve journeys for public transport users and cyclists, and address the conflict between east-east travel and access to villages along this route.
- **Delivering improvements at Steventon traffic lights at the A4130/ B4017 junction** – to remove the ‘bottle-neck’ and improve journey times to the A34, Milton Park and other Didcot employment sites.
- **Reducing congestion at Rowstock roundabout** – to increase capacity of the junction itself and improvements to Featherbed Lane.
- **Securing Grove Northern Link Road** – to improve access to development at Grove Airfield from the A338.
- **Securing new bus services** – particularly between new residential sites at Didcot, Wantage and Grove and the employment sites of Milton Park, Harwell Campus and Oxford.
- **Safeguarding and protecting the ability to deliver a Station at Grove** – to ensure the future longer term ambition of connecting Wantage and Grove with Didcot, Swindon and beyond can be achieved.
- **Provide relief to Manor Bridge and A4130 through delivery of a new bridge over the railway at the Didcot A Power Station (known as ‘Science Bridge’)** – to help relieve congestion, improve the network capacity and reduce the severance caused by the railway line.
- **Improving access and connections to Harwell Campus, Milton Park and Didcot** – to provide better connectivity, reduce congestion on the local network and protect villages. For example

¹⁰ <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/local-transport-plan-2011-2030>

investigating the provision of a new road from the B4493 to the A417 and improving Hagbourne Hill.

Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 4 (2015 – in preparation)

- 2.16 Oxfordshire County Council is in the process of revising its Local Transport Plan. LTP 4 will be made up of two parts – policies and area strategies. LTP 4 will be subject to public consultation in early 2015, and will contain an updated Science Vale Area Strategy which will also cover movement to and from Abingdon and Wallingford. There will also be an A420 Corridor Strategy chapter.. Building on the success of achieving funding for many of these schemes and in recognition of imminent construction of some, LTP 4 contains further schemes that have been identified as being required to deliver growth over the Local Plan period. Bus and cycling strategies will ensure opportunities to travel sustainably are maximised. The transport strategy identifies schemes for the current known, planned growth across the Vale, however it will also need to evolve as the growth for the wider Oxfordshire area is identified.
- 2.17 In addition, the LTP 4 will also consider the need for safeguarding other areas within the Vale. For example, if significant additional development is allocated to the south of Abingdon-on-Thames in the future, a south Abingdon relief road will be required. The Local Plan 2031 should therefore safeguard and protect the ability to deliver this, which will provide a direct link from west Abingdon to the A415 to the east and relieve congestion in Abingdon town centre.
- 2.18 Furthermore, if there is substantial additional development in west Wantage beyond the plan period, a western link will be required. The Local Plan 2031 should therefore safeguard and protect the ability to deliver a Wantage Western Link Road, which would complete the perimeter route for the town and provide relief to key roads within Wantage

Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan 2014¹¹

- 2.19 This document sets out the strategic economic plan for Oxfordshire and was prepared by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). It sets out ambitious plans to maximise the world-class assets of Oxfordshire.
- 2.20 In particular, the strategy reaffirms the critical importance of transforming connectivity across Oxfordshire to help deliver innovation-based growth and the significant role of Science Vale for fostering and accommodating job creation.

¹¹ <http://www.oxfordshirelep.org.uk/cms/content/oxfordshire-strategic-economic-plan>

- 2.21 The strategy provides support to the highway infrastructure set out within the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (described above) and sets out overarching objectives for connectivity in Science Vale, which:
- provide strategic connections to the wider UK and international gateways
 - link the Science Vale area with Oxford's Universities and other innovation centres in the city region
 - connect the main employment and development sites within the Science Vale area
 - contribute positively to the realm of the main settlements in the Science Vale area, and Didcot in particular, and
 - cater for the anticipated growth in people living and working in the area.
- 2.22 Importantly, the strategy reaffirms the LEP's commitment to supporting the funding and delivery of essential infrastructure and explains how both the City Deal Investment and Local Growth Fund will contribute to the area.
- 2.23 The strategy also outlines the Better Broadband project, a multi-million pound contract to deliver superfast broadband to Oxfordshire, which will bring significant economic benefits to the county, particularly the rural areas. It is important the Local Plan 2031 ensures that new development is superfast broadband enabled and can be connected to the new network, once it is rolled-out, without additional post development works. This will help to support home-working and so reduce the need to travel.

Vale Local Plan 2011¹²

- 2.24 The Vale Local Plan 2011 was adopted in 2006 and provides a policy framework to inform day-to-day determination of planning applications across the Vale. It will be partly replaced by the ***Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1 – Strategic Sites and Policies*** and partly by the ***Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 2 – Detailed Policies and Local Sites***. Part 2 will be prepared once Part 1 has been adopted. Until then, some policies from the existing Local Plan 2011 will continue to be saved and relied upon for decision-making.
- 2.25 An assessment of Local Plan 2011 policies has been carried out to check if they are still fit for purpose, are consistent with the NPPF, and whether they either need replacing or saving (**Appendix 2**).

¹² <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/existing-local-plan-2011>

Evidence

Summary of previous consultation stages and key issues

3.0 The Council has completed a number of stages of consultation over the past few years as we have developed the Local Plan 2031. The responses to each stage of consultation have been used to help inform the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1. The main stages of consultation completed to date include:

- Issues and Options 2007¹³
- Preferred Options 2009¹⁴
- Additional Consultation 2010¹⁵
- Draft Local Plan Consultation 2013¹⁶
- Housing Delivery Update 2014¹⁷

Issues and Options 2007; Preferred Options 2009; and Additional Consultation 2010

3.1 Examples of comments relating to the transport topic area from the early stages of consultation to prepare the Local Plan 2031 include:

- the need for transport schemes to be implemented at an early stage
- concern about the impact on the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) of proposed highway schemes at Rowstock and Harwell
- concern that even with proposed mitigation in place, the traffic flows in the area will increase
- concern that there are no proposals for the A338, A417 or A420 and that traffic levels are likely to increase on these routes, and
- support for the package of identified transport infrastructure.

Draft Local Plan Consultation 2013

3.2 Over 400 transport related comments were made to this consultation, which demonstrate the high level of importance the respondents attach to this issue. Many comments expressed concern about the stress that new development might place on the existing transport infrastructure,

¹³ **Issues and Options** - <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/core-strateg-5>

¹⁴ **Preferred Options** - <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/core-strategy/preferred-options>

¹⁵ **Additional Consultation** - <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/core-strateg-2>

¹⁶ **Draft Local Plan** - http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2013-03-14_FinalLocalPlanPartOneReduced.pdf

¹⁷ **Housing Delivery Update** -

<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Local%20Plan%20housing%20delivery%20update%202014.pdf>

particularly relating to the main routes in the district (such as the A417, A420, A338, A4130 and the A34). Other comments included:

- a significant number of objections were made to the proposed developments at Wantage and Grove on the basis that new roads would not be able to cope with the increased volume of traffic
- the need for a bypass to the west of Wantage in addition to the one planned for the east
- support for the creation of a new railway station serving Wantage and Grove
- concerns about a perceived disconnect between the proposed location of new homes and sites for employment which could lead to more people commuting to work
- many objections to the proposed South Abingdon-on-Thames bypass on the basis that this would have a significant impact on the environmental and heritage assets at Culham. But support for the principle that development cannot take place to the south of Abingdon-on-Thames without the provision of a new bypass.
- support for the decision to restrict development at Abingdon-on-Thames due to highway constraints in the town
- concerns about the availability of parking in towns and larger villages and that the standards for provision should be revisited
- requests that footpaths and cycle paths are provided to connect new residential developments in Wantage, Grove and Didcot to places of employment such as Harwell Campus and Milton Park
- a request for the plan to make reference to bus priority measures as part of the proposed road schemes
- impact on the A420 from development within the borough of Swindon to the west of the Vale district, and
- criticism that the plan places too much emphasis on travel by car to the detriment of promoting other modes of travel.

Housing Delivery Update 2014

- 3.3 The focus of this consultation was to introduce a new housing target and a number of new proposed strategic development sites. Whilst the consultation was not specifically focused on transport, comments were received to the consultation that raised issues on transport, particularly in relation to the new site proposals.
- 3.4 The comments followed a similar theme to those to the February 2013 consultation and in particular, raised concerns over the capacity of the network to cope with additional traffic, particularly on the A34, A417, A338, A420 and at locations in Botley, Abingdon-on-Thames and Didcot. Many respondents stated that incidents on the A34 lead to associated impacts on the surrounding local road network.

Other relevant evidence

Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) Study 2014¹⁸

- 3.5 The ETI assessed the impact of growth proposed within the Local Plan 2031. The preparation of the ETI was iterative and informed each stage of preparing the plan (see **Table 3.1**).
- 3.6 The ETI modelled the predicted highway performance in 2030 and used the Central Oxfordshire Transport Model (COTM). The work was carried out by the consultants 'CH2M Hill' and 'Atkins' who were also working in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council. Detailed descriptions of the methodology and results of the work are set out in the full ETI report. This topic paper provides only a high level summary.
- 3.7 One of the main purposes of the ETI was to inform the selection of strategic development sites for inclusion within the Local Plan 2031. This approach ensured that site selection was informed by an understanding of how the transport network performs and so helps the plan to contribute towards sustainable development¹⁹.
- 3.8 The ETI also allows issues with the transport network to be identified, and where new mitigation is required, such as an improved junction layout or the provision of a new road.

¹⁸ www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence

¹⁹ The selection of sites is discussed in more detail within the Strategic Site Selection Topic Paper available from the council website: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence.

Table 3.1: Local Plan and Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) Stages.

Date	Local Plan Stage	ETI Stage
<p>February 2013</p>	<p>Draft Local Plan Consultation (February 2013)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was the first complete draft of the Local Plan 2031 published for consultation. • It was based on the South East Plan and included proposals to deliver 13,294 homes and 14,300 new B-use class jobs. 	<p>Stage 1</p> <p>This work was undertaken by the consultants ‘CH2M Hill’ (formerly Halcrow) using the Central Oxfordshire Transport Model (COTM). The model produced forecasts for the whole of the county for transport demand and its impact on the network in 2030.</p> <p>The Stage 1 work consisted of two sub-stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1a comprised of the Local Plan 2031 development assumptions applied to a forecast year transport network agreed with the Vale of White Horse and Oxfordshire County Council. • Stage 1b considered a package of mitigation measures to support the Local Plan 2031 growth (tested at Stage 1a). These mitigation measures are listed separately (Paragraph 3.9).
<p>2013</p>	<p>Assessment of Additional Site Options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council worked with the other Oxfordshire authorities to prepare an up-to-date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Oxfordshire. • The SHMA identified an increased housing requirement for the county and for the Vale of White Horse District. • For this reason, the council tested a range of new (additional) strategic development site options for possible inclusion in the Local Plan 2031. • The assessment of these additional site options helped to inform the proposed selection of sites included within the <i>Housing Delivery Update</i> (February 2014). 	<p>Stage 2</p> <p>This work as also undertaken by the consultants ‘CH2M Hill’ using COTM.</p> <p>The work was completed in September 2013 and considered potential development sites that were tested in five geographical clusters. The aim of this stage was to identify the impacts associated with development in each of the potential locations being tested. This informed the Council’s decisions for how much development could occur within each cluster and guide the formulation of strategic development site options for inclusion within the Local Plan 2031.</p>

Date	Local Plan Stage	ETI Stage
February 2014	<p>Housing Delivery Update (February 2014)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council published an update to its Local Plan 2031 in February 2014. The <i>Housing Delivery Update</i> set out a new housing target based on the Oxfordshire SHMA of 20,560 homes and an updated projected job growth figure of 23,000 new jobs. The <i>Housing Delivery Update</i> also set out a series of new proposed strategic development sites to meet the new housing target. 	<p>Stage 3</p> <p>This stage was undertaken by the consultants 'Atkins' using a modified version of the Central Oxfordshire Transport Model (COTM).</p> <p>This work was completed in February 2014 and tested the growth and proposed strategic development sites, as set out in the <i>Housing Delivery Update</i>, along with the identified mitigation (Paragraph 3.9).</p>
2014	<p>Assessment of Additional Site Options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following consultation on the <i>Housing Delivery Update</i> the council considered a range of additional potential development sites that were identified through the consultation. The assessment of these additional site options helped to inform the final selection of sites for inclusion within the Publication Version of the Local Plan 2031. 	<p>Stage 4</p> <p>This stage was undertaken by Atkins to test additional potential development sites to compare against the early stages of ETI work completed to date. This work helped to inform the final site package for inclusion within the Local Plan – Publication Version.</p>
November 2014	<p>Local Plan – Publication Version (November 2014)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council published its final draft Local Plan in November 2014. This document is the version for submission to the Secretary of State in early 2015. The Local Plan – Publication Version was informed by the previous stages of developing the Local Plan 2031 described above. 	<p>Stage 5</p> <p>This is the final stage of ETI work to inform the Local Plan 2031 and was undertaken by Atkins. It tested the final growth and strategic development sites as included within the Local Plan – Publication Version. This stage consisted of three sub-stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage 5a tested the final growth and sites package. Stage 5b tested the impact of new (small-scale) mitigation. Stage 5c tested the impacts of new (large-scale) mitigation (Paragraph 3.11).

3.9 Stage 1 of the ETI tested the growth required by the South East Plan (13,294 homes to be delivered in the Vale). This stage of the ETI included various highway mitigation (such as new roads or junction enhancements) that had already been identified and were set out within the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 3 (2011 – 2031). These schemes are listed below:

- Wantage Eastern link Road
- Improvements to Featherbed Lane
- Improvements to Steventon Lights
- Improvements to A34 Milton Interchange
- North Facing Slips at A34 Chilton Interchange
- Improvements to Hagbourne Hill
- Harwell Field Link Road (B4493 to A417)
- Science Bridge (Relief to Manor Bridge and re-routing of A4130)

3.10 Later stages of the ETI (for example Stage 5) tested the new housing target for the Vale (20,560 homes derived from the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment). With this increased housing target it was found that additional highway mitigation was required and the following schemes were identified through the ETI process:

- A4130 capacity enhancements between A34 Milton Interchange and Science Bridge
- South facing slips at A34 Lodge Hill
- Improvements to traffic signals at A415/ A338 Junction
- Corridor Improvements to the A420, A338 and A417
- New Thames crossing at Culham and a Clifton Hampden Bypass
- Although not explicitly tested in the model, sustainable transport schemes have been identified, forming a central part of the transport strategy. These are discussed below.

3.11 **Tables 3.2 to 3.7** summarise the traffic flows (as percentages of network capacity) for both the AM and PM peak periods for the following main highway corridors throughout the district:

- A338
- A34
- A4130
- A415
- A417
- A420

3.12 Traffic flows are described as being ‘at capacity’ if the capacity values are over 95 % (this affectively means that journey times are reduced). Whilst there are some locations on the network that remain at capacity in 2031, i.e. following the new housing allocated within the Local Plan 2031, in most instances the network is still performing at a similar level

to how it would have performed if only the South East Plan housing target was delivered alongside the mitigation package identified in LTP3 (as at para 3.9). This demonstrates that the package of additional highway mitigation measures identified to be delivered alongside the additional local plan growth to address SHMA requirements adequately off-sets any additional impacts associated with the additional housing.

- 3.13 On this basis, it is essential that the Local Plan 2031 makes provision to deliver the identified highway infrastructure, found to be necessary to ensure the plan delivers sustainable development.
- 3.14 The identified highway infrastructure package is set out within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) that is published alongside the Publication Version of the Local Plan 2031. Significant funding has already been secured (£26.1 Million as at Sept 2014) to assist the delivery of this infrastructure. Furthermore, as identified in the IDP significant funds will be contributed towards funding transport and other infrastructure from developer contributions²⁰.
- 3.15 **Tables 3.2 to 3.7** also summarise other work currently in progress to help improve the performance of the highway network. This includes, for example, work by Oxfordshire County Council to inform the preparation of their Local Transport Plan 4. This includes the development of Corridor Studies for many roads within the Vale, such as the A420, and making significant enhancements to public transport and cycle routes.

²⁰ www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence

Table 3.2: Traffic flows (percentage capacity at 2031) along the A338 corridor within the Vale of White Horse at Stage 1 (South East Plan growth with some mitigation) and Stage 5b (Local Plan 2031 growth with final mitigation package).

Location	Direction	AM Peak		PM Peak		Comments
		Stage 1	Stage 5b	Stage 1	Stage 5b	
A338						
Tubney	North	39	41	35	34	The predicted traffic flows for locations along the A338 corridor at 2031, for both AM and PM peak periods, are clearly very similar for both Stages 1 and 5b (South East Plan growth vs. Local Plan 2031 growth). This means that the proposed Vale housing target, along with the identified mitigation package, does not worsen traffic flows on this route. Only two locations remain at capacity, but change very little with the increased housing growth.
	South	23	21	36	37	
North of Frilford	North	74	82	41	43	
	South	18	17	34	35	
South of Frilford	North	74	77	54	53	
	South	39	37	67	66	
East Hanney	North	60	63	42	46	
	South	35	47	97	93	
South of East Hanney	North	69	71	72	72	
	South	61	62	63	66	
Grove	North	84	87	67	68	
	South	45	47	99	101	

	> 95 %	Route at capacity (higher figures indicate journey delays)
	> 85 % < 95 %	Route close to capacity
	< 85 %	Route within capacity

Other factors

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) is planning to undertake a Corridor Study for the A338 to understand what improvements might be possible. This, along with proposed enhancements to public transport and cycling routes, will help to further improve the performance of the A338 corridor. The potential longer-term opening of a railway station at Grove could also assist with improving the performance of this route.

Table 3.3: Traffic flows (percentage capacity at 2031) along the A34 corridor within the Vale of White Horse at Stage 1 (South East Plan growth with some mitigation) and Stage 5b (Local Plan 2031 growth with final mitigation package).

Location	Direction	AM Peak		PM Peak		Comments
		Stage 1	Stage 5b	Stage 1	Stage 5b	
A34						
North of Lodge Hill	North	87	78	95	87	It is clear that the predicted traffic flows for locations along the A34 corridor at 2031, for both AM and PM peak periods, improve for Stage 5b compared to Stage 1. This is because of the proposed mitigation, principally a new road and river crossing of the Thames to the north of Didcot including a new road that bypasses Clifton Hampden. This provides an improved route towards the east of Oxford, a significant employment destination, reducing pressure on the A34. Only one location remains at capacity at 2031 (in AM and PM peak periods), but there is little change with the additional growth.
	South	100	92	86	80	
South of Lodge Hill	North	84	28	94	27	
	South	84	42	63	31	
North of Milton	North	93	89	100	104	
	South	105	105	84	85	
South of Milton	North	66	67	100	76	
	South	56	54	67	61	

	> 95 %	Route at capacity (higher figures indicate journey delays)
	> 85 % < 95 %	Route close to capacity
	< 85 %	Route within capacity

Other factors

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) is working with the Highways Agency (HA) to develop a Route Based Strategy for the A34. It is anticipated that this work will lead to enhancements to the A34 route within the Vale, along with identification of potential longer-term options to provide a step-change in capacity. This is in addition to significant work being undertaken to enhance public transport, particularly along the 'knowledge spine' between Harwell Campus, Didcot, Oxford and Bicester, with improved bus services, facilities for cycling and upgraded rail services. These measures will also contribute to improving the performance of this route, especially by providing a credible alternative to Vale residents, for making local journeys.

Table 3.4: Traffic flows (percentage capacity at 2031) along the A4130 corridor within the Vale of White Horse at Stage 1 (South East Plan growth with some mitigation) and Stage 5b (Local Plan 2031 growth with final mitigation package).

Location	Direction	AM Peak		PM Peak		Comments
		Stage 1	Stage 5b	Stage 1	Stage 5b	
A4130						
Start of B4493	East	66	58	36	37	It is clear that the predicted traffic flows along the A4130 route within the Vale are within capacity at nearly all locations and are similar for Stage 1 (South East Plan growth) vs. Stage 5b (Local Plan 2031 growth). This means that the proposed Vale housing target, along with the identified mitigation package, does not worsen traffic flows on this route. Only one location on this route is worsened to become at capacity at Stage 5b. This will be investigated further.
	West	87	79	83	97	
East of A34 Roundabout	East	30	36	41	33	
	West	35	32	46	29	
West of A34 Roundabout	East	44	41	25	45	
	West	32	45	82	63	
Milton Hill	East	36	43	32	46	
	West	42	50	30	38	
Science Bridge	East	97	83	20	12	
	West	13	20	92	50	

	> 95 %	Route at capacity (higher figures indicate journey delays)
	> 85 % < 95 %	Route close to capacity
	< 85 %	Route within capacity

Other factors

The Vale of White Horse District Council is working closely with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to plan for the Science Vale area and for the settlement of Didcot. This will include the preparation of a Joint Science Vale Area Action Plan (AAP), which will be informed by more detailed work to investigate opportunities for further highway mitigation. This is in addition to significant work being undertaken to enhance public transport, particularly along the 'knowledge spine' between Harwell Campus, Didcot, Oxford and Bicester, with improved bus services, facilities for cycling and upgraded rail services. These measures will also contribute to improving the performance of this route, especially by providing a credible alternative to Vale residents, for making local journeys. For example, a high frequency, high quality bus corridor with appropriate bus priority where required is proposed between Harwell Campus and Didcot Railway Station and Town Centre.

Table 3.5: Traffic flows (percentage capacity at 2031) along the A415 corridor within the Vale of White Horse at Stage 1 (South East Plan growth with some mitigation) and Stage 5b (Local Plan 2031 growth with final mitigation package).

Location	Direction	AM Peak		PM Peak		Comments
		Stage 1	Stage 5b	Stage 1	Stage 5b	
A415						
West of Frilford	East	98	101	88	90	For most locations on this route, there is little change between the traffic flows at Stage 1 (South East Plan growth) vs. Stage 5b (Local Plan 2031 growth). This means that the additional housing growth is having only limited impact on the traffic flows of the route.
	West	20	26	51	52	
East of Frilford	East	81	81	48	45	However, there are instances where the route is at capacity in both the AM and PM peak periods.
	West	63	71	98	99	
West of A34	East	104	107	64	60	
	West	33	73	101	106	

	> 95 %	Route at capacity (higher figures indicate journey delays)
	> 85 % < 95 %	Route close to capacity
	< 85 %	Route within capacity

Other factors

The A415 corridor is a key east-west route, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) is planning to undertake a targeted Study for parts of the A415 to assess what improvements might be possible. This corridor is particularly constrained through Marcham Village itself and will limit what can be done on along this route. This will include analysis and improvements to the Frilford Lights junction. Wider proposed enhancements to public transport and cycling routes, will help to improve the performance of the A415 corridor.

Table 3.6: Traffic flows (percentage capacity at 2031) along the A417 corridor within the Vale of White Horse at Stage 1 (South East Plan growth with some mitigation) and Stage 5b (Local Plan 2031 growth with final mitigation package).

Location	Direction	AM Peak		PM Peak		Comments
		Stage 1	Stage 5b	Stage 1	Stage 5b	
A417						
East of Wantage	East	124	120	74	83	The predicted traffic flows on this route clearly show some worsening of conditions between Stage 1 (South East Plan growth) vs. Stage 5b (Local Plan 2031 growth) and there are a number of locations that are predicted to be at capacity in 2031. However, further measures are being developed to improve traffic flows on this route (see below).
	West	57	63	101	101	
West of Featherbed	East	107	108	80	89	
	West	64	65	101	101	
East of Featherbed	East	70	73	58	60	
	West	47	50	100	95	
East of A4130	East	62	67	82	88	
	West	59	78	63	71	

	> 95 %	Route at capacity (higher figures indicate journey delays)
	> 85 % < 95 %	Route close to capacity
	< 85 %	Route within capacity

Other factors

There are proposals for increasing the frequency of public transport between Wantage and Grove, Harwell Campus and Didcot. Furthermore, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) is progressing a Corridor Study for the A417, which will identify junction enhancements and a dedicated cycle route between Wantage, Harwell and Didcot. The potential longer-term opening of a railway station at Grove could also assist with improving the performance of this route.

Table 3.7: Traffic flows (percentage capacity at 2031) along the A420 corridor within the Vale of White Horse at Stage 1 (South East Plan growth with some mitigation) and Stage 5b (Local Plan 2031 growth with final mitigation package).

Location	Direction	AM Peak		PM Peak		Comments
		Stage 1	Stage 5b	Stage 1	Stage 5b	
A420						
Botley Interchange	East	103	102	105	105	<p>For most locations on this route, there is little change between the traffic flows at Stage 1 (South East Plan growth) vs. Stage 5b (Local Plan 2031 growth). This means that the additional housing growth is having only limited impact on the traffic flows of the route.</p> <p>However, there are instances where the route is at capacity in both the AM and PM peak periods.</p> <p>Other factors</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council is developing a Corridor Strategy for the A420 as part of Local Transport Plan 4. This will identify further mitigation including junction enhancements to help improve traffic flows on this route. This is in addition to enhancements to the Route 66 Premium bus route between Swindon and Oxford.</p>
	West	33	31	48	48	
South of Cumnor	East	86	94	66	70	
	West	60	56	94	93	
East of Appleton	East	93	94	66	70	
	West	51	49	82	83	
South of Appleton	East	65	63	45	50	
	West	44	43	72	72	
East of Fyfield	East	103	103	73	78	
	West	70	68	100	100	
West of A415	East	61	62	48	50	
	West	25	25	36	36	
East of Buckland	East	85	100	73	80	
	West	65	69	89	88	
West of Buckland	East	108	106	85	92	
	West	83	89	98	98	
North of A417	East	51	53	78	79	
	West	73	69	47	51	
South of A417	East	100	100	76	81	
	West	52	54	66	70	

	> 95 %	Route at capacity (higher figures indicate journey delays)
	> 85 % < 95 %	Route close to capacity
	< 85 %	Route within capacity

Harwell/ Didcot High-Performance Public Transport Study 2014²¹

- 3.16 A feasibility study has been prepared that examines the potential for the delivery of a priority bus system between Harwell Campus and Didcot. This system could be routed through the proposed development at Harwell Campus and at Valley Park (within Harwell Parish in the Vale but adjoining the settlement of Didcot).
- 3.17 The study concludes that the system has a favourable business case. It will be progressed in partnership with the bus companies, developers and local authorities.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)²²

- 3.18 An Infrastructure Delivery Plan is being published alongside the Publication Version of the Local Plan 2031. This sets out the infrastructure identified to be necessary to be delivered alongside the Local Plan 2031 development. It includes the highways infrastructure summarised in this topic paper and set out within the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan and Vale ETI.
- 3.19 Furthermore, the IDP is supported by a Viability Study, which demonstrates that identified infrastructure can be funded and delivered and so meets the requirements set out within the NPPG to highlight required infrastructure and how it can be funded.

Other Work

- 3.20 In addition to the work contributing to the Vale ETI Study, various other work is also under way to help to minimise the impact of new development on the highway network. This involves work being led by Oxfordshire County Council to maximise the areas' potential and deliver a fit-for-purpose transport network. These include:

- ***Localised improvements***

Oxfordshire County Council is completing a series of work to look at the localised impact of our proposals. This includes working with local communities and seeking to address issues, such as access to the A417 from villages between Wantage and Blewbury. In addition to the A417, work will also be focused on the A338, A4130, A415 and A420.

Early work to develop the A420 Corridor Study confirms the importance of delivering upgrades to A420 junctions at Shrivenham and Faringdon and these areas need to be safeguarded by the Local Plan 2031.

- ***City Deal***

²¹ www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence

²² www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence

The Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal will provide £95 million of government investment across the County and help to maximise Oxfordshire's potential. One feature of City Deal is to help deliver a new Oxfordshire transit system that aims to provide:

- access to high-quality, high-frequency services on the core network, operating on a 'turn-up and go' basis throughout the day
- integrated connections at the core interchanges for journeys both within the Oxford City-Region and with international gateways such as London (Heathrow) and London (St Pancras)
- flexibility throughout their journey, with the ability to switch between modes of travel without penalty or the need to make separate payments, and
- using a single transaction and journey planning solution (such as the Oyster Card used in London)

- **A34 Strategy**

Oxfordshire County Council is working closely with the Highways Agency (HA) to develop a Route Based Strategy (RBS) for the A34 and has completed an Oxfordshire specific RBS for this route within the County.

Oxfordshire County Council will work with the HA to inform the next stage of the national RBS process (which continues through to February 2015) and look to push forward feasibility work to access part of the £15 billion the HA has allocated for 2015 to 2020 for national network enhancements, so that major route capacity enhancements can be implemented on the A34 in this funding period.

- **Public transport**

Various work is under way, by both transport providers and OCC, in partnership with the Vale of White Horse District council to upgrade existing services, particularly between key routes and to introduce new services to ensure the proposed housing growth is connected by public transport. This will include the development of a high performance public transport route connecting Harwell Campus, Didcot and some of the proposed new residential areas.

- **Rail Strategy**

Work on improving how Vale residents access the rail network and making improvements to facilities at Stations is also under way. Although not located in the Vale, Didcot Station provides important access to the rail network for Vale residents and is to be the focus for investment that will lead to a step change in the capacity of the station.

This will lead to significantly enhanced facilities for rail services and the delivery of an integrated transport hub with facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and bus users. This breaks down into several discrete projects including some that have already been successfully delivered:

- increase in station car parking capacity
- northern pedestrian entrance
- new station building
- new platform
- enhanced track capacity between Didcot and Oxford to enable 4 trains an hour to operate between these stations, and
- enhanced interchange with increased numbers of buses connecting with employment and residential sites.

The council continues to support the long-term ambition to re-open a railway station at Grove and is working with rail operators and OCC to ensure opportunities to achieve this ambition are maximised.

- ***Cycling***

As part of Local Transport Plan 4, an Oxfordshire Cycling Strategy will be included, and annexed to that will be a specific Science Vale area cycling strategy. This will set out the Oxfordshire County Council's ambition for cycling and will assist with securing future funding for upgrading cycling facilities across the area.

Issues (Challenges and Opportunities)

- 4.0 It is important the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1 is informed by national, regional and local policy and by appropriate and up-to-date evidence, including the responses to each stage of our consultation processes.
- 4.1 This section provides a brief summary of those issues identified in Sections 2 and 3 relating to the policy review and evidence base, which the Local Plan 2031 should address.

Summary of Issues

Policy Review – the local plan should:

- promote development at locations that are or can be made sustainable and seek to minimise trip generation
- protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport located where the need to travel is minimised
- promote mixed use development, where opportunities for meeting day-to-day needs can be met on-site and for larger-scale development, ensure that key services are provided on-site
- support the need for Transport Assessments and Travel Plans to be prepared for proposals that would create significant transport movements
- highlight infrastructure requirements for inclusion in infrastructure delivery and spending plans, linked to CIL, S106 and other funding sources
- where new development creates a need for additional infrastructure, agree a programme of delivery before the development begins
- support the delivery of highway and other key infrastructure identified in the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (and supported by the Strategic Economic Plan)
- provide support to the Better Broadband project to ensure new development can be connected to superfast broadband without additional post development works
- ensure development is not permitted unless the necessary improvements to the transport network are secured
- continue to provide support for the reopening of a railway station at Grove, and
- continue to provide support to Oxfordshire County Council and other stakeholders to deliver wider initiatives such as the A34 Route Based Strategy or county wide public transport and cycling schemes.

Evidence: previous consultation responses – the local plan should:

- ensure the consultation responses to each stage of preparing the local plan are taken into consideration
- ensure that transport infrastructure that is required is implemented at an early stage of development
- give consideration to each of the main routes throughout the district, including the A338, A34, A417, A420 and A4130
- improve the balance between the location of housing and employment and seek to locate development in the most sustainable locations

Other evidence: – the local plan should:

- support the delivery of transport mitigation measures identified in the Vale Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) Study.
- safeguard land to ensure the delivery of a wider range of highway schemes is not compromised for the longer term should they be needed. This includes:
 - South Abingdon-on-Thames Bypass, and
 - Western Wantage Link Road
- provide strategic policy support for the development of a Route Based Strategy for the A34, and
- provide strategic policy support for the re-opening of Grove Railway Station.

Strategic Policy Options

- 5.0 Transport and accessibility clearly forms an essential component of supporting the delivery of sustainable development and needs to be central to the Local Plan 2031. A range of specific requirements have been identified relating to this topic area, which the Local Plan 2031 should address, as set out in the earlier sections of this topic paper.
- 5.1 Perhaps most importantly, the selection of the proposed strategic development sites, set out in the Local Plan 2031, have been informed by an understanding of traffic impacts (through the ETI) and have been located in accordance with the spatial strategy. The strategy seeks to focus growth around the Science Vale area, where the majority of new employment and infrastructure is located, thus helping to contribute towards delivering sustainable development and helping to reduce the need to travel.
- 5.2 The Draft Local Plan 2031 (February 2013) contained four policies relating to transport and accessibility. Following consultation, further work to develop evidence and collaborative working with Oxfordshire County Council, some additional policies were added and others were split to more fully address specific issues in the final version of the Local Plan 2031 policies relating to transport.
- 5.3 The Publication Version of the Local Plan 2031 (November 2014) contains nine policies specifically relating to the transport and accessibility topic. These are listed by Table 5.1, which also summarises any significant changes to those policies that were set out within the Draft Local Plan 2031.
- 5.4 It is also important that our policies are also tested through Sustainability Appraisal (SA). This is a legislative requirement of the plan making process and has taken place alongside the preparation of the plan.
- 5.5 The SA has been prepared by the consultants 'URS' and has followed appropriate guidance and legislation. The SA has tested the transport related policies and the full SA Report should be referenced for the full appraisal findings²³.

²³ For more information see the Sustainability Appraisal at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/evidence

Table 5.1: Summary of policies set out within the Local Plan 2031 relating to Transport and Accessibility.

Identified Policy Requirement	Draft Policy		Comments
	Draft Local Plan 2031 (Feb 2013)	Publication Version Local Plan 2031 (Nov 2014)	
Safeguard land identified as being required to deliver the necessary highway infrastructure to ensure the plan contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development, as identified in the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan, Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan, Vale of White Horse Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) Study and as set out within the Vale Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	<p>Core Policy 11: Safeguarding of Land for Transport Schemes in the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area</p> <p>Core Policy 15: Safeguarding of Land for Transport Schemes in the South East Vale Sub-Area</p>	<p>Core Policy 12: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements within the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area</p> <p>Core Policy 18: Safeguarding of Land for Transport Schemes in the South East Vale Sub-Area</p> <p>Core Policy 21: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements within the Western Vale Sub-Area</p>	Core Policy 21 was added to reflect the need identified within the ETI, and expressed through consultation responses, to deliver junction improvements to the A420 at Faringdon and Shrivenham.
Support the delivery of highway infrastructure critical to the delivery of the proposed growth within the Science Vale area, as identified in the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan, Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan, Vale of White Horse Evaluation of Transport Impacts Study and as set out within the Vale Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	<p>Core Policy 14: Transport Delivery for the South East Vale Sub-Area</p>	<p>Core Policy 17: Delivery of Strategic Highway Improvements within the South-East Vale Sub-Area.</p>	Additional mitigation measures have been added to this policy to reflect the final Vale ETI and wider evidence.

Identified Policy Requirement	Draft Policy		Comments
	Draft Local Plan 2031 (Feb 2013)	Publication Version Local Plan 2031 (Nov 2014)	
Supporting the ambition to re-open the railway station at Grove, as set out in the Local Plan 2011, Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan, Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and as identified through consultation on early stages of preparing the Local Plan 2031.	N/A	Core Policy 19: Re-opening of Grove Railway Station.	This policy was added to the final version of the plan to better reflect the identified ambition, to respond to consultation responses and to ensure it formed part of the strategic policy framework for the district within Part 1 of the Local Plan 2031.
Promoting sustainable transport and accessibility and public transport, cycling and walking, including the requirement for major development to prepare a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan to support the proposal and inform the identification of any site specific mitigation as required by national and local policy and as expressed through consultation responses on early stages of preparing the Local Plan 2031.	Core Policy 29: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility	Core Policy 33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility Core Policy 35: Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking	These policies were split into separate parts following informal advice from Oxfordshire County Council and Vale of White Horse Officers to improve its useability. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans are required for 'major development' as this term is clearly defined by Regulations ²⁴ . The highway network is highly constrained within parts of the Vale at peak hours and it is important that any cumulative impact from development proposals is fully considered.

²⁴ as defined by Development Management Procedure Order 2010.

Identified Policy Requirement	Draft Policy		Comments
	Draft Local Plan 2031 (Feb 2013)	Publication Version Local Plan 2031 (Nov 2014)	
Providing strategic support for the development and implementation of a Route Based Strategy for the A34 as identified as a requirement through collaborative working with Oxfordshire County Council and consultation responses to early stages of preparing the Local Plan 2031.	N/A	Core Policy 34: A34 Strategy	This policy was added to the final version of the plan to ensure the development and implementation of a Route Based Strategy for the A34 was supported through strategic policy within Part 1 of the Local Plan 2031.
To ensure that new development is enabled to connect to superfast broadband without any post development works and complement the Better Broadband Project as set out within the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan.	Core Policy 29: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility	Core Policy 36: Electronic Communications	This policy was split to form a separate policy following informal advice from Oxfordshire County Council and Vale of White Horse Officers to improve its useability.

Conclusions

- 6.0 Transport and accessibility are an essential part of the Local Plan 2031 and contribute to the delivery of sustainable development. The Local Plan 2031 will help to reduce the need to travel, maximise the use of sustainable forms of travel and deliver a fit-for-purpose transport system that will unlock the area's world-class assets and support innovation led growth.
- 6.1 There are a number of key requirements the Local Plan 2031 should respond to relating to national or local policy and guidance, consultation feedback and from up-to-date evidence.
- 6.2 In particular, the Local Plan 2031 responds to proposals set out within the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) by safeguarding land critical for the delivery of highways infrastructure to support sustainable development. In turn, the new evidence prepared to support the Local Plan 2031, will also inform future iterations of these other plans (LTP and SEP).
- 6.3 A significant package of new highway infrastructure is proposed to minimise any harmful impacts associated with the proposed housing and employment growth and these are set out within the Vale Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). Significant funding has already been secured to deliver this infrastructure package. Further work is ongoing to improve the performance of the main transport corridors across the district as well as enhancing public transport and cycling.
- 6.4 The ETI Study confirms that the proposed infrastructure package will be adequate in off-setting any impacts associated with growth. In nearly all cases the transport network is predicted to perform at 2031 at the same level, as if only the South East Plan housing target were delivered, as opposed to the actual proposed target (20,560 new homes up to 2031).
- 6.5 The Local Plan 2031 provides support for sustainable transport and accessibility and for promoting public transport, cycling and walking.
- 6.6 Where there are transport network capacity constraints on the network at peak hours, for the most part these already exist. In combination with the identified additional mitigation these constraints are not made materially worse for the network taken as a whole. Nor do they trigger the test set out in the NPPF, which states that development should only be prevented on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe²⁵.

²⁵ CLG (2012). National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 32.

Appendix 1: A review of relevant South East Plan policies for their consistency with the NPPF.

Policy	Summary	Consistency with the NPPF	Identified Issues
<p>SP3: Urban focus and urban renaissance</p>	<p>This policy states that local planning authorities should formulate policies to meet a range of criteria, including:</p> <p>‘Use strategic land availability assessments to identify the scope for redevelopment and intensification of urban areas, seeking opportunities for intensification around transport hubs and interchanges’.</p>	<p>Partially consistent</p> <p>The NPPF continues to advocate development in sustainable locations close to urban areas and the use of SHLAA’s to assess the availability, suitability and economic viability of sites.</p>	<p>This policy should be considered alongside the NPPF to help inform the policy development for the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1.</p>
<p>CC7: Infrastructure and Implementation</p>	<p>This policy sets out the approach to delivering new infrastructure. It states, for example, that:</p> <p>‘Where new development creates a need for additional infrastructure a programme of delivery should be agreed before development begins’.</p> <p>And</p> <p>‘Development documents will identify the necessary additional infrastructure and services required to serve the area and the development they propose together with the means, broad cost and timing of their provision related to the timing of development’</p> <p>It also states that the ‘role and scope of development contributions towards infrastructure’ should be set out.</p>	<p>Partially consistent</p> <p>This broad approach is consistent with Paragraph 31 of the NPPF. Whilst there is no specific mention of programmes of delivery within the NPPF, Paragraphs 176 and 177 explain that it is important to ensure that ‘there is a reasonable prospect that planned infrastructure is deliverable in a timely fashion’.</p>	<p>This policy should be considered alongside the NPPF to help inform the policy development for the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1.</p>

Policy	Summary	Consistency with the NPPF	Identified Issues
T1: Manage and Invest	<p>This policy is relevant to the preparation of the Local Transport Plan as well as Development Plans and sets out criteria for ensuring an appropriate approach to transport. It includes, for example the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • achieve a re-balancing of the transport system in favour of sustainable modes • foster and promote an improved and integrated network of public transport services • encourage development that is located and designed to reduce average journey lengths • improving overall levels of accessibility. 	<p>Partially Consistent</p> <p>Chapter 4 of the NPPF focuses the need to reduce the need to travel and improve sustainable modes of transport, both through improved networks and the mix of land uses, and the location of development.</p> <p>The NPPF does not make specific reference to all those criteria included in this policy.</p>	<p>This policy should be considered alongside the NPPF to help inform the policy development for the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1.</p>
T2: Mobility Management	<p>This policy sets out requirements to help achieve a rebalancing of the transport system in favour of sustainable modes. It included criteria designed to support a range of sustainable modes, including for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the scope and management of public transport services, and • improvements in the extent and quality of pedestrian and cycle routes. 	<p>Fully Consistent</p> <p>The approach in this policy is broadly consistent with Chapter 4 of the NPPF, particularly in the encouragement and promotion of sustainable modes of transport, the reduction in the need to travel and promotion and encouragement of other initiatives.</p>	<p>None.</p>
T4: Parking	<p>This policy sets out criteria for how local plans should consider parking provision.</p>	<p>Partially consistent</p> <p>Whilst the specific requirements of this policy are not detailed in the NPPF, parking provision is addressed by Paragraphs 39 and 40.</p>	<p>This policy should be considered alongside the NPPF to help inform the policy development for the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1.</p>

Policy	Summary	Consistency with the NPPF	Identified Issues
T5: Travel Plans and advice	This policy sets out the requirement for travel plans to be developed for major travel generating developments.	Fully consistent This is fully consistent with Paragraphs 32 And 36 of the NPPF.	None
T6: Communications Technology	This policy highlights the potential for investing in communications technology to reduce the need to travel and should be taken into consideration when identifying future transport needs.	Fully consistent This is consistent with Paragraph 29 and Chapter 5 of the NPPF.	None.
T7: Rural transport	This policy seeks to encourage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community-based transport in areas of need • looking for opportunities to improve provision for cyclists and pedestrians, and • develop innovative and adaptable approaches to public transport in rural areas. 	Partially consistent The framework as a whole encourages the use and promotion of sustainable modes of transport but is not specific about rural initiatives.	This policy should be considered alongside the NPPF to help inform the policy development for the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1.
T8: Regional Spokes	This policy sets out requirements to develop regional spokes to support economic activity through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivering improvements in journey time reliability • developing a complementary and integrated network of rail and express bus/coach services 	Partially consistent The specification of regional spokes through the South East Plan is not reflected in the NPPF. However, the principles of the policy in terms of improving access to rail, international gateways and focusing economic activity at these important areas is supported by the NPPF.	This policy should be considered alongside the NPPF to help inform the policy development for the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1.

Policy	Summary	Consistency with the NPPF	Identified Issues
T14: Transport Investment and Management Priorities	<p>This policy sets out a programme of regional investment into transport priority schemes. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improvements to the A34, and • the accessing Oxford scheme <p>The policy required a regional implementation plan to be produced to clarify the partnerships, policy links, timing, scale and cost of the interventions necessary to support the spatial strategy.</p> <p>It also stated that local authorities should develop policies to safeguard land to where required to support delivery of transport policy</p>	<p>Partially Consistent</p> <p>The NPPF encourages joint working with neighbouring authorities to identify priorities through the Duty-to-Cooperate. It therefore remains important to set clear priorities for larger than local areas, particularly to assist applications for funding when it becomes available</p> <p>The NPPF supports the principle outlined in this policy that land required for key projects should be safeguarded. Paragraph 41 states that: ‘Local planning authorities should identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice.’</p>	
CO1: Core strategy	<p>This policy sets out the strategy for Central Oxfordshire to be a world leader in education, science and technology by building on the sub-regions strengths.</p> <p>The policy includes criteria to ensure appropriate infrastructure delivery, protect and enhance the environment where the need to travel by can be reduced.</p>	<p>Partially consistent</p> <p>This policy sets a spatial strategy for the Central Oxfordshire area. It is not consistent with the NPPF, which does not provide area specific policy.</p> <p>However, the principles of the policy are consistent with the NPPF, including core-planning principles 8 and 11.</p>	<p>This policy is partially consistent with the NPPF and remains a valid and appropriate strategy ton inform the Central Oxfordshire sub-region. It should inform policy development for the Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1.</p>
CO5: Transport	<p>This policy sets out the commitment from the County Council, local authorities and other stakeholders to work together to support the meet strategic and local access requirements while reducing the need to travel, and encouraging the use of more sustainable modes.</p>	<p>Fully Consistent</p> <p>The specific references in policies that relate to specific areas are not directly relevant to the NPPF. However, the principle of this policy is supported by Paragraph 31 of the NPPF.</p>	<p>None</p>

Policy	Summary	Consistency with the NPPF	Identified Issues
	Identified priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving access to Oxford, and • aiding the delivery of the Central Oxfordshire Sub-Regional Strategy. 		

Appendix 2: A review of relevant Vale Local Plan 2011 policies for their consistency with the NPPF.

Policy	Summary	Consistency with the NPPF	Identified Issues
TR1 Wantage and Grove Integrated Transport and Land Use Study	This policy requires developer contributions from development in the Wantage and Grove area towards the delivery of a Wantage Relief Road Scheme.	Consistent, in part, with the NPPF Whilst the NPPF does not make reference to any specific schemes, the principle of the policy is consistent with Chapter 4 of the NPPF.	This policy should inform policy development for inclusion in the Vale Local Plan 2031 Part 1
TR2 & TR3 Implications of the Integrated Transport Strategies for New Development	TR2 This policy sets out a series of requirements for development to contribute where they are likely to result in an increase in traffic. These include, for example, promoting sustainable transport choices and delivering highway improvements.	Fully Consistent	None
	TR 3 This policy identifies specific locations in proximity to the A34, where development will not be permitted unless necessary improvements to the transport network are secured. The locations identified are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milton Park • Milton Heights • Harwell Campus • West of Didcot, and • Milton Hill. 	Consistent, in part, with the NPPF Whilst the NPPF does not make reference to any specific schemes, the principle of the policy is consistent with Chapter 4 of the NPPF.	This policy should inform policy development for inclusion in the Vale Local Plan 2031 Part 1

Policy	Summary	Consistency with the NPPF	Identified Issues
TR4 & TR5 The National Cycle Network	TR4 This policy ensures the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are taken into account in determining proposals for development. This policy is not saved.	Covered by other Local Plan polices e.g. DC5, which will continue to be saved.	None.
	TR5 This policy states that permission will not be granted for development which inhibits the use of existing footpaths or the cycle network for specified locations unless safe, direct and convenient alternatives can be found.	Fully Consistent	None
TR6 Public Car Parking in the Main Settlements	This policy safeguards existing parking provision within the main settlements and safeguards an area for additional parking in Wantage.	Fully Consistent	None
TR7 Rail Services – Grove Station	This policy safeguards land for delivering the re-opening of a railway station at Grove.	Consistent, in part, with the NPPF Whilst the NPPF does not make reference to any specific schemes, the principle of the policy is consistent with Chapter 4 of the NPPF.	This policy should inform policy development for inclusion in the Vale Local Plan 2031 Part 1

Policy	Summary	Consistency with the NPPF	Identified Issues
TR8 Public Transport Interchange Facilities	<p>This policy provides support for proposals to improve the interchange between different modes of public transport.</p> <p>This policy is not saved</p>	Fully Consistent	None
TR9 Transport Assessments and Travel Plans in association with Major Development	<p>This policy sets out the need for a transport assessment and travel plan to be prepared for development proposals which have significant transport proposals.</p> <p>This policy is not saved</p>	Fully Consistent	None
TR10 Lorries and Roadside Services	<p>This policy states that proposals for roadside services will not be permitted other than at three specified sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milton Heights • Buckland, and • Park Road, Faringdon. 	Fully Consistent	None

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