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# Sustainability Appraisal Report

## Botley Centre SPD

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October 2015

**BDP.**

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## 1.0 COMPONENTS THAT MAKE UP THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

- 1.1 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a process for considering and communicating the likely environmental and sustainability effects of a draft plan, and reasonable alternatives, with a particular emphasis on preventing, reducing and as full as possible offsetting and significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan.
- 1.2 This document is a SA Report for the Botley Centre SPD. It has been undertaken in line with the procedures prescribed by Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which were prepared in order to transpose into national law the European Union Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive and guidance within the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).
- 1.3 While there is no requirement for an SA to be prepared for a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), SPD's may require Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Given the existing and potential for environmental effects related to transport, air quality and noise it is considered appropriate to undertake an SA incorporating SEA for Botley. The contents of the SA Report are in line with the requirements of Regulation 12 and Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, as set out in the following table below.

Information to be included in an Environmental Report under the SEA Regulations 2004 (Regulation 12 and Schedule 2)
1. An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;
2. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan;
3. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;
4. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds(a) and the Habitats Directive;
5. The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.
6. The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, on issues such as— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) biodiversity;</li> <li>(b) population;</li> <li>(c) human health;</li> <li>(d) fauna;</li> <li>(e) flora;</li> <li>(f) soil;</li> <li>(g) water;</li> <li>(h) air;</li> <li>(i) climatic factors;</li> <li>(j) material assets;</li> <li>(k) cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage;</li> <li>(l) landscape; and</li> <li>(m) the inter-relationship between the issues referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (l);</li> </ul>
7. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;
8. An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;
9. A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation
10. A non-technical summary of the information provided in section 2

1.4 The objective of this SA is to inform the development of the Botley Centre SPD. It considers the SPD's implications from a social, economic and environmental perspective, using the baseline data and sustainability objectives already set out in the '*Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report – Botley Centre SPD*' (June 2015) and the '*Sustainability Appraisal of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – SA Report*' (October 2014) for the emerging Local Plan 2031. The findings of the SA have been used to inform and assist the SPD process, for example by adapting objectives, identifying issues and understanding the wider development context of the SPD.

**SA Methodology**

1.5 The NPPG provides guidance on the content of the SA. This report provides an overview of Stage A as well as detailed information on Stage B of the SA process. The SA Report was consulted on and amended as part of Stage C and D and these changes have been incorporated into this report, along with proposals for the post adoption reporting and monitoring in Stage E.

<p><b>Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives</li> <li>• Collect baseline information</li> <li>• Identify sustainability issues and problems</li> <li>• Develop the sustainability appraisal framework</li> <li>• Consult the consultation bodies on the scope of the sustainability appraisal report</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage B: Developing and Refining Alternatives and Assessing Effects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test the objectives (of the SPD) against the SA framework</li> <li>• Develop the options (of the SPD) including reasonable alternatives</li> <li>• Evaluate the likely effects (of the SPD) and alternatives</li> <li>• Consider ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects</li> <li>• Propose measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the SPD</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage C: Prepare the sustainability appraisal report</b></p>
<p><b>Stage D: Seek representations on the sustainability appraisal report from consultation bodies and the public</b></p>
<p><b>Stage E: Post adoption reporting and monitoring</b></p>

1.6 These stages provide the structure for the contents of the following SA Report.

## 2.0 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 2.1 This section provides a non-technical summary of the SA Report for Botley Centre SPD, setting out the process and what changes it has brought about.
- 2.2 The Botley Centre SPD has been prepared by the Vale of White Horse District Council (the Vale) in order to provide a framework for the future development of the Botley area. The SPD creates a flexible strategy to guide a high quality, prestigious development that supports the existing and future local community and attracts investment to serve the wider district and meet local regeneration aspirations.
- 2.3 The objective of this SA is to inform the development of the Botley Centre SPD. It considers the SPD's implications from a social, economic and environmental perspective, using the relevant baseline data and sustainability objectives identified in the Botley Centre SA Scoping Report (June 2015). The findings of the SA have been used to inform and assist the SPD process, for example by adapting objectives, identifying issues and understanding the wider development context of the SPD.
- 2.4 The NPPG provides guidance on the content of the SA. This SA report provides an overview of Stage A as well as detailed information on Stage B of the SA process.

### **Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope (Stage A)**

- 2.5 The SA has been conducted to meet the requirements of the SEA Regulations for the environmental assessment of policies, plans and programmes (PPPs). The SA report has considered PPP's at an international, national and local scale. This has focused on the National Planning Policy Framework (March, 2012) and Adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 (July, 2006) (Saved Policies). Consideration has also been given to the emerging Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Local Plan Part 1. The emerging Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2014 and the examination commenced in September 2015. This draft policy may be subject to change following the examination and on this basis it has been afforded limited weight within the SPD.
- 2.6 Baseline information gathered for Botley Centre contained within the SA covered the following topics:
- *Social:* Population, deprivation, housing and educational attainment
  - *Environmental:* Transport, historic environment, natural environment
  - *Economic:* Economic Activity
- 2.7 Baseline information was also gathered through urban design analysis. This analysis identified a series of issues and opportunities, the main points of which are:
- Issues:*
- Poor pedestrian environment with poor quality routes that lack surveillance
  - Disjointed vehicle dominated site with multiple car parks and dead spaces
  - The wide vehicular route along West Way to the north inhibits safe pedestrian movement
  - Limited retail offer that lacks cafes, restaurants and general evening economy
  - Lack of public open space
- Opportunities:*
- There is an existing mix of community facilities and businesses on site and there is an opportunity to improve the diversity of uses and extend evening activity
  - Opportunity to retain and enhance the active retail frontage along the West Way
  - Size of the site is of a significant scale to help the delivery of regeneration principles
  - Opportunity to improve permeability through the site and provide pedestrian and cycle links which follow desire lines and are supported by active frontages
  - Improve pedestrian environment and crossings on West Way to reduce severance and car dominance.
- 2.8 Drawing on a review of the baseline information, a range of sustainability issues were then identified, covering a wide variety of themes from environmental, economic and social topic areas. These issues

were finalised following post-consultation amendments due to responses from the relevant statutory bodies after the Stage A SA Scoping Report (June 2015).

- 2.9 These sustainability issues led to the development of a set of eleven SA objectives for Botley Centre that are sustainable. These are:
1. Provide sufficient suitable homes including affordable homes in Botley
  2. Ensure the availability of high quality services and facilities in Botley
  3. Reduce the need to travel and Improve provisions for walking, cycling and public transport and reduce road congestion in Botley
  4. Provide high quality placemaking which creates an inclusive environment for the local Botley community
  5. Provide high quality placemaking which creates an inclusive environment for the local Botley community
  6. Support a strong and Sustainable economy within Botley
  7. Improve and protect the natural environment including biodiversity, water and soil quality in Botley
  8. Enhance the character and identity of Botley and protect the local townscape and cultural heritage
  9. Reduce air, noise and light pollution in Botley
  10. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the use of resources and improve resource efficiency in Botley
  11. Increase resilience to climate change in Botley

#### **Developing and Refining Alternatives and Assessing Effects (Stage B)**

- 2.10 The Botley Centre SPD is underpinned by a vision, which has been informed by West Way Community Concern's vision for the future development of Botley, to inspire regeneration and ensure that the needs of existing and future communities are met.
- 2.11 This vision is underpinned by nine overarching SPD objectives, which seek to address the site issues, embrace opportunities and deliver the vision for Botley. These are assessed against the SA Framework by undertaking a comparison with the SA objectives, which indicates the likelihood of the various SPD objectives reaching the sustainability targets developed in the SA as well as areas of potential incompatibility and areas where the SPD objectives can be adapted and strengthened.
- 2.12 During the development of the SPD, development scenarios were created for the site and these were used to test the vision, objectives and design principles of the SPD for their sustainability as well as to ensure their deliverability. These scenarios assessed the sustainability implications of varying degrees of development on site from minimum intervention, medium mixed-use intervention, medium residential-led intervention to maximum intervention.
- 2.13 The likely sustainability impacts of the SPD, both positive and negative where relevant, were then considered as part of the assessment of scenarios.
- 2.14 Following this the SPD was considered as a whole to identify the significant potential social, environmental and economic effects of implementing it, as well as measures to maximise/mitigate these effects. The majority of sustainability objectives are affected positively by the implementation of the SPD (e.g. SA objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11).
- 2.15 Where potential negative effects are identified under certain objectives, mainly within the environmental dimension of sustainability (e.g. SA objectives 4, 7, 9 and 10), this tends to be limited to certain criteria under an objective with others being more positive. These negative effects will particularly occur during the short-term construction phase and are considered acceptable to realise the long-term benefits highlighted above.
- 2.16 The SA Report identifies implementation and mitigation measures to manage the identified effects (i.e. maximise the beneficial effect of positive impacts or control/mitigate the adverse effect of negative impacts), and these measures have been incorporated into the SPD through its various objectives, design principles and supporting text.

- 2.17 The SA Report and Draft SPD were published for consultation from the 21 August 2015 to the 25 September 2015 (Stages C and D). Representations from the public and statutory consultees were received on both documents. Following review of these representations the Vale has made amendments to the SPD and SA Report which have been appraised and updated within the final adopted documents.
- 2.18 Monitoring measures for the significant sustainability effects of implementing the SPD are informed by Section 36 of Part 4 of the '*Sustainability Appraisal of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – SA Report*' (October 2014). As the Botley Centre SPD and associated SA Report is based on baseline data and sustainability objectives already set out in the Vale's wider SA Report, these measures are therefore directly relatable to Botley.

**Next Steps – Post adoption reporting and monitoring**

- 2.19 The next steps will involve post adoption reporting and monitoring (Stage E) to identify any significant effects of implementing the SPD and respond to any adverse effects.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND**

3.1 This section describes the background to the SPD and the legislative requirements for SA.

#### **Botley Centre SPD**

3.2 The Botley Centre area (the site) is situated within the Vale of White Horse District Council (the Vale) and forms a Local Service Centre for the Vale and Oxford Fringe area, approximately 2km west of the City of Oxford.

3.3 Botley Centre SPD has been prepared by the Vale of White Horse District Council (the Vale) in order to provide a framework for the future development of the Botley area. The SPD creates a flexible strategy to guide a high quality, prestigious development that supports the existing and future local community and attracts investment to serve the wider district and meet local regeneration aspirations. In order to achieve this, the SPD:

- Elaborates on the relevant national and local policies;
- Articulates an exciting and bold vision to inspire regeneration and ensure the needs of existing and future communities are met;
- Offers an aspirational set of objectives to address issues and capitalise on opportunities to ensure long term physical, social and environmental regeneration in Botley;
- Develops a clear set of development principles to guide the detailed nature and design of development thereby providing greater certainty on the form and quality of acceptable development including the public realm and guidance for developers; and
- Provides assistance to the Council in the assessment of planning applications.

3.4 It is the aspiration of the Vale to enhance Botley Centre's offering and range of uses to better reflect its status as a Local Service Centre in a key location on the western edge of Oxford with good public transport connections and immediate access to the strategic highways network (A34).

3.5 The SPD has been prepared in accordance with policy objectives set out in the NPPF (March, 2012) and the Vale Local Plan 2011 (July, 2006) (Saved Policies). In particular the SPD builds upon Local Plan Saved Policies, including: GS1 - Development in Existing Settlements, H10 Development in the Five Main Settlements, S1 New Retail Provision and S12 Local Shopping Centres. The SPD has also considered and aligns with draft policies contained in the emerging Local Plan 2031. The SPD will be a material consideration in assessing planning applications within the SPD boundary.

3.6 The area covered by the SPD lies in the centre of Botley. It is bound to the south and west by two storey residential properties set within medium sized gardens. The north west of the site is bordered by the West Way. To the east of the site lies Westminster Way and the raised A34 Oxford Bypass and the Botley Interchange with Botley Primary School and Seacourt Bridge public house to the northern side of the site.

3.7 The three hectare site comprises a range of retail, residential, office and community uses including the West Way Shopping Centre, two supermarkets, offices, community halls, a library, Botley Baptist Church, the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Elms Parade, three public car parks, a post office, banks, cafes and restaurants, a day centre and sheltered housing.





Figure 1 – Botley Centre SPD Site Boundary

3.8 The main sections of the SPD set out:

- The Botley context including information on the existing baseline, issues and opportunities for the site and the relevant national and local planning policy and guidance (Section 1 and 2)
- The vision for the SPD area as well as a set of clear objectives for future development to meet (Section 3)
- Development principles from which any development and planning applications should be based in order to meet the wider objectives of the SPD (Section 4)

#### **4.0 SETTING THE CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES, ESTABLISHING THE BASELINE AND DECIDING ON THE SCOPE (STAGE A)**

4.1 The following provides an overview of the findings of Stage A of the SA Process which was covered in the '*SA Scoping Report – Botley Centre SPD*' (June 2015).

##### **Relevant Plans, Policies and Programmes (A1)**

4.2 The SPD supplements policies within the adopted Local Plan specific to Botley. A full review of the relevant policies, plans and programmes (PPP's) is provided in Part 1, Section 5 of the '*Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – SA Report*' (October 2014) and these are considered relevant to the Botley Centre SPD (see Appendix A).

4.3 All of the PPPs influence the SPD to some degree. However the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 (July, 2006) (Saved Policies) where they are consistent to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March, 2012) are of particular relevance. The policies contained within these provide the local planning framework for the Vale of White Horse District. The emerging Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 was submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2014 and the examination commenced in September 2015. This draft policy may be subject to change following the examination and on this basis it has been afforded limited weight within the SPD.

##### *National Planning Policy Framework (March, 2012) (NPPF)*

4.4 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. The NPPF calls for planning policies and decisions to 'encourage the effective use of land' through the reuse of land which has been previously developed, 'provided that this is not of high environmental value'.

4.5 Paragraph 18 of the NPPF highlights the Government's commitment to ensuring economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity and tackle the challenges of climate change and global competition.

4.6 The NPPF recognises town centres are at the heart of the community and their development should support the viability and vitality of surrounding communities. The NPPF identifies the important role a range of uses play in contributing towards town centres and states sites should be allocated to meet the development needed, including retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential and promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer, which reflect individuality.

4.7 The NPPF states that local planning authorities should meet the 'full, objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing' in their area. With a view to creating 'sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities' authorities should ensure provision of affordable housing onsite or externally where robustly justified.

4.8 The NPPF states the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the active management of growth patterns such that the fullest use may be made of locations in terms of walking, cycling and public transport, maximising access to sustainable travel options and minimising the need for private vehicles and major transport infrastructure.

4.9 Paragraph 56 of the NPPF places great importance on the design of the built environment and states good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places for people. The NPPF states that the planning system should protect and enhance valued landscapes.

Adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 (July, 2006) (Saved Policies)

- 4.10 Local Plan Policies GS1 Development in Existing Settlements, H10 Development in the Five Main Settlements, S1 New Retail Provision and S12 Policies for Local Shopping Centres specifically relate to Botley Centre and the priorities for the area. Policy GS1 establishes the general spatial strategy for the location of development, which underpins and provides the context for other key policies, and states:

*Policy GS1 – Development in Existing Settlements*

*‘The General Locational Strategy is to:*

- i) Concentrate development at the five main settlements of Abingdon, Botley, Faringdon, Grove and Wantage, which are designated as Local Service Centres and are defined by the development boundaries on the proposals map. Important open land within these settlements will be protected from development. ...*

*Development which accords with this strategy will be permitted provided there is no conflict with other policies in this plan.*

- 4.11 *Policy H10 – Development in the Five Main Settlements*

Local Plan Policy H10 provides the strategy for delivering housing across the district, which will be a focus of the Botley Centre SPD:

*‘Within the built-up areas of Abingdon, Botley, Faringdon, Grove and Wantage, as defined by the development boundaries on the proposals map, new housing development will be permitted provided:*

- i) It would not result in the loss of facilities important to the local community, including areas of informal public open space; and*
- ii) It makes efficient use of the land, and the layout, mass and design of the dwellings would not harm the character of the area.*

- 4.12 *Policy S1 New Retail Provision*

A key consideration for the SPD is the provision of retail and its relationship to surrounding areas of retail. The policy for the location of new retail development is included in Policy S1 and sets out a hierarchy of shopping provision.

*‘Proposals for new retail development or changes of use to retail will be permitted in the following locations provided they are in keeping with the scale and character of the centre or area concerned and would not create unacceptable traffic or environmental problems:*

*...'*

- i) Within the local shopping centres at Abingdon, Botley, Faringdon, Grove and Wantage as defined on the proposals map subject to policies S12 and TR6 (The retention of public car parking spaces) ...'*

- 4.13 *Policy S12 Local Shopping Centres*

Policy S12 recognises the valuable shopping facilities provided within Local Shopping Centres and seeks to maintain the role of these centres. The Botley Centre area is identified as Local Shopping Centre on the adopted proposals map.

*‘Within the existing Local Shopping Centres at Abingdon, Botley, Faringdon, Grove and Wantage as defined on the proposals map, changes of use from class A1 (retail) to classes A2 and A3 will only be permitted if:*

- i) The proposal would not individually, or cumulatively with other existing non-retail uses, cause demonstrable harm to the function, character or appearance of the shopping centre concerned;*
- ii) The proposal would add to the range and variety of goods and services available to the local residents; and*
- iii) There would be no demonstrable harm caused to the living conditions of any neighbouring residents in terms of noise, cooking smells, or general disturbance.*

*Changes of use to residential (class C3) or office (class B1) uses will not be permitted at ground floor level. Such uses will be permitted on upper floors subject to criteria (i) and (iii) above being met.’*

The Emerging Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031

4.14 The SPD has also considered the emerging Local Plan policies on Botley. Core Policy 11: Botley Central Area sets the policy framework for Botley and states:

*'Proposals for a comprehensive retail-led redevelopment and upgrading of Botley central area, as defined on the Adopted Policies Map, will be supported provided that:*

- i) taken as a whole, the proposals support the role and function of Botley as a local service centre, providing a well-integrated mix of shops and services to meet day-to-day shopping needs of the local area*
- ii) effective use is made of development potential above ground level and on more peripheral parts of the site for a mix of uses that may include, but are not limited to, office, community, residential, hotel and leisure activities*
- iii) existing community facilities, including the community hall, library and Baptist Church are replaced with facilities of an appropriate size and quality to meet current and likely future local needs*
- iv) it can be demonstrated that proposals will not harm the character or appearance of the local area, particularly West Way, Arthray Way and Westminster Way*
- v) proposals for the site are prepared through a comprehensive masterplanning process providing an integrated solution to site access, traffic management, air quality management, servicing and sufficient car parking whilst prioritising the pedestrian customer environment, and proposals that seek to demolish Elms Parade should demonstrate that its successor is of at least equal architectural merit and particular attention should be given to provide at least the same level of active frontage.'*

4.15 Following examination of the emerging Local Plan Part 1 in September 2015 this draft policy may be subject to change and on this basis it has been afforded limited weight within the SPD.

**Baseline Environment (A2)**

4.16 This section of the SA provides information about the Botley baseline environment so as to provide essential background to the appraisal. This provides the basis for predicting and monitoring effects and aids the identification of sustainability issues and possible methods for dealing with those issues.

4.17 The aim has been to present sufficient information to provide an overall understanding of the general situation in Botley. The baseline analyses contained in Part 1, Section 6 of the '*Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – SA Report*' (October 2014) (please see Appendix B) has been used as the primary source of information for this SA scoping report and the layout of the chapter follows that of the topics identified in these documents.

4.18 However given that the Botley Centre SPD covers a smaller area, more site specific information has been provided where relevant and available. The sustainability baseline has been informed through site visits, an urban design analysis, a transport and movement analysis, a review of the surrounding development context and viability, and a comprehensive review of baseline information, including census data, Interdepartmental Business Register (IDBR), environmental records, base mapping data and statutory records.

4.19 To provide an indication of the socio-economic characteristics of Botley, census data was collected for the two wards within which Botley is located being the North Hinksey and Wytham Ward and the Appleton and Cumnor Ward. For ease of reference we refer to this area as the "Botley Area" in the following text. As a comparison and to broadly align to the area covered by the West Way Development Survey (June, 2015) undertaken by West Way Community Concern, an area referenced as the Botley Catchment Area which includes the North Hinksey and Wytham Ward, the Appleton and Cumnor Ward, and Oxford City Council's Jericho and Osney Ward has also been considered due to the proximity of the site to Oxford.

4.20 The Census data including information for the Botley Core area (i.e. North Hinksey and Wytham ward and the Appleton and Cumnor ward), and also due to the proximity of Oxford, the wider context area (or Botley Catchment area) which also includes the Jericho and Osney ward from the Oxford district, which is within the administrative boundary of Oxford City Council.

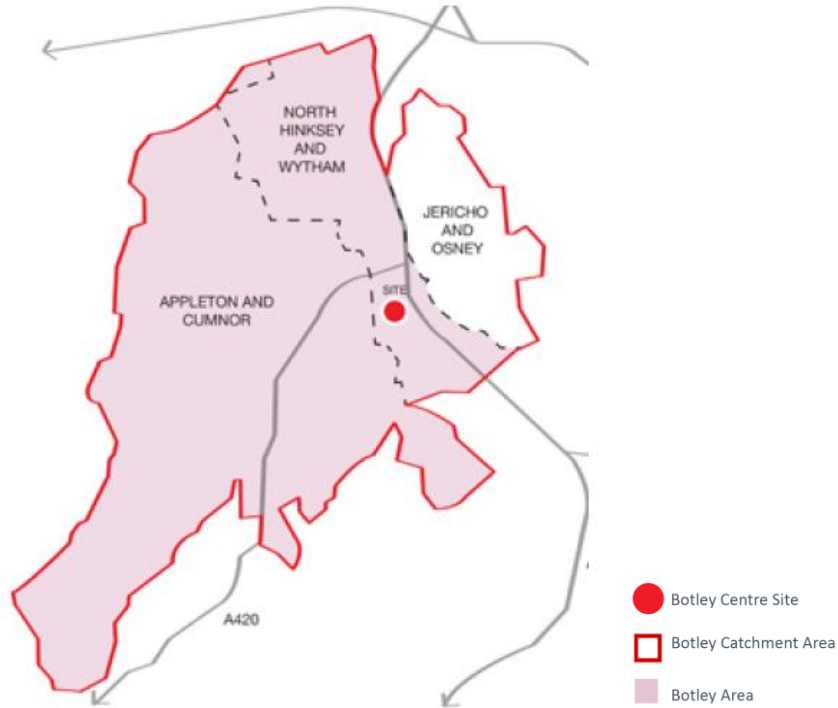


Figure 2 – Map Showing Botley Area and Botley Catchment Area

4.21 The following table lists baseline topics that are covered in this section.

<b>Baseline Data Themes and Topics</b>
<b>Social</b>
Population
Deprivation
Housing
Educational Attainment
<b>Economic</b>
Economic Activity
<b>Environmental</b>
Transport
Historic Environment
Natural Environment
Urban Design Analysis

4.22 The following provides a summary of the key findings and should be read in conjunction with Appendices B which provides further background on the characteristics of the Vale.

Population

4.23 Analysis of census data from 2011 and 2001 shows a general trend of population increase in the Botley Area which is generally in line with the level of increase seen across the wider Vale of White Horse area. A significantly larger increase in population is seen within the Oxford ward of Jericho and Osney, which is within the Botley Catchment Area. This suggests the need for provision of sufficient suitable homes including affordable homes within the Botley Area and appropriate local services for the growing community. This information is illustrated on the table below.

Area	Census 2011	Census 2001	% Difference (+/-)
<b>Vale of White Horse</b>			
All Wards	121,000	115,627	+ 4.6%
<b>Botley Area</b>			
North Hinksey and Wytham Ward	4,671	4,442	+ 5.2%
Appleton and Cumnor Ward	6,670	6,407	+ 4.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,341</b>	<b>10,849</b>	<b>+ 4.5%</b>
<b>Botley Catchment Area (Botley Area plus Jericho and Osney Ward)</b>			
Jericho and Osney Ward	6,820	5,868	+ 16.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,161</b>	<b>16,717</b>	<b>+ 8.6%</b>

Table 1 – Population Analysis from Census 2011 and Census 2001 Data

Deprivation

4.24 With regard to deprivation, the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD, 2010) ranks the Vale 306th out of 326 local authorities, with the 326th being the least deprived. In general the level of deprivation within the Botley Catchment Area varies significantly across the spectrum as illustrated in Figure 6.1 (extract shown below) of the ‘Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part One’. The site lies within an area of low deprivation and therefore deprivation is not considered to be a significant issue for Botley.

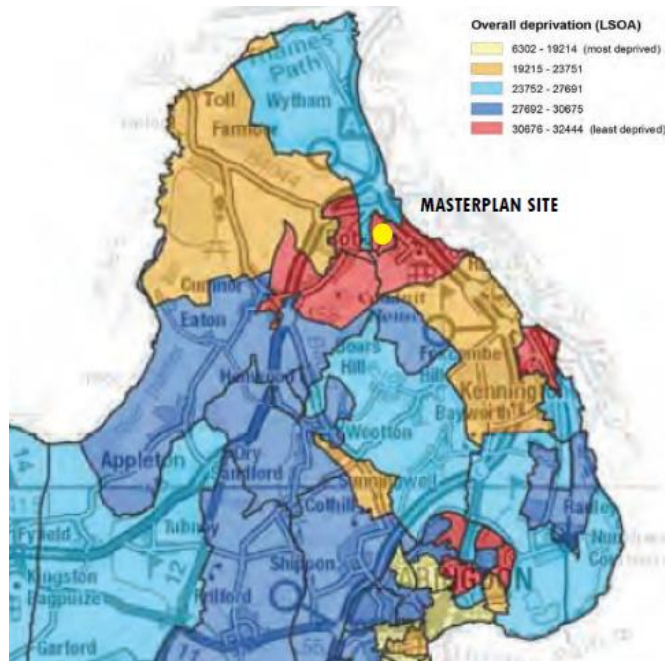


Figure 3 – Location of the Masterplan Site within the Deprivation Map

Housing

4.25 Information on housing including the number of housing completions, average house price to income ratio, number of affordable homes completed and average household size across the Vale can be found in Part 1, Section 6 of the 'Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part One' and is relatable to the Botley situation.

4.26 There is no strategic allocation made for housing development in Botley in the emerging Local Plan 2031 however as Botley is designated as a Local Service Centre, offering a variety of mixed uses and services to the local community, it is expected that housing will be delivered as part of the future development of Botley Centre and therefore is an issue which will need to be considered.

Educational Attainment

4.27 The level of educational attainment in Botley is greater than the Vale with 51 per in the Botley Catchment with a *level 4 qualification and above* when compared to 37.2 per cent in the Vale. This includes ordinary and higher degrees, higher diplomas and professional qualifications. This implies a high level of educational achievement and skills in the Botley area.

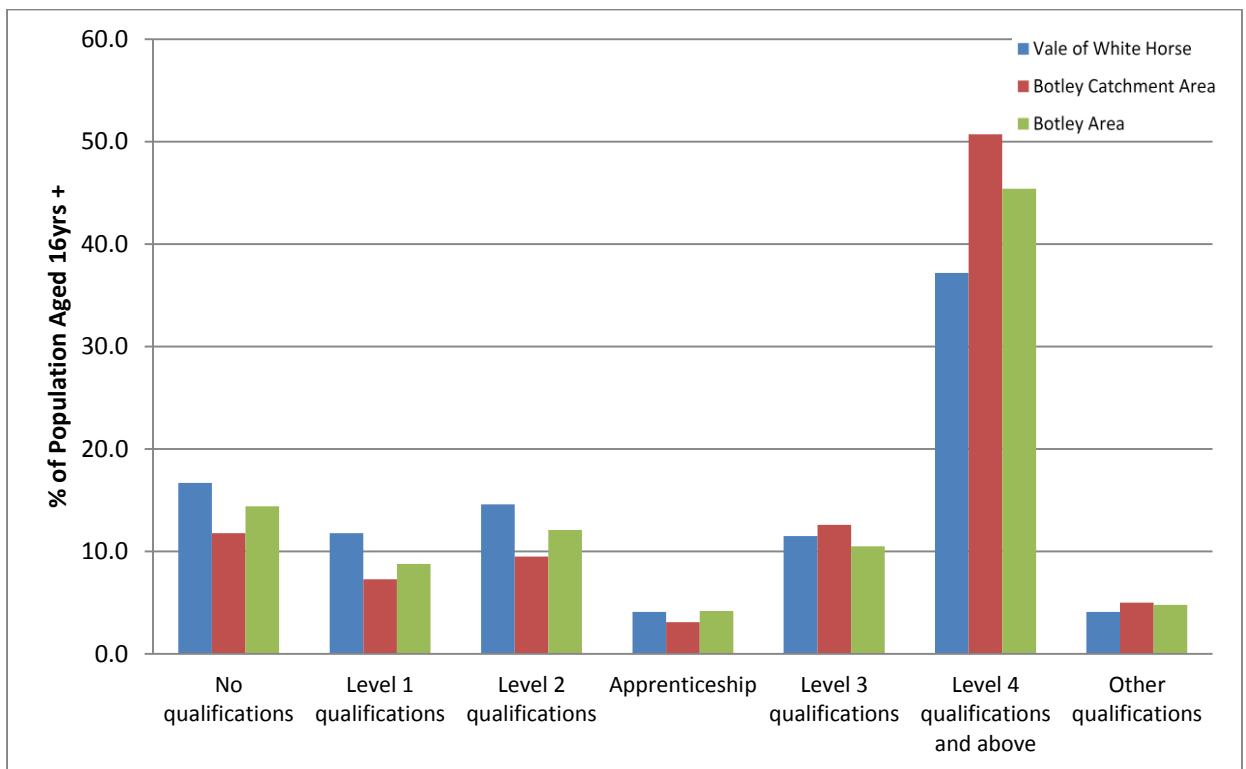


Figure 7 – Highest Level of Qualification (Census, 2011)

Economic Activity

4.28 Details of the economic baseline for the wider Vale are contained in Part 1, Section 6 of the ‘Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part One’ and in general these are relatable to the Botley Area.

4.29 The Botley workforce is highly skilled with a higher than average proportion of managers and professionals than the Vale, as shown in the first two categories of Figure 4 (Census, 2011).

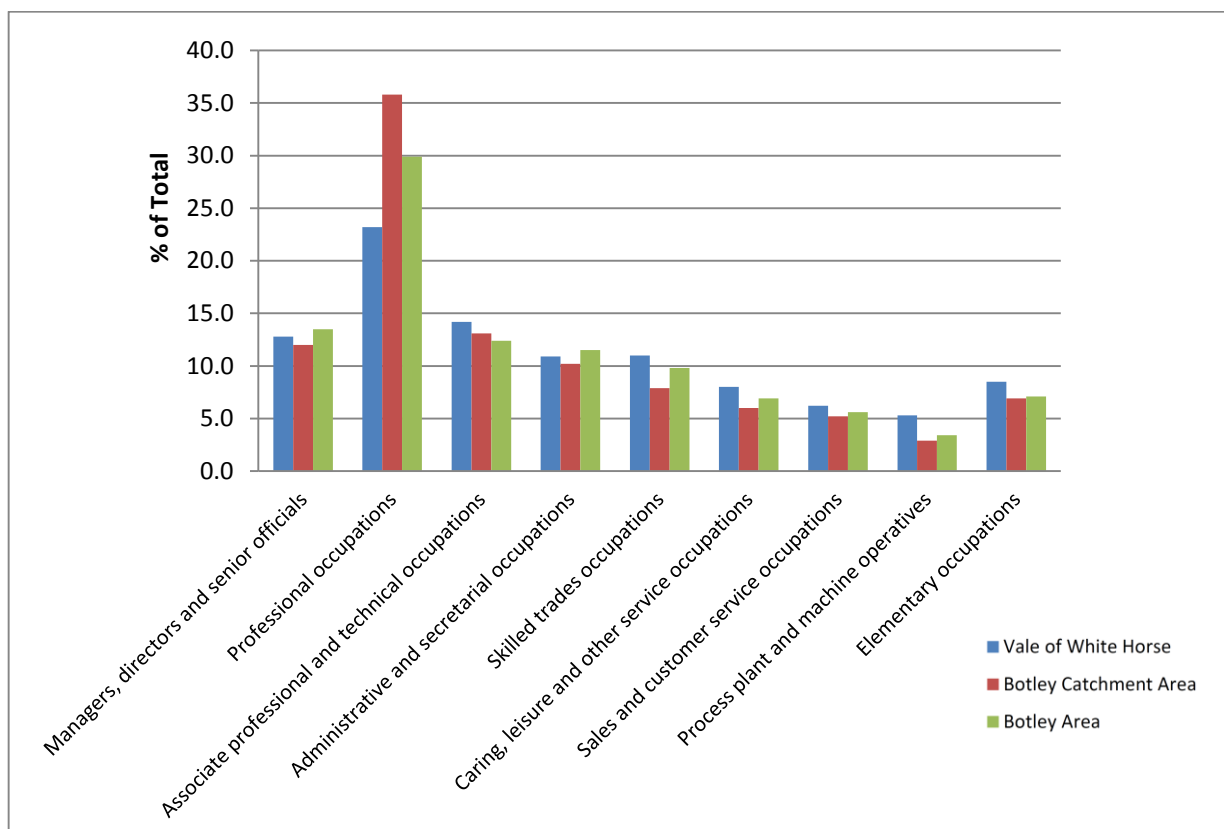


Figure 4 – Occupation Profile (Census, 2011)

4.30 Information from the 2011 Census also denotes a slightly lower level of unemployment when compared with the percentage for the Vale and the wider South East region, as indicated in the following table. This indicates that Botley’s population are economically active, contributing to the Vale’s ranking within the top 10 per cent in the country in the UK Competitiveness Index.

Area	Total Population Economically Active	Total Population Unemployed	% Unemployed
South East Region	6,274,341	216,231	3.4%
Vale of White Horse	87,477	2,190	2.5%
Botley Catchment	14,029	279	2.0%
Botley Area	8,243	158	1.9%

Table 2 – Level of Unemployment (Census, 2011)

4.31 With regard to the number of businesses in the Botley Area (based on the census super output layers – mid layer which is roughly based on the ward boundaries of the Botley Area), the level of active businesses has remained stable, consisting mostly of micro businesses with 0 to 9 employees, as illustrated in Figure 5 below (Interdepartmental Business Register (IDBR, 2010 - 2015)).



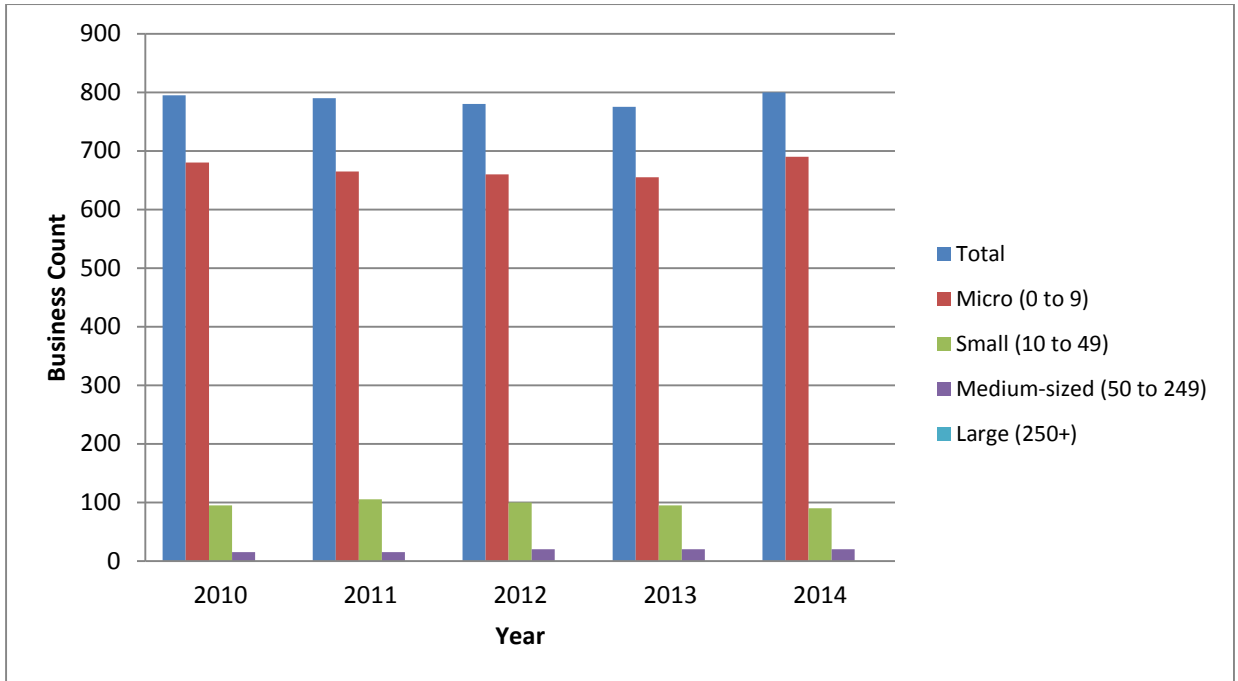


Figure 5 – Business Count (IDBR, 2010 - 2015)

4.32 The largest industry sector in the Botley Area is the 'professional, scientific and technical' category with 21 per cent of the total followed by 'construction' with 14 per cent and 'information and communication' at 9 per cent. This information, illustrated below in Figure 6 illustrates that industry in the Botley Area is diverse with a skilled workforce. Maintaining and contributing to this economic stability will likely be an issue in Botley (IDBR, 2015).

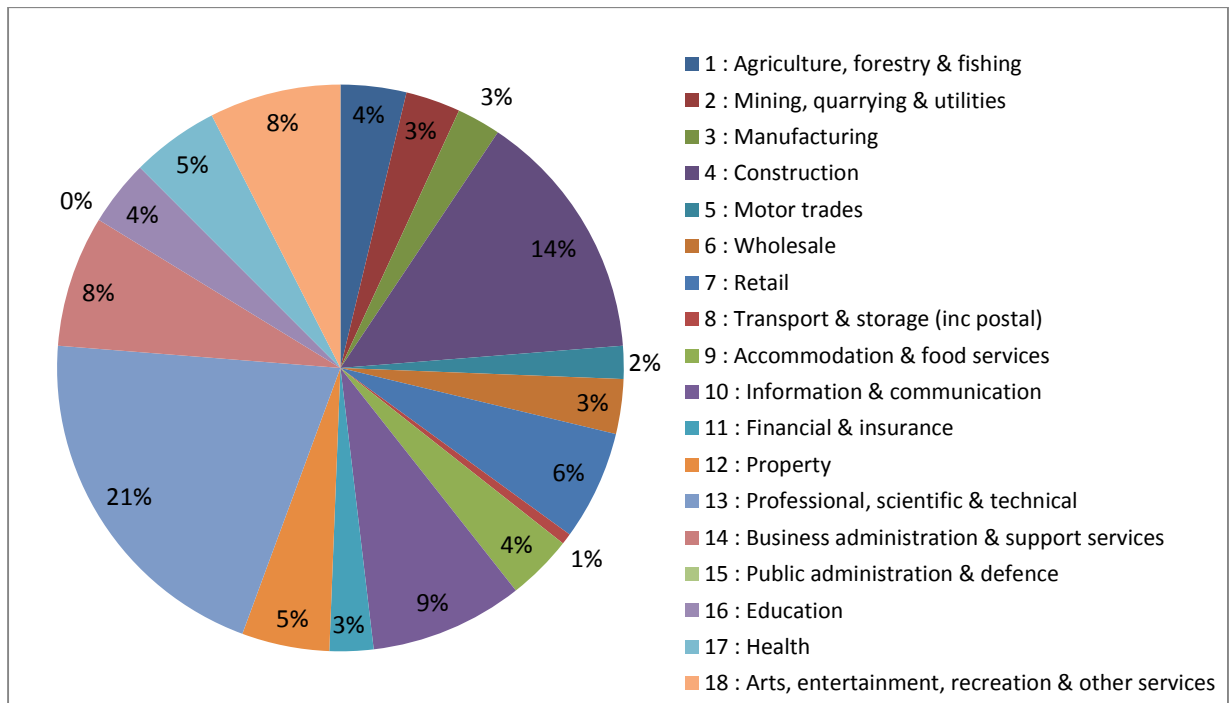


Figure 6 – Botley Industry 2014 (IDBR, 2015)

Transport

4.33 The Botley Centre SPD site is well connected to the local and strategic road network, with the A34 trunk road to the east providing good, if sometimes congested, access between the M4 to the south and the M40 to the north. The B4044 West Way acts as a primary vehicular route offering connections to the wider area including Oxford City Centre.

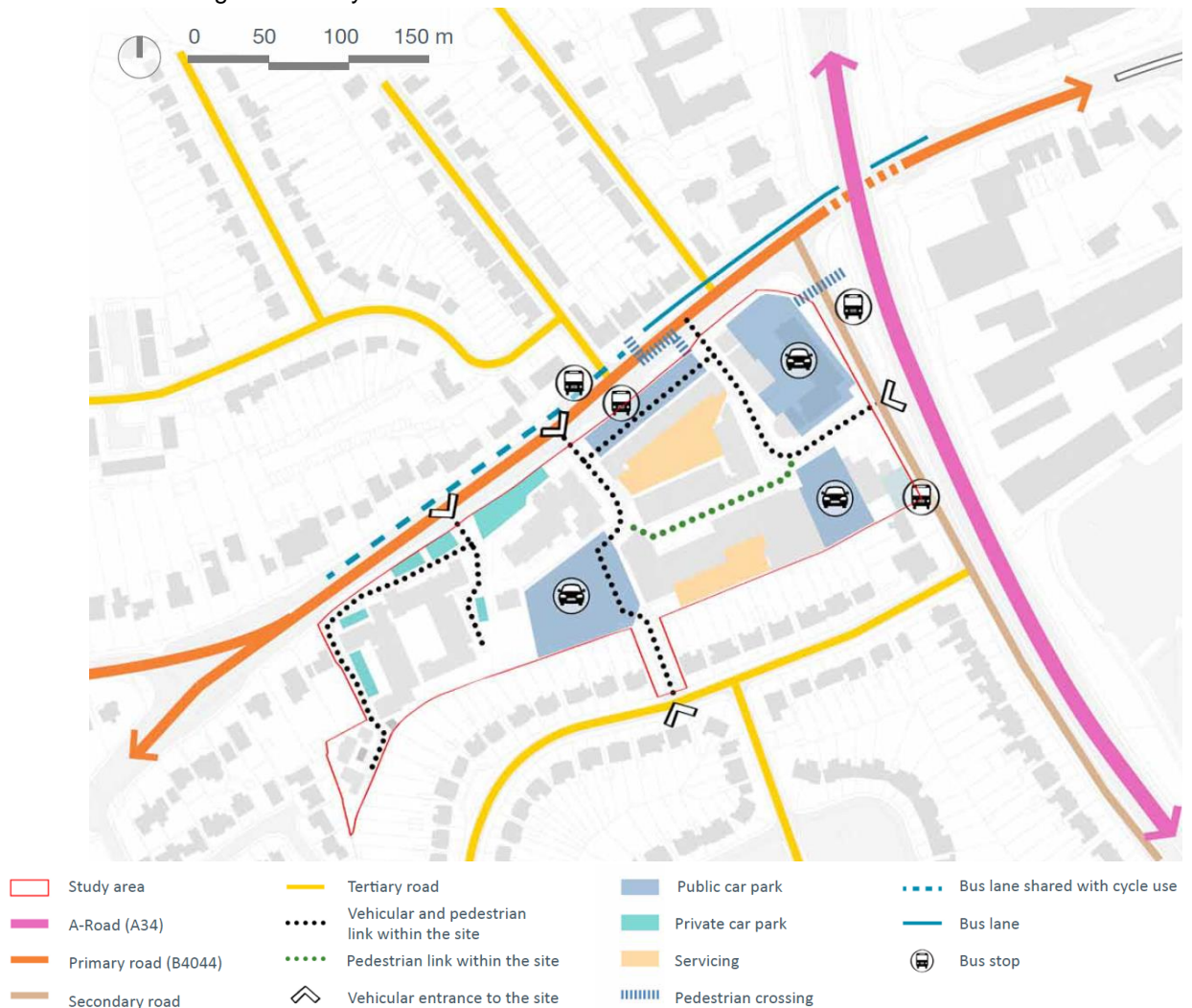


Figure 8 – Access and Movement

4.34 Although there is no railway station in the Botley area, Oxford Station is walkable from the site offering regional and national rail connections. The site also benefits from good bus connections with bus stops located along West Way and Westminster Way. These offer access to Abingdon, Carterton, Oxford, Swindon, Wantage and Witney.

4.35 Pedestrian routes through the site generally lack natural surveillance and are not well used beyond working hours, leading to personal security concerns and attracting anti-social behaviour.

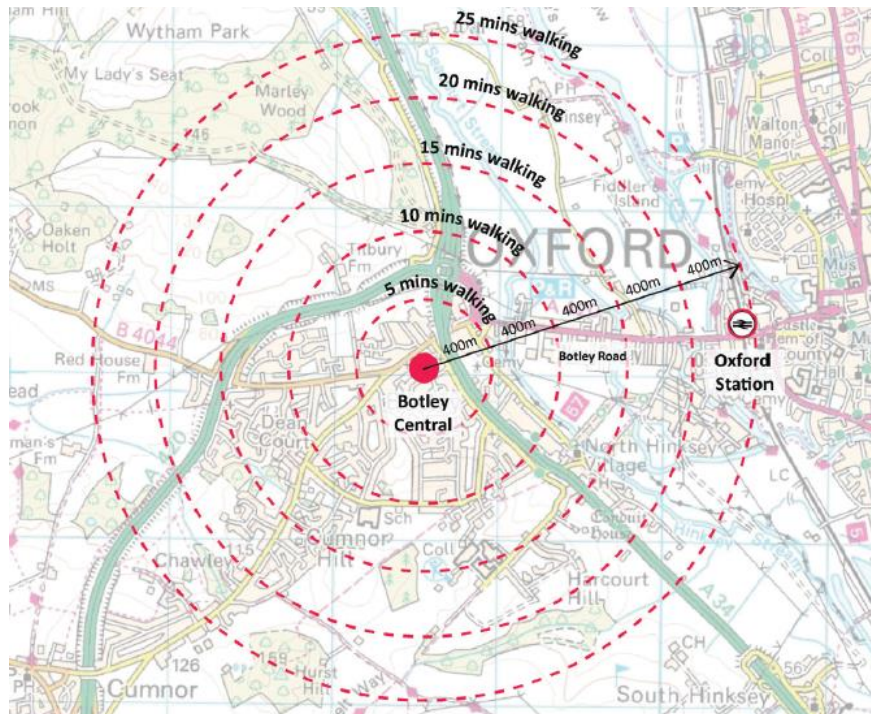


Figure 9 – Map showing proximity of the site to Oxford Railway Station

4.36 Despite the study area being quite well connected to the surrounding area the population of the Botley Core are still quite reliant on the car with 35 per cent of households having 1 car/van and 55 per cent of households owning 2 or more cars (Census, 2011). Car ownership in the Botley Catchment Area does not provide a representative view of car ownership as the population in the Jericho and Osney ward of Oxford has significantly lower car ownership which is likely to be due to the proximity of this ward to Oxford train station and the city centre.

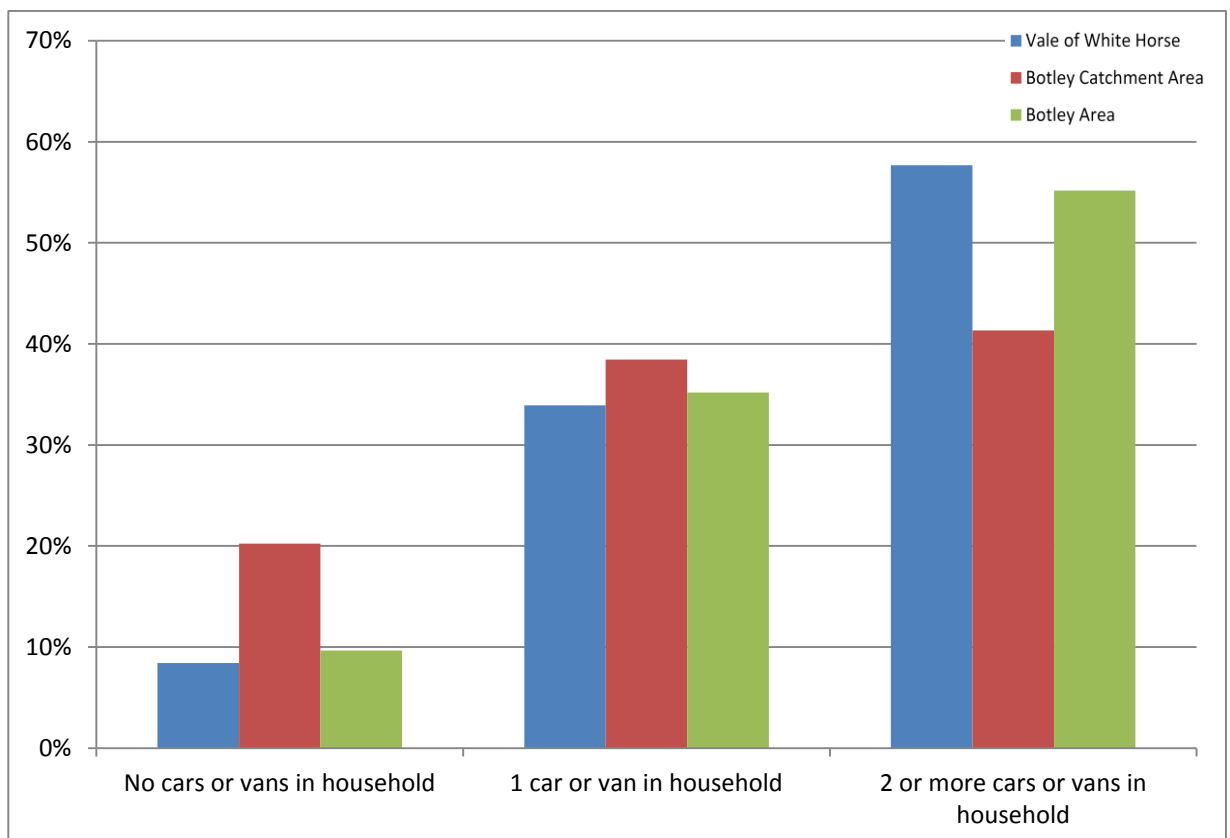


Figure 10 – Car Ownership (Census, 2011)

- 4.37 The area surrounding the site is vehicle dominated and does not promote a pedestrian friendly environment due to the wide carriageways, large car parks, fenced footpaths and elevated A34 road which is in close proximity to the site. The West Way junctions are subject to congestion at peak times but generally operate satisfactorily.
- 4.38 Further information on travel across the Vale is given in Part 1, Section 6 of the '*Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part One*' however, the previous analysis would suggest that transport, access and the creation of a pedestrian/cyclist friendly environment are likely to be an important consideration in the future of Botley.

#### Historic Environment

- 4.39 Part 1, Section 6 of the '*Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part One*' gives a comprehensive description of the general historic environment throughout the Vale.
- 4.40 The development of Botley suburb began in the early 20th Century with further expansion in the mid 20th Century.
- 4.41 There are no listed buildings, scheduled monuments or historic parks and gardens within the site. There are also no Conservation Areas within or near the SPD site. Elms Parade (1937), St. Peter and St. Paul's Church (1958) and Seacourt Bridge Public House (1936) are within or near the SPD site and are considered to contribute to the identity and character of Botley.

#### Natural Environment

- 4.42 The Vale has a rich and diverse natural environment however the SPD area is predominantly developed land or hardstanding with some mature trees and fragmented open green spaces. As a result the site does not have a very rich or diverse environment its surrounding context.

#### Landscape Quality

- 4.43 Botley is surrounded by the Oxford Green Belt land and there are areas of ancient woodland including Marley Wood, Cammoor Copse and Higgins's Copse to the north and north-west of the Botley. These features contribute significantly to the surrounding landscape environment and therefore are an important issue for the Botley SPD.

#### Views

- 4.44 Due to the varied topography of the site with ground levels rising from 65m AOD in Botley Centre to over 100m AOD in Marley Wood to the north and Cumnor Hill and Harcourt Hill in the south, the site is partially visible from a number of elevated long range views. These views are considered to be sensitive to change and will have to be considered in the SPD.
- 4.45 The site is also prominent in local streetscape views, particularly those from the West Way, the A34 and surrounding residential streets to the south and east and it will also be important to carefully consider the impact on local views.
- 4.46 Owing to the proximity of Oxford City Centre, it will also be important to consider views over Oxford City Centre, including the view cone from South Park in which Sea Court Tower appears in the background (Oxford City Council, Assessment of the Oxford View Cones, 2015).

#### Flood Risk

- 4.47 The study area does not lie within flood zone 2 or 3 as defined in the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea, 2015), however the area has experienced surface flooding in the past in extreme weather conditions as illustrated in the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning (Risk of Flooding from Surface Water, 2015). It is therefore considered that flooding is an issue for the study area.

#### *Nature*

- 4.48 There are several protected nature conservation sites in close proximity to the site, two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in the Vale (Wytham Woods 650m north and Hurst Hill 1.6km south east) and the Oxford Meadows SSSI in Oxford (1.7km north east) which is also a Special Area for Conservation, part of which includes Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common and Green SSSI. The Hutchcombe Copse Local Wildlife Site also in close proximity (450m south). These designated areas are rich in biodiversity and are of ecological importance. These designated areas are rich in biodiversity and because of this ecological importance; they are likely to be important considerations in Botley.

#### *Air Quality*

- 4.49 There are two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in close proximity to the study site. The first is near the A34 due to the exceedance of the annual-mean objective for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), attributed to road traffic emissions. The study area is located 260m north-west of this AQMA. The second AQMA covers the entire Oxford City area and lies 300m east of the site. The site does not lie directly within an AQMA. The proximity of the site to the AQMA's as well as the location of the site within an urban location prone to traffic congestion, air quality is likely to be an issue in Botley.
- 4.50 The Vale ceased continuous automatic monitoring of air pollution in 2009, however the closest automatic monitoring of air quality to the site is carried out by Oxford City Council in an urban background location (i.e. away from local influence of emission sources and therefore broadly representative of residential areas within large conurbations) 2.7km away at St. Ebbes in Oxford.
- 4.51 There are also two locations closer to the site where both the Vale and Oxford City Council passively monitor NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations at urban background locations using diffusion tubes. These are located at Hutchcomb Road 0.9km from the study area and at Pike Terrace 2.7km from the site boundary. These will likely be a consideration in any future development in the Botley area.

#### *Noise*

- 4.52 The SPD site and surrounding residential area are currently exposed to existing noise from the surrounding streets, roads, service areas and car parks.
- 4.53 Noise monitoring undertaken as part of a previous planning application for the site (Reference No. P13/V2733/FUL) illustrated a moderately high baseline noise level in the study area, specifically in the areas proximate to the A34 and along West Way. Therefore it is likely that noise will be an issue in Botley Centre.

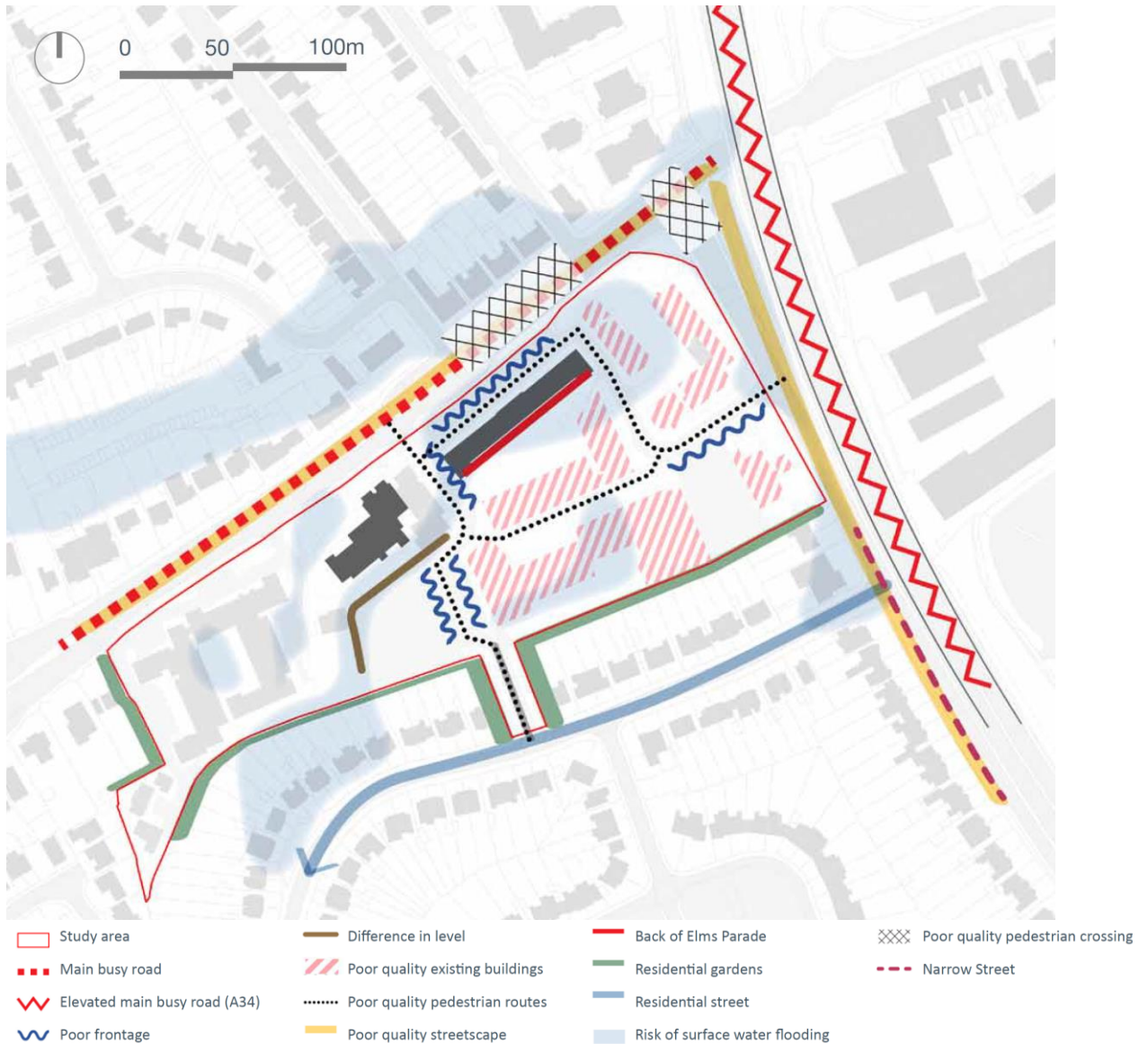
#### *Health*

- 4.54 The census 2011 states that 10 per cent of the Vale's population are living with a long term health problem or disability. The percentages for Botley Catchment and Botley are consistent with the Vale at 9.6 per cent and 11.6 per cent respectively. Regardless the health and welfare of the community is likely to be a consideration in Botley.
- 4.55 Further information on the natural environment can be found in Part 1, Section 6 of the '*Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part One*'.

*Urban Design Analysis – Issues and Opportunities*

4.56 A visual analysis of the site has identified the following issues and opportunities related specifically to the study area. These are as follows:

*Issues*



*Figure 11 – Issues for the Study Area*

- The piecemeal development of the site has created a disjointed environment dominated by car parks, poor pedestrian routes and dead spaces.
- The existing buildings on site are generally of low architectural quality and have a poor relationship with their surroundings, lacking active frontages.
- Pedestrian routes are of poor quality and suffer from a lack of active frontages and natural surveillance which can lead to fear of crime.
- Circuitous vehicle routes and multiple surface car parks contribute to a vehicle dominated environment within the site.
- The elevated A34 road forms a visual and physical barrier to the east, which negatively affects the character of the Westminster Way Streetscape.
- The A34 and West Way are a source of noise and pollution
- West Way to the north is a wide, busy vehicular road which inhibits safe pedestrian movement and results in severance to the north.

- The existing site is partially visible from surrounding hills and Oxford and redevelopment will need to consider the potential for impacts on these views.
- Limited retail offer and lack of cafes, restaurants and an evening economy.
- The position of Elms Parade on the site creates a large inactive facade facing the centre of the site.
- The level difference between St. Peter and St Pauls Church and the existing surface car park forms a barrier to pedestrian movement.
- Low rise surrounding residential development requires sensitive treatment of boundaries.
- There is a lack of public open space.

### Opportunities



Figure 12 – Opportunities for the Study Area

- Previously developed site provides an opportunity to re-use land in a more efficient and sustainable way.
- The site is a seven minute bus journey from Oxford train station, which offers a wide variety of transport services and links.
- The existing Elms Parade and St. Peter and St. Pauls Church contribute to the identity and character of Botley.

- There is a mix of uses on site, including a range of community facilities and businesses, however there is an opportunity to improve the diversity of uses and extend activity into the evening.
- Opportunity to retain and enhance the active retail frontage along the West Way.
- The existing mature trees on site provide soft landscape elements and contribute to the attractiveness of the site.
- The east of the site is a suitable location for increased building heights due to its location on a large open junction and the adjacent A34.
- The size of the site is of a significant scale to help the delivery of regeneration principles.
- Improve permeability through the site, and provide pedestrian and cycle links which follow desire lines and are supported by active frontages.
- Create new and improved public spaces throughout the site, creating a more usable and attractive environment.
- Create a high quality built environment through comprehensive development.
- Improve pedestrian environment and crossings on the West Way to reduce severance and car dominance.

Baseline Evolution without Implementation of the Plan

- 4.57 Just as it is important for the scope of the SA to be informed by an understanding of current baseline conditions, it is also important to ensure that thought is given to how baseline conditions might ‘evolve’ in the future under the no plan/business as usual scenario. Doing so helps to enable identification of those key sustainability issues that should be a particular focus of the appraisal, while also providing ‘benchmarks’ for the appraisal of significant effects.
- 4.58 In general, the evolution of the baseline for the Botley Centre SPD is directly relatable to those contained in Part 1, Section 7 of the ‘Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – SA Report’ (October 2014).

**Key Sustainability Issues and Problems (A3)**

- 4.59 The identification of sustainability problems during the course of the SA provides an opportunity to define key issues for consideration in the Botley Centre SPD. Drawing on a review of the sustainability context and baseline, a range of such sustainability issues were identified, all originating from the SA Framework within the ‘Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1’.
- 4.60 This wider SA Framework for the Vale has been used as the basis for identifying key sustainability issues, which cover a wide variety of themes from environmental, economic and social topic areas. Where relevant some of these issues have been discounted, some added to, and others incorporated, to create a table of issues which are specific to Botley Centre.
- 4.61 The following table contains the issues which were finalised following post-consultation amendments, as described under ‘Consultation on the SA Scope (A5)’.

<b>Sustainability Issues</b>	
Social	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortage of housing, including affordable, market and supported living</li> <li>• Need to preserve and enhance the quality of built environments</li> <li>• Limited access to services</li> <li>• Need to improve the quality and range of recreational facilities and services in Botley</li> <li>• Congestion on strategic and local road network</li> <li>• Lack of alternatives to the private car</li> <li>• Limited access to services</li> <li>• Need to mitigate/reduce effects of noise, air and light pollution</li> <li>• Reduce car dominated environment and provide attractive pedestrian and cycle routes in Botley</li> <li>• Health of Vale’s residents</li> <li>• Lack of high quality overlooked pedestrian routes and activity in the evening, contributing to fear of crime within the study area, though it is recognised that actual crime rates are low in the area.</li> </ul>



<b>Sustainability Issues</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor quality local service centre environment which does not provide for all of the Botley community and is in need of improvement</li> </ul>
Economic	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of employment opportunities for residents</li> <li>• Opportunity for small/medium sized offices and flexible work spaces</li> </ul>
Environmental	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and improvement of biodiversity, particularly Special Areas of Conservation surrounding the site</li> <li>• No designated nature conservation sites in the study area</li> <li>• Several SSSI's and Wildlife sites surrounding the site</li> <li>• Lack of biodiversity within the study area including planting and street trees</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection of valued landscapes</li> <li>• Enhance the quality of built environments</li> <li>• No designated heritage assets within the study site however Elms Parade and St. Peter and St. Pauls Church contribute to the built identity and character of Botley</li> <li>• The town is surrounded by designated greenbelt land and ancient woodland which contributes to the character of the surrounding landscape</li> <li>• Need to mitigate/reduce effects of noise, air and light pollution</li> <li>• Action to mitigate the causes and adapt to the effects of climate change</li> <li>• The study site is not in a flood zone but is prone to surface flooding in extreme weather conditions</li> <li>• Reducing the urban heat island effect</li> <li>• Reducing the need to travel by providing for local needs locally</li> </ul>

#### **Development of the SA Framework (A4)**

4.62 These previously identified issues and problems for Botley led to the development of objectives and scenarios for the SPD area that are sustainable. As outlined in Section 4 of the 'SA Scoping Report – Botley Centre SPD' (June 2015), the wider SA Framework for the Vale has been used to identify the key sustainability objectives which form the basis of the SA Framework, covering a wide variety of themes from environmental, economic and social topic areas. Where relevant some of these objectives have been discounted, some added to, and others incorporated, to create a finalised set of objectives as part of a SA Framework which is specific to Botley Centre.

<b>Botley Centre Specific SA Objectives</b>	
1.	Provide sufficient suitable homes including affordable homes in Botley
2.	Ensure the availability of high quality services and facilities in Botley
3.	Reduce the need to travel and Improve provisions for walking, cycling and public transport and reduce road congestion in Botley
4.	Improve the health and well-being of Botley residents.
5.	Provide high quality placemaking which creates an inclusive environment for the local Botley community
6.	Support a strong and Sustainable economy within Botley
7.	Improve and protect the natural environment including biodiversity, water and soil quality in Botley
8.	Enhance the character and identity of Botley and protect the local townscape and cultural heritage
9.	Reduce air, noise and light pollution in Botley
10.	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the use of resources and improve resource efficiency in Botley
11.	Increase resilience to climate change in Botley

**Consultation on the SA Scope (A5)**

- 4.63 The SA Report is based on the findings of the ‘SA Scoping Report – Botley Centre SPD’ (June 2015) which covered Stage A of the SA process. The regulations require the responsible authority (the Vale) consult on the scope and level of detail to be included in the SA Report. The consultation bodies who by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing the plan, have five weeks from receipt of request to make their responses. This is in accordance with regulation 125 and 12(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 4.64 The SA Scoping Report (June 2015) was sent to the Environment Agency, Natural England, and Historic England on the 17 of June 2015. A summary is given on the following table of their responses and how the SA and SPD have been amended.

Date Received	Consultation Body	Consultation Responses	Botley SPD Actions/Clarifications
20 July 2015	Environment Agency	Acknowledgement that the SPD is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental impacts within the remit of the EA and therefore no request/recommendations made.	n/a
17 July 2015	Natural England	Identification of correction to Para 3.27 to reflect that Oxford Meadows is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), part of which includes the Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common and Green SSSI, and resultant amendment of the sustainability issues text in relation to Sustainability Objective 7 to include the ‘protection and improvement of biodiversity, particularly Special Areas of Conservation’.	Noted and the sustainability issues for Objective 7 of the SA Framework have been updated to reflect the presence of the Oxford Meadows SAC.
		Also, request to include the incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) within the SPD area as an opportunity for Botley Centre (Para 3.35).	SUDs is recognised as an important part of any future development, not only in Botley but Vale wide. While it is recognised as an opportunity, the incorporation of SUDs into a development is ultimately required by local policy to comply and will therefore be incorporated into the Botley Centre redevelopment to meet this requirement. Principle DG14: Water Features and SUDs of the Vale’s Design Guide (March 2015) states that “development proposals should incorporate the use of sustainable urban drainage as an integral

Date Received	Consultation Body	Consultation Responses	Botley SPD Actions/Clarifications
			part of the landscape structure” and be incorporated into the development “...from the offset”. In conjunction with this the Botley Centre SPD itself includes as a principle that “...development should incorporate sustainable urban drainage (SUDs)”
8 July 2015	Historic England	Query whether locally important buildings and features in addition to Elms Parade and St Peters and St Pauls Church have been identified for Botley.	For the purpose of the SA Scoping Report only Elms Parade and St. Peter and St. Pauls Church were listed as these buildings are within the study area boundary. However, other locally important buildings of note outside of the SPD site boundary include the Seacourt Bridge Public House situated just north of the study area along West Way. This building, like Elms Parade is of 1930’s character and contributes to the local historic environment surrounding the site.
		Request that Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record be consulted for any archaeological finds and potential archaeological interest.	A search of the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record has not uncovered anything of archaeological interest or of particular note in the vicinity of the site. The only records of note relate to Old Botley, east of the A34, which comprise a few listed buildings. However these do not relate to the site in any particular way therefore there is not merit in including them in the SA.
		Request to consider and make reference to the view cones identified in the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.	<p>While there is an agreement between the Vale and Oxford City Council to work closely with each other there is no requirement for development occurring within the Vale to have regard to policies contained within the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.</p> <p>However, because of the proximity of Oxford City Centre to the site, it is considered important to have regard to views from Oxford City Centre, including the view cone from South Park in which Sea Court Tower appears in the background (Assessment of the Oxford View Cones, Oxford City Council, 2015). As a result, reference to this has been made in the baseline data and is addressed in the SPD.</p>
		Request the inclusion of ‘protect the cultural heritage’ to Objective 8 of the SA Framework	Noted and SA Objective 8 amended
		Identification of misquotation in Paragraph 5.2.10	This relates to Appendix A – Plans, Policies and Programmes of the SA Scoping Report, which contains an excerpt from the ‘Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (October 2014). This document is included for information purposes and therefore is not open for consultation as part of the SA process for Botley Centre.

## 5.0 DEVELOPING AND REFINING ALTERNATIVES AND ASSESSING EFFECTS (STAGE B)

5.1 The following provides an overview of the findings of Stage B of the SA process, as set out by the NPPG.

### Testing the SPD Objectives against the SA Framework (B1)

5.2 The Botley Centre SPD is underpinned by a vision for the future development of Botley to inspire regeneration and ensure that the needs of the existing and future communities are met.

5.3 This vision seeks:

*The redevelopment of Botley will create a thriving and welcoming centre, which is recognisably 'Botley', and responds to the existing local character and surrounding scale. Botley will provide a heart for the existing and future community which includes human scale buildings and spaces that are distinctive, flexible and sustainable. Above all, Botley will be:*

- A good place to meet.
- A good place to do business.
- A good place to shop and eat.
- A good place to live, grow up and grow old.
- A safe and attractive place.'

5.4 West Way Community Concern has prepared their own vision for Botley Centre. The community aspirations contained in the West Way Community Concern vision have informed the vision for the SPD.

5.5 This vision is underpinned by nine overarching objectives, which seek to address the site issues, embrace opportunities and deliver the vision for Botley. These are:

1. A deliverable regeneration scheme
2. Respect the character and identity of Botley
3. A distinctive place
4. Appropriate scale and massing
5. Strengthen the retail centre
6. Transforming the public realm
7. Improve access, permeability and parking
8. Enhance community facilities
9. A vibrant mix of uses

5.6 These overarching objectives of the SPD are assessed against the SA Framework by undertaking a assessment of how they meet the SA objectives. This process indicates the likelihood of the various SPD objectives reaching the sustainability targets developed in the SA. This process will therefore indicate areas of potential incompatibility and areas where the objectives of the SPD can be adapted and strengthened.

SPD Objective	Relevant SA Objective(s)	Consideration of Sustainability
<b>1. A Deliverable Regeneration Scheme</b> Adopt a comprehensive approach to redevelopment, which encourages the effective use of land and an appropriate balance of land uses that delivers maximum community benefit and ensures a viable and deliverable scheme.	1. Provide sufficient suitable homes including affordable homes in Botley 2. Ensure the availability of high quality services and facilities in Botley 6. Support a strong and Sustainable economy within Botley	This SPD objective is compatible with the relevant SA objectives in that it proposes a deliverable regeneration scheme which will provide suitable homes, and quality services and facilities for the community, which will also support the local economy and reap maximum community benefit for Botley.
<b>2. Respect the Character and Identity of Botley</b> Recognise and reflect the	8. Enhance the character and identity of Botley and protect the local townscape and	Redevelopment of Botley Centre envisaged in the SPD proposes many changes which will alter the character

SPD Objective	Relevant SA Objective(s)	Consideration of Sustainability
<p>existing character of Botley, and where possible better integrate buildings which contribute to the area's identity, such as Elms Parade, St. Peter and St. Paul Church and the Seacourt Bridge public house. The character and appearance of new development should reference the existing local vernacular, whilst not limiting high quality contemporary design.</p>	<p>cultural heritage</p>	<p>and appearance of Botley Centre however this SPD objective aims to respect the character of the area and the setting of the various buildings noted for their local importance, which is in line with the relevant SA objective.</p>
<p><b>3. A Distinctive Place</b> Ensure development is of the highest architectural quality creating buildings, spaces and streets which meet people's needs and include distinctive landmarks and gateways for Botley Centre.</p>	<p>5. Provide high quality placemaking which creates an inclusive environment for the local Botley community 8. Enhance the character and identity of Botley and protect the local townscape and cultural heritage</p>	<p>This SPD objective aims to meet the relevant SA objectives by ensuring development of the highest architectural and design quality, providing a public realm which is permeable, accessible, attractive and complementary to the local character of Botley Centre.</p>
<p><b>4. An Appropriate Scale and Massing</b> Development should relate to the scale and massing of the area and create a varied and integrated roofscape, which contributes positively to the visual amenity.</p>	<p>8. Enhance the character and identity of Botley and protect the local townscape and cultural heritage</p>	<p>The SPD has been developed with consideration to the existing physical environment of the surrounding area and this SPD objective aims to create a development which relates to the surrounding area and enhances the identity and character of Botley Centre through appropriate scale and massing. This meets the sustainability aim of the SA objective.</p>
<p><b>5. Strengthen the Retail Centre</b> Improve the retail offer by creating retail circuits that incorporate a range of unit sizes, a variety of retail types including cafes/restaurants and promote an evening economy.</p>	<p>2. Ensure the availability of high quality services and facilities in Botley 3. Reduce the need to travel and Improve provisions for walking, cycling and public transport and reduce road congestion in Botley 6. Support a strong and Sustainable economy within Botley</p>	<p>This SPD objective will improve the retail offer of Botley as a Local Service Centre. In turn this meets aims of the relevant SA objectives by widening the variety and availability of services in Botley which will in turn strengthen and support the local economy. As a direct result this SPD objective also lessens the need for local residents of Botley to travel elsewhere for such services, helped by improvements to the public realm, walking and cycling provision as well as accessibility to public transport.</p>

SPD Objective	Relevant SA Objective(s)	Consideration of Sustainability
<p><b>6. Transforming the Public Realm</b> Create an attractive unified public realm with a range of social spaces for a variety of activities and provide friendly, active and safe routes and streets.</p>	<p>5. Provide high quality placemaking which creates an inclusive environment for the local Botley community 7. Improve and protect the natural environment including biodiversity, water and soil quality. 10. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the use of resources and improve resource efficiency in Botley 11. Increase resilience to climate change in Botley</p>	<p>This SPD objective is directly compatible with the relevant SA objectives in that improvements to the public realm will create an accessible and attractive place which is a healthier, safer and more inclusive to all facets of the community. Also, the transformed public realm will maintain and protect existing mature trees, provide landscaping which will enhance the natural environment and minimise the impact of surface water flooding, and as a direct result improve the environmental quality of the site and increase Botley Centre's resilience to climate change.</p>
<p><b>7. Improve Access, Permeability and Parking</b> Create a highly permeable development, which encourages pedestrian movement, improves access to and from the site and provides appropriate levels of car parking.</p>	<p>3. Reduce the need to travel and Improve provisions for walking, cycling and public transport and reduce road congestion in Botley 5. Provide high quality placemaking which creates an inclusive environment for the local Botley community 9. Reduce air, noise and light pollution in Botley 10. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the use of resources and improve resource efficiency in Botley</p>	<p>This SPD objective seeks to encourage pedestrian and cycle movement while also improving access to/from the site and facilitating an adequate amount of parking. This is compatible with both the relevant SA objectives which encompass the same aims as the SPD. These improvements will also improve the environmental quality of the site. By minimising the need for vehicles to access the site this will see a reduction in air and noise pollution as well as greenhouse gases.</p>
<p><b>8. Enhance Community Facilities</b> Rationalise and enhance community facilities across the site to better serve the needs of the existing and future community.</p>	<p>2. Ensure the availability of high quality services and facilities in Botley</p>	<p>This SPD objective complies with the SA objective in that both seek to enhance facilities and services across the site to serve the needs of the Botley community.</p>
<p><b>9. A Vibrant Mix of Uses -</b> Provide an expanded and diverse range of land uses that meet the needs of people of all ages from the existing and future community.</p>	<p>1. Provide sufficient suitable homes including affordable homes in Botley 2. Ensure the availability of high quality services and facilities in Botley 6. Support a strong and sustainable economy within Botley</p>	<p>This SPD objective helps to meet the relevant SA objectives by facilitating the provision of a vibrant mix of uses within Botley, including homes of mixed type, tenure, size and affordability. It will also encourage the provision of high quality services and facilities for the present and future Botley communities, thereby enabling a strong and sustainable economy which continues to meet the needs of locals.</p>

## **Developing the Options and Alternatives (B2)**

- 5.7 One of the key requirements of SA is to consider reasonable alternatives as part of the assessment process. The approach to the assessment of options and alternatives is proportionate to the policy document being assessed which is a Supplementary Planning Document and therefore must be consistent with adopted development plan which includes planning policy at the national and local level, as per s8(3) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The NPPF and NPPG state that SPDs should build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on the policies in the Local Plan and can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. As a result the assessment of alternatives has ensured that all scenarios are fully compliant with adopted planning policy which defines Botley as a Local Service Centre.
- 5.8 The assessment of alternatives has also been influenced by the scope and format of the Botley SPD which creates a framework and guidelines for development allowing a more flexible approach, rather than being prescriptive as to a preferred development scenario. These four scenarios assessed do not represent alternate proposals for future development on site, but instead offer a range of potential forms of development to inform the SPD development principles and the Sustainability Appraisal.
- 5.9 During the development of the Botley Centre SPD, development scenarios were created for the site and these were used to test the vision, objectives and design principles of the draft SPD for their sustainability as well as to ensure their deliverability. Each scenario was considered, assessed and also debated with the local community and other stakeholders. They were also informed by urban design analysis, baseline transport work and other viability appraisals which informed the development of the SPD.
- 5.10 These scenarios assessed the sustainability implications of varying degrees of development on site from minimum intervention, medium mixed-use intervention, medium residential-led intervention (which is aligns with the West Way Concern alternative) to a maximum intervention.
- 5.11 The following offers a brief description of the four scenarios which were used to test the SPD and SA.
- Scenario 01 – Minimum Intervention*
- 5.12 This proposed to retain and refurbish a high proportion of existing buildings, including the West Way Centre, while also slightly increasing the retail and residential offer across the site through the incorporation of a large food store and some mixed tenure residential units as well as some student accommodation. Community uses are also included in this scenario. A multi-storey car park was also provided, accessed from Westminster Way. No route through the site for vehicles is included, with only pedestrian access through the site, allowing the creation of a new town square and two new retail oriented public spaces.
- Scenario 02 – Medium Mixed Use Intervention*
- 5.13 This comprised a vibrant mix of uses and activities including retail units, a food store, a multiplex cinema, a hotel, a library and other community uses. The upper floors are generally occupied by student accommodation with a small amount of residential. St. Peter and St Paul's Church and Elms Parade are retained in this option. A decked car park was included along the southern boundary of the site, accessed from the east along Westminster Way. No vehicular route through the site was included meaning the site was mostly pedestrianised, with two new public spaces (town square and retail square) positioned in the centre of the site. A new pedestrian route is also created to connect to the local centre and the existing bus stops on Westminster Way.
- Scenario 03 – Medium Intervention Residential-Led*
- 5.14 This option provided the highest number of residential units, whilst also providing a variety of uses and activities, including community uses. A large food store and hotel are provided to the east of the site and St. Peter and St Paul's Church and Elms Parade are also retained. No student accommodation or cinema uses were included in this scenario. Pedestrian access is available to the north from West Way, the south from Arthray Road as well as to the east from Westminster Way. A strong lateral connection through the site links two new public spaces, creating a strong pedestrian street environment while a

new pedestrian route is also created to connect to the local centre and the existing bus stops on Westminster Way. A decked car park is included along the southern boundary and accessed from Westminster Way.

#### Scenario 04 – Maximum Intervention

- 5.15 Proposing the highest level of intervention across the site, this scenario creates a vibrant mixed use development by providing a wider retail offering, a food store, a cinema, a hotel, a library and community spaces, residential units and student accommodation. St. Peter and St. Paul's Church is retained, while Elms Parade and the Barclays Bank offices are removed. A strong east west connection through the site links two new public spaces, creating a strong pedestrian street environment route through to connect to the existing bus stops on Westminster Way. A decked car park was also created along the southern boundary accessed from Westminster Way.

#### **Evaluate the likely effects (of the SPD) and alternatives**

- 5.16 The following describes how the likely sustainability impacts of the SPD, were considered as part of the assessment of scenarios. As the scenarios were developed to test the flexibility of the SPD rather than as alternatives, a more general approach has been taken to the assessment, however where relevant additional effects caused by specific scenarios are also discussed.
- 5.17 The overall positive sustainability impacts (i.e. strengths) of the SPD are as follows:
- The SPD will increase the availability of high quality housing and provide expanded leisure and community uses, thereby supporting the social needs of the existing and future Botley Centre community.
  - The balance of land uses proposed in the SPD would increase Botley's role as a Local Service Centre while improvement to the physical infrastructure and buildings would improve the local image of Botley Centre.
  - The balance of land uses and the provision of car parking has aimed to minimise car trips to reduce traffic, noise pollution and air quality impacts.
  - Public realm improvements will increase not only the usability of the site but also the perception of safety by creating spaces which are overlooked by active retail frontages, providing passive surveillance of the area.
  - Increased permeability through the site will also promote a healthy lifestyle by encouraging pedestrian and cyclist movement in Botley Centre.
  - The alignment of pedestrian routes through the site with bus stop locations on West Way and Westminster Way would promote the use of public transport to and from the site.
  - Consolidation of pedestrian access points to the site as proposed in the SPD would improve wayfinding through the site through clearly defined axial routes and enhance connections to the surrounding area. This would increase the attractiveness of the site and promote pedestrian movement.
  - The minimisation of vehicle access points and improvement of road crossing conditions for pedestrians and cyclists in relation to the site seeks to encourage more sustainable forms of movement and create an environment which is not car dominated.
  - The incorporation of SUDs in future development would ensure that Botley Centre is less susceptible to flooding and therefore more resilient to climate change.
  - The SPD seeks the retention of existing mature trees on site as well as the enhancement of green infrastructure through a net increase in trees and planting or landscape elements such as green roofs. This would help reduce air pollution and significantly improve the natural environment of Botley Centre.
  - Development through the SPD also seeks to minimise energy consumption and carbon emissions through sensitive design and the incorporation of renewable energy and heating sources.
  - Additional economic opportunities are facilitated through the provision of uses such as the cinema, restaurants, cafes and the hotel and encourage use of the site outside usual retail hours by improving the offer of evening-appropriate uses and creating a busier centre, with improved surveillance and the potential to reduce any fear of crime issues.



- The provision of student accommodation will contribute to increased economic activity in the area and will also increase the viability of these evening uses such as cinemas, restaurants and cafes.
- Student accommodation will also help to alleviate pressures on the local housing market by freeing up private rented units for those most in need.
- The retention of existing buildings (i.e. Elms Parade and St Peter and St Pauls Church) will preserve the existing character and identity of Botley Centre.
- A more minimal intervention similar to that proposed in Scenario 01 not only represents a sustainable reuse of existing buildings but would also cause less disruption/displacement than more comprehensive redevelopment of the site due to the small scale of development (however this would be unlikely to achieve the other objectives of the a SPD due to the reduced scope of development and minimal improvement to the existing site meaning that factors leading to present problems will not be addressed comprehensively).

5.18 The overall negative sustainability impacts (i.e. weaknesses) of the SPD are as follows:

- More minimal interventions such as that proposed in Scenario 01 would mean limited improvements to the configuration of the public realm with no real improvement in permeability through the site.
- Similarly, for minimal interventions such as Scenario 01 where a significant number of existing buildings are to be reused, this would represent a poor utilisation of space, with minimal improvement to the existing car dominated environment.
- More comprehensive redevelopment of the site (Scenarios 02, 03 & 04) would mean potential disruption to local people, businesses and services which would be of a temporary nature, specifically during development phases.
- Redevelopment of the site would also mean negative environmental impacts, specifically during the construction phases, however these would be short term. Specifically traffic, air quality and noise issues however these could be controlled via planning condition and through the EIA process.
- Depending on the amount of residential development, there would be a rise in the local population which will place increased pressure on facilities, particularly on adjacent areas, for example school places or health care. However this can be addressed through planning conditions as well as mitigation through the EIA process. The provision of community facilities on site will also help to offset this.
- Population growth could also lead to environmental pressures including, habitat disturbance, air pollution, water use, waste etc. However these can be mitigated through S106 planning requirements.
- If potential development was to demolish those buildings that have been recognised as contributing to the local character of Botley, such as Elms Parade in Scenario 04, the loss of such buildings would have negative impacts on the identity and character of Botley Centre. However such proposals would need to be justified in planning terms.

**Evaluating the Likely Effects of the SPD against the SA Objectives (B3) and Mitigating Adverse Effects and Maximising Beneficial Effects (B4)**

- 5.19 The following seeks to consider the SPD as a whole and identify the significant potential social, environmental and economic effects of implementing it, as well as measures to maximise/mitigate these effects.
- 5.20 The following table illustrates that the majority of sustainability objectives are affected positively by the implementation of the SPD (e.g. SA objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11).
- 5.21 Inevitably due to the proposed scale of the redevelopment of Botley Centre potential negative effects have been identified, specifically under certain objectives, mainly within the environmental dimension of sustainability (e.g. SA objectives 4, 7, 9 and 10). However this tends to be limited to certain criteria under an objective with others being more positive. These negative effects will particularly occur during the short-term construction phase and are considered acceptable to realise the long-term benefits highlighted above. Based on Appendix 23 of Part 1 of the *'SA of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031'*, the following table offers a summary of these likely effects.

5.22 The table also identifies implementation and mitigation measures manage the identified effects where relevant. As is the case for the negative effects, measures that minimise the scope of the effect or mitigate the effect have been identified, whereas for the beneficial effects measures have been identified to enhance the relevant effect. These measures have been incorporated into the SPD objectives, design principles and supporting text.

SA Objective	Potential Effects	Mitigation Measures
<p>1. Provide sufficient suitable homes including affordable homes in Botley</p>	<p>The SPD will see the provision of homes of mixed tenure and affordable housing. The SPD will therefore have a <b>significant beneficial effect</b> on this objective.</p>	<p>SPD Objective 01 supports the maximisation of the identified beneficial effect by adopting a comprehensive approach to redevelopment and encouraging an effective use of land and mix of land uses, which could include the provision of residential units.</p> <p>Also Objective 09 provides for an expanded and diverse range of land uses that meet the needs of people of all ages from the existing and future community. This includes meeting the need for high quality housing which is suitable for a range of users.</p> <p>Development Principle 4.1.2 provides more specific support for residential uses including affordable homes, accommodation for older people and student accommodation.</p>
<p>2. Ensure the availability of high quality services and facilities in Botley</p>	<p>The SPD would lead to an improvement in the appearance of the existing centre which would help ensure the availability of high quality services and facilities in the local area, therefore having a <b>significant beneficial effect</b> on this objective, with the effect being most positive in more comprehensive development proposals, which would see the full redevelopment of the site and the creation of additional uses which would support a wider range of services.</p>	<p>Many parts of the SPD will support the maximisation of the beneficial effects identified specifically:</p> <p>Objective 01 which supports the adoption of a comprehensive approach to redevelopment and encourages an effective use of land and mix of uses, which could include the provision of high quality services and facilities.</p> <p>Objective 05 supports the strengthening of the retail centre by improving the retail offer by providing a range of unit sizes and retail types including cafes and restaurants.</p> <p>Objective 08 supports the rationalisation and enhancement of community facilities across the site to better serve the needs of both the existing and future communities.</p> <p>Similarly Objective 09 provides for an expanded and diverse range of land uses to meet the needs of the community.</p> <p>Development Principle 4.1.2 provides more specific support for a range of potential uses on the site including retail, cafes,</p>

SA Objective	Potential Effects	Mitigation Measures
		<p>restaurants and community uses.</p> <p>Also, design principle 4.5.4 encourages the refurbishment/change of use of the units within Elms Parade, to house such services and facilities, where it ensures the long term viability of the building.</p> <p>These objectives and principles will maximise the identified beneficial effect, with the scope dependent on the final configuration of development on site.</p>
<p>3. Reduce the need to travel and improve provisions for walking, cycling and public transport and reduce road congestion in Botley</p>	<p>Transport and movement improvement, particularly pedestrian and cycling play an important role in accessibility of the site. The SPD seeks to improve connections with layouts that encourage cycling, walking and access to public transport connections. Improved road layouts and vehicular access will also reduce road congestion in the area. Overall, the SPD will have a <b>significant beneficial effect</b> on this objective.</p>	<p>Objective 06 and Objective 07 support improvements to the public realm, access and permeability in Botley Centre to encourage users of the site to walk, cycle or use public transport and minimises the need for people to travel using private vehicles.</p> <p>There are many development principles which go further to support this including but not limited to the Access, Linkages and Legibility development principles (4.2.1 – 4.2.10), Parking and Servicing development principles (4.6.1 – 4.6.7) and public realm specific realm development principles which seek to provide a more cohesive, permeable, well proportioned and active Botley Centre (4.3.1, 4.3.3, 4.3.5, 4.3.7 and 4.3.10).</p>
<p>4. Improve the health and well-being of Botley residents</p>	<p>The SPD seeks to increase the provision and availability of community facilities and provide a better environment for active lifestyles (encouraging walking and cycling etc). In addition by improving internal and external living conditions background health issues should improve in the long term. Access to facilities together with affordable housing and mix of tenure could help reduce inequalities. Overall, there would be a <b>significant long term beneficial effect</b> on this objective as a result of the SPD.</p> <p>In the <b>short term</b>, disruption and displacement may lead to some <b>adverse health effects</b>, especially on those most vulnerable in society, which will require careful management.</p> <p>The re-development of the site could result in <b>adverse effects</b> in terms of</p>	<p>Objective 06 and Objective 07 and Development Principles within 4.2 and 4.3 seek to maximise the identified beneficial effect by improving the physical environment of the site which will promote active lifestyles and improve the perception of safety in Botley Centre.</p> <p>Also Objective 08 and Objective 09 and Development Principle 4.1.2 seek to provide a vibrant mix of uses including community facilities and residential units which will benefit the well-being of the local community, provide them with better living conditions and help to reduce inequalities.</p> <p>Where potential negative effects were identified, the SPD also proposed some measures which will help to mitigate the scope of the effect as well as the sources with potential to create adverse health effects.</p> <p>Development principle 4.4.8 suggests that</p>

SA Objective	Potential Effects	Mitigation Measures
	<p>noise and air pollution, particularly if there is an increase in vehicle movements to the site.</p> <p>There is also potential for <b>adverse effects</b> in terms of residential amenity depending on the scale, massing and location of new buildings on the site.</p>	<p>development along Westminster Way should limit the level of noise and air pollution entering the site while development principle 4.2.8 seeks to maximise sustainable travel modes and ensure transport impacts of future developments are assessed and mitigated.</p> <p>Development principle 4.4.7 suggests that the scale and massing of any development will consider effects such as residential amenity and access to sunlight/daylight.</p>
<p>5. Provide high quality placemaking which creates an inclusive environment for the local Botley community</p>	<p>This is a central aim of the SPD with the design and development principles setting out clear and detailed guidance to improve and enhance the quality and layout of the site, and requirements for high quality materials for street environments, public art and general enhancement of the public realm. The inclusion of more active frontages and natural surveillance also has the potential to reduce any fear of crime in the area, while the inclusion of new public spaces together with improvements to street furniture is also likely to increase satisfaction and ownership of the area. Improvements in quantity and quality of community facilities and sport opportunities likely to encourage participation. Overall the SPD will have a <b>significant beneficial effect</b> on this objective.</p>	<p>The beneficial effect created by the SPD with regard to placemaking will be maximised through a number of the SPD's objectives. In particular Objective 02 and Objective 03 seek to ensure that development is of the highest quality and respects and enhances the existing character of the area, while Objective 04 and development principles (4.4.1 - 4.4.8) seeks to control the scale and massing of the area, guiding development to the most appropriate areas.</p> <p>Other specific development principles such as 4.3.2 and 4.3.5 will maximise this beneficial effect by creating a cohesive and legible development which is inviting for people to use and ignites a sense of pride in Botley Centre.</p>
<p>6. Support a strong and sustainable economy within Botley</p>	<p>Development that would come forward through the SPD would improve the appearance of Botley Centre, having a beneficial economic and regenerative impact on the area. New, modern retail units and office spaces would encourage the creation of new businesses which would offer more job opportunities in the area, therefore leading to more positive effects in terms of supporting a strong and sustainable economy. More comprehensive development would result in greater <b>significant beneficial effects</b> due to the greater level of redevelopment involved.</p>	<p>Specific SPD objectives which seek to maximise the identified beneficial effect are Objective 5 which seeks to improve the retail offer in Botley Centre by attracting a variety of different retailers such as cafes and restaurants which would offer a more vibrant evening economy and support a more strong and sustainable economic future. Also, Objective 09 seeks to expand and diversify the range of land uses on site. Supporting development policy 4.1.2 suggests a range of potential land uses that could strengthen Botley Centre including a "range of retail units" which seeks to provide for large units for modern retailers and smaller units more suited to independent retailers.</p>

SA Objective	Potential Effects	Mitigation Measures
		<p>The deliverability and viability of the overall development is addressed in Objective 01 which will ensure that a comprehensive approach is adopted, and that the redevelopment, through the effective use of land and careful balance of uses, will act to strengthen the local economy within Botley.</p>
<p>7. Improve and protect the natural environment including biodiversity, water and soil quality in Botley</p>	<p>The scale of the development has <b>potential negative effects</b> (especially in the short term due to potential construction effects), but also provides opportunities for incorporating biodiversity enhancements. Development principles seek to ensure the enhancement of biodiversity by retaining existing mature trees and providing a net increase in trees and planting throughout the site. By redeveloping this site, pressure to develop on greenfield sites in the locality would also be reduced, further protecting existing habitats in the surrounding area. These would have <b>long term beneficial effects</b> on this objective, especially with regard to biodiversity.</p> <p>Development has the potential to increase water use and demands on water and waste water infrastructure, specifically short term water demands of construction, and medium to long term demand due to increased population, economic activity and community facilities. This would have a <b>potential adverse effect</b> on this objective.</p>	<p>Potential negative effects, including short term construction effects, will be mitigated through specific development principles. For example, 4.3.8 suggests development should retain existing mature trees on site and 4.5.8, 4.5.9 and 4.5.10 promote a range of climate change adaption and design measures.</p> <p>These measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• planting and glazing to regulate heat;</li> <li>• sustainable materials including green walls and roofs to reduce heat penetration and flooding;</li> <li>• maximising natural ventilation;</li> <li>• building and window location and orientation; and</li> <li>• Sustainable Urban Drainage</li> <li>• minimise energy consumption and carbon emissions through sensitive design and the incorporation of renewable energy and heating sources.</li> <li>• Consideration of solar orientation, low energy materials, photovoltaics, solar and thermal heating and implementation or future connection to a wider district heating network.</li> <li>• As set out in the Vale's Design Guide the Council aspires to new non-residential development achieving a level of performance equivalent to BREEAM excellent which incorporates a range of initiatives including those related to water use.</li> </ul>
<p>8. Enhance the character and identity of Botley and protect the local townscape</p>	<p>Development that sees the retention of Elms Parade and St Peter and St Pauls Church would have a <b>beneficial effect</b> in that this would ensure the protection of Botley's identity and</p>	<p>Objective 02 ensures that development of the site will respect and reflect the existing character of Botley Centre. In order to mitigate the identified negative effects, the SPD through development principle 4.5.7</p>

SA Objective	Potential Effects	Mitigation Measures
and cultural heritage	<p>existing character.</p> <p>Where development proposes to demolish Elms Parade or proposes alterations to the building (Development Principle 4.5.7), these buildings there would be a <b>negative impact</b> on the existing character of the townscape in Botley Centre. However, such proposals would have to be justified in planning terms and the negative impacts would have to be weighed against the <b>potential beneficial effects</b> on service provision and the local economy of supplying more modern floor plates.</p> <p>The redevelopment of the site with modern, well designed buildings would compliment and improve the existing local townscape, therefore having a significant <b>long term beneficial effect</b> on this objective.</p> <p>The SPD also explored the potential to include a taller, landmark building at the junction of West Way and Westminster Way, which would have a beneficial effect on Botley Centre's distinctiveness and local identity. This <b>beneficial effect</b> will have to be balanced with the potential negative effect a taller building would have on views toward Oxford from the surrounding area.</p>	<p>states that loss of such buildings will have to be justified, including through a high level of architectural quality to enhance the character of the locality and its townscape. Justification will also have to be provided to illustrate how these negative impacts are outweighed by other potential beneficial effects on service provision and the local economy.</p> <p>The identified beneficial effects will be maximised through various development principles including but not limited to 4.5.2 which promotes the use of high quality materials and finishes. Also, 4.4.5 states that consideration should be given to the appearance of the site from surrounding sensitive views, ensuring that development compliments and enhances the existing townscape. This development principle also mitigates the potential negative effect of the landmark taller building proposed at the north east corner of the site by saying consideration will have to be given to long range views, including the Oxford View Cones and that developments should be subject to a Visual Impact Assessment.</p>
9. Reduce air, noise and light pollution in Botley	<p><b>Adverse short-term impacts</b> are possible during demolition and construction, especially with regard to traffic, air and noise pollution.</p> <p><b>Long term beneficial effects</b> are identified by the creation of high quality accommodation which maximises the availability of sunlight/daylight, development which will act as a screen to minimise noise pollution from the adjacent A34 and promotion of more sustainable transport methods such as walking cycling and public transport which would reduce the need to travel by car, having a proportionate reduction in associated traffic, noise and air pollution.</p>	<p>Potential short term adverse effects will be mitigated through planning conditions.</p> <p>Long term beneficial effects will be maximised through Objective 04 and Design Principles within 4.4 which guide appropriate scale and massing to contribute positively not only to visual amenity but also the adequate access to sunlight/daylight.</p> <p>Objective 06 and Objective 07 and Development Principles within 4.2, 4.3 and 4.6 seek to create a more accessible and permeable development, improve public transport links, create a more pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment and minimise traffic. Also, development principle 4.4.8 states that development should seek to limit the level of noise and</p>

SA Objective	Potential Effects	Mitigation Measures
		air pollution entering the site from the A34 and 4.4.7 seeks to address effects of overshadowing, sunlight and daylight and wind microclimate.
10. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the use of resources and improve resource efficiency in Botley	<p>Where the reuse of existing buildings on the site is proposed this will result in <b>positive effects</b> in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the <b>long term</b> through reuse of resources.</p> <p>Conversely, where the replacement of older, highly inefficient buildings with new, modern buildings is proposed, this could mean a saving of energy and possible reduction in resource use, leading to a more <b>neutral effect</b> in the medium/long term.</p> <p>The re-development of the site could result in <b>adverse effects</b> in terms of greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles, particularly if there is an increase in vehicle movements to the site.</p> <p>Both the refurbishment and redevelopment processes would increase greenhouse gas emissions during construction leading to an <b>adverse effect in the short term</b>, specifically through the energy involved in carrying out the refurbishment and redevelopment works.</p>	<p>With regard to the identified positive effects, Objective 02 seeks to better integrate existing buildings on site, controlling greenhouse gases through refurbishment as opposed to complete redevelopment. Also, Development Principles 4.5.8, 4.5.9 and 4.5.10 seek to minimise energy consumption and carbon emissions through sensitive sustainable design and the incorporation of renewable energy and heating sources as outlined above.</p> <p>Development principle 4.2.8 seeks to maximise sustainable travel modes and ensure transport impacts of future developments and assessed and mitigated.</p> <p>Potential short term negative effects as a result of construction would be mitigated through planning conditions upon the granting of planning permission for any development.</p>
11. Increase resilience to climate change in Botley	Redevelopment offers the opportunity to incorporate a Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) which would minimise the likelihood of surface water flooding on the site in times of extreme weather, therefore having a <b>significant beneficial effect</b> on this objective.	<p>Development principle 4.3.9 and 4.3.10 seek to maximise the identified potential beneficial effect by stating that SUDs should be incorporated into the development, and that a variety of measures incorporated into the BREEAM certification process could address climate change resilience.</p> <p>Development principle 4.5.8 also seeks to mitigate potential negative effects through incorporation of climate change adaption design measures which could include measures such as planting and glazing to regulate heat; maximising natural ventilation and the use of sustainable materials including green walls/roofs to reduce heat penetration and flooding.</p>

### Monitoring the Significant Effects of the SPD (B5)

5.23 Monitoring the significant sustainability effects of implementing the SPD is an important ongoing element of the sustainability appraisal process. Section 36 of Part 4 of the '*Sustainability Appraisal of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – SA Report*' (October 2014) suggests measures that might be taken to monitor the effects (in particular the negative effects) highlighted by the appraisal of the Local Plan. As the Botley Centre SPD and associated SA Report is based on baseline data and sustainability objectives already set out in the Vale's wider SA Report, these measures are therefore directly relatable to Botley.

5.24 The following table sets out the measures, which are directly relatable to the Botley Centre area envisaged concerning monitoring.

<b>Botley Centre SPD Objective</b>	<b>Monitoring Measure</b>
1. Provide sufficient suitable homes including affordable homes in Botley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing delivery</li> <li>• Housing Density</li> </ul>
2. Ensure the availability of high quality services and facilities in Botley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to services and facilities of current and future residents</li> <li>• Educational Attainment</li> </ul>
3. Reduce the need to travel and improve provisions for walking, cycling and public transport and reduce road congestion in Botley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel to work patterns</li> <li>• Average journey times by mode</li> <li>• Average km travelled by mode</li> <li>• Modal split</li> </ul>
4. Improve the health and well-being of Botley residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health profile for the Botley Area</li> <li>• Delivery of green infrastructure including extent and condition / quality</li> </ul>
5. Provide high quality placemaking which creates an inclusive environment for the local Botley community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of a high quality public realm and open spaces</li> </ul>
6. Support a strong and sustainable economy within Botley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce classification</li> <li>• Jobseeker claimants</li> </ul>
7. Improve and protect the natural environment including biodiversity, water and soil quality in Botley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of Botley's surrounding SSSIs in a favourable or unfavourable but recovering condition BAP species and habitat extent and condition (Note: It may be difficult to attribute the specific impact from Botley Centre to district and county wide growth)</li> <li>• Chemical and biological water quality</li> <li>• Percentage of applications granted against the advice of Natural England</li> </ul>
8. Enhance the character and identity of Botley and protect the local townscape and cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of buildings, public realm and open spaces of high design quality</li> <li>• Provision of strong justifications where redevelopment proposes the removal of buildings of local importance</li> </ul>
9. Reduce air, noise and light pollution in Botley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air Quality (PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub>)</li> <li>• Quantity of noise complaints due to construction and operation of new developments</li> </ul>
10. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the use of resources and improve resource efficiency in Botley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GHG emissions per capita</li> <li>• Water efficiency of new developments</li> <li>• Energy efficiency of new developments</li> </ul>
11. Increase resilience to climate change in Botley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of developments given permission contrary to EA objections (over flood risk).</li> </ul>



## **6.0 PREPARE AND CONSULT ON THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT (STAGES C AND D)**

6.1 The SA Report and Draft SPD were published for consultation from the 21 August 2015 to the 25 September 2015 (Stages C and D). Representations from the public and statutory consultees were received on both documents. Following review of these representations the Vale has made amendments to the SPD and SA Report which have been appraised and updated within the final adopted documents.

6.2 The changes to the SPD and the SA Report which are relevant to the Sustainability Appraisal are summarised below:

- Amendments to SPD Development Principle 4.5.8 to include SUDs (also reference in 4.3.9) and additional Development Principle 4.5.10 in relation to BREEAM which incorporates a broad range of sustainability measures.
- Amendments to SPD Development Principle 4.2.8 to ensure transport impacts are adequately assessed.
- Amendments to SPD Development Principle 4.4.5 to require a Visual Impact Assessment
- Amendments to SPD Development Principle 4.4.7 to address wind micro-climate
- Amendments to SPD Development Principle 4.4.8 to address air pollution
- Clarification of the use of socio-economic data for the Botley Area and Botley Catchment Area within both the SPD and SA Report;
- Clarification of the approach to the assessment of alternatives in the SA Report;
- Clarification of low crime rates in the area, however that the current lack of active frontages and natural surveillance could contribute to a fear of crime in SA Report issues.

6.3 Other amendments to the SPD and the SA Report have been made in response to the consultation however the above changes are considered most relevant to the Sustainability Appraisal.

## **7.0 POST ADOPTION REPORTING AND MONITORING (STAGE E)**

7.1 The approach to post adoption reporting and monitoring is outlined in paragraphs 5.23 and 5.24 above and seeks to align suggested measures within the *Sustainability Appraisal of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031*.

## **Appendix A – Policies, Plans and Programmes**

Part 1, Section 5 of the *Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – SA Report* (October 2014)

## 5 WHAT'S THE SUSTAINABILITY 'CONTEXT'?

The SA Report must include...

- The relevant sustainability objectives, established at international / national level
- Any existing sustainability problems / issues which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas / populations etc. of particular importance

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 An important step when seeking to establish the appropriate 'scope' of an SA involves reviewing 'sustainability context' messages (e.g. issues, objectives or aspirations) set out within relevant plans, policies, strategies and initiatives (PPSIs). Sustainability context messages are important, as they aid the identification of the 'key sustainability issues' that should be a focus of the SA. Key messages from this review, with specific emphasis on the National Planning Policy Framework<sup>6</sup>, are summarised below. A comprehensive review can be found in Appendix 2 of the Scoping Report.

5.1.2 The following is an updated summary of the context review presented within the LPP1 SA Scoping Report (2012)<sup>6</sup>, updated to take into account new information that has emerged since 2012.

### 5.2 Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework<sup>7</sup>

#### *Community: Population, Health, Crime and Social Equity*

5.2.1 The social role of the planning system is defined as 'supporting vibrant and healthy communities', with a 'core planning principle' being to 'take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all'.

5.2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework advises that planning policies should promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. The National Planning Policy Framework states that ensuring that there is a 'sufficient choice of school places' is of 'great importance'. To this end, local authorities are called upon to take a 'proactive, positive and collaborative approach' to bringing forward 'development that will widen choice in education'.

5.2.3 Specific protection and promotion of town centres is encouraged. Specifically, local planning authorities should 'define the extent of town centres' and set policies that 'make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations', and 'promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres'.

#### *Housing*

5.2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should meet the 'full, objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing' in their area. With a view to creating 'sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities' authorities should ensure provision of affordable housing onsite or externally where robustly justified. Plans for housing mix should be based upon 'current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community'. Larger developments are suggested as sometimes being the best means of achieving a supply of new homes, with these to be developed in

<sup>6</sup> Vale of White Horse District Local Plan Part 1 Scoping Report (2012) [online] Available at: [http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/SA%20Scoping%20Report%20FINAL.pdf?bcsi\\_scan\\_AB11CAA0E2721250=0&bcsi\\_scan\\_filename=SA%20Scoping%20Report%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/SA%20Scoping%20Report%20FINAL.pdf?bcsi_scan_AB11CAA0E2721250=0&bcsi_scan_filename=SA%20Scoping%20Report%20FINAL.pdf) (accessed 10/2014)

<sup>7</sup> CLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework [online] available at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2116950.pdf> (accessed 08/2014)

accordance with the 'principles of Garden Cities'.

5.2.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) sets out that local planning authorities should use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan 2031 meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area . They should prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess their housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where appropriate

5.2.6 The NPPF also establishes that local planning authorities should ensure that their assessment of and strategies for housing and employment are integrated and that they take full account of relevant market and economic signals.

#### *Economy*

5.2.7 The contribution the planning system can make to building a strong, responsive economy is highlighted. This should include 'identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure'. There is a need to support new and emerging business sectors, including positively planning for 'clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries'. In addition, local plans should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas.

5.2.8 The National Planning Policy Framework promotes competitive town centre environments and encourages positive planning policies to support them. It seeks resilient decisions that will anticipate economic changes, as well as promoting customer choice and a diverse retail offering. The need to enhance and retain markets is outlined within the National Planning Policy Framework, ensuring they remain attractive and competitive. There is the provision to only consider edge of town developments if they have good access with flexibility demonstrated in format and scale. This should be followed with an impact assessment to ensure the town centre remains viable and does not prejudice future growth.

#### *Travel*

5.2.9 In terms of transport and travel policies, the National Planning Policy Framework notes that these will have an important role in 'contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives'. It calls for the transport system to be balanced 'in favour of sustainable transport', with developments to be located and designed to facilitate these modes of travel. In order to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure and other activities, the National Planning Policy Framework calls for planning policies that aim for 'a balance of land uses'. Wherever practical, key facilities should be located within walking distance of most properties.

#### *Historic Environment*

5.2.10 Heritage assets should be recognised as an 'irreplaceable resource' that should be conserved in a 'manner appropriate to their significance', taking account of 'the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits' of conservation, whilst also recognising the positive contribution new development can make to local character and distinctiveness.

#### *Natural Environment*

5.2.11 Impacts on biodiversity should be minimised, with net gains in biodiversity to be provided wherever possible. To contribute to national and local targets on biodiversity, planning should promote the 'preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks' and the 'protection and recovery of priority species'. High quality open spaces should be protected or their loss mitigated, unless a lack of need is established.

5.2.12 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the planning system should protect and enhance valued landscapes. Particular weight is given to 'conserving landscape and scenic beauty'. According to the National Planning Policy Framework, 'great weight' should be given to the conservation of the landscape and scenic beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which have the 'highest level of protection' in this regard. The conservation

of cultural heritage and wildlife in these areas is also an ‘important consideration’

- 5.2.13 The National Planning Policy Framework aims to protect Green Belt land, the aim of which is to ‘prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open’. The National Planning Policy Framework calls on local planning authorities to ‘plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt’ to improve access, provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land’.
- 5.2.14 The National Planning Policy Framework calls for planning policies and decisions to ‘encourage the effective use of land’ through the reuse of land which has been previously developed, ‘provided that this is not of high environmental value’. Whilst there is no longer a national requirement to build at a minimum density, the National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to ‘set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances’. The value of best and most versatile agricultural land should also be taken into account.
- 5.2.15 The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that planning policies should be compliant with and contribute towards EU limit values and national objectives for pollutants; and states that new and existing developments should be prevented from contributing to, or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of air pollution. This includes taking into account Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and cumulative impacts on air quality.
- 5.2.16 The planning system prevent new or existing development from being ‘adversely affected’ by the presence of ‘unacceptable levels’ of soil pollution or land instability and be willing to remediate and mitigate ‘despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land’ wherever appropriate.
- Planning policies and decisions should ‘encourage effective use of land’ through the reuse of land which is previously developed, ‘provided that this is not of high environmental value’.
  - Planning authorities should take account of the long term effects of climate change and ‘adopt proactive strategies’ to adaptation, with new developments planned to avoid increased vulnerability to climate change impacts.
- 5.2.17 In terms of flooding, development should be directed away from areas highest at risk and should not be allocated if there are ‘reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding’. The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should avoid ‘inappropriate development in vulnerable areas or adding to the impacts of physical changes to the coast’ in order to reduce the risk posed from coastal change.

#### *Resources*

- 5.2.18 The National Planning Policy Framework identifies as a ‘core planning principle’ the need to ‘support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate’. A key role for planning in securing radical reductions in GHG emissions is envisioned, with specific reference made to meeting the targets set out in the Climate Change Act 2008<sup>8</sup>. Specifically, planning policy should support the move to a low carbon future through:
- a. planning for new development in locations and ways which reduce GHG emissions;
  - b. actively supporting energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings;
  - c. setting local requirements for building’s sustainability in a way that is consistent with the Government’s zero carbon buildings policy;
  - d. positively promoting renewable energy technologies and considering identifying suitable

<sup>8</sup> The Climate Change Act 2008 sets targets for greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions through action in the UK of at least 80% by 2050, and reductions in CO2 emissions of at least 26% by 2020, against a 1990 baseline.

- areas for their construction; and
- e. encouraging those transport solutions that support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.

5.2.19 The National Planning Policy Framework does not contain any specific waste policies<sup>9</sup>. Nonetheless, local authorities who are preparing waste related plans should have regard to the policies within the framework so far as they are relevant.

5.2.20 In relation to water resources, the National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should produce strategic policies to deliver the provision of a variety of infrastructure, including that necessary for water supply.

### 5.3 Supplementing the National Planning Policy Framework

5.3.1 In addition to reviewing relevant contextual messages set out within the National Planning Policy Framework, it is also important to 'cast the net wider' and consider contextual messages established through other plans, policies, strategies and initiatives. The PPPSIs reviewed can be found in Appendix 2 of the Scoping Report.

#### National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014)<sup>10</sup>

5.3.2 The Government published national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in March 2014. This is intended to complement and support the National Planning Policy Framework and provide advice on how to deliver its policies.

5.3.3 The PPG contains a number of sections that cover a range of topic areas. The main factors that need to be taken into account in relation to housing are outlined below:

#### Housing and economic development needs assessments

- The PPG emphasises the importance of objectively assessing both the economic and housing needs (both market and affordable) of an area, within a functional housing market area or economic area; to promote more balanced spatial patterns of sustainable development;
- The assessment should identify the future quantity of housing needed including a breakdown by type, tenure and size;
- Constraints to development are not considered as part of the assessment but would need to be considered as part of the plan making process;
- Local planning authorities should demonstrate their development needs working with other local authorities in the relevant housing market area in line with the duty to cooperate;
- The national household projections are the starting point for establishing the housing needs. However, they are trend based and would need to be adjusted for changing circumstances such as local demography and household formation rates which are not captured in past trends;
- Housing need suggested by household projection should take into account of market signals such as house prices, affordability, rates of development, etc. A worsening trend in any of these indicators will require upward adjustment to planned housing numbers compared to ones based solely on household projections;
- An assessment of the likely level of job growth based upon past trends and /or future economic forecasts would be required, taking into account factors such as the growth of working age population and cross boundary migration.

<sup>9</sup> National waste planning policy will be published as part of the National Waste Management Plan for England

<sup>10</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2014) National Planning Practice Guidance [online] available at: <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/> (accessed 10/14)

#### Housing and economic land availability assessment

- This includes a Strategic housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to identify a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable to help meet future housing growth.
- Identify and demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable sites, including windfall allowance, if justified by a robust evidence base. Also to identify developable sites (or broad locations) for years 6-15 of the Local Plan 2031.
- The PPG states that “Local planning authorities should aim to deal with any undersupply [or past shortfalls] within the first 5 years of the plan period where possible. Where this cannot be met in the first 5 years, local planning authorities will need to work with neighbouring authorities under the ‘Duty to Cooperate’”.

#### Housing Standards Review

5.3.4 The Government completed a Housing Standards Review in October 2013. A Technical Consultation was launched in September 2014<sup>11</sup>. It is intended that standards relating to water efficiency, access (including Lifetime Homes) and security will be consolidated into the building regulations. The relevant legislative requirements are currently going through Parliament. It is expected that transitional arrangements for local authorities will be introduced in early 2015.

5.3.5 The Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 has been prepared in compliance with national policy. In particular, the NPPF states that for a local plan to be considered sound, it must comply with the legal and procedural requirements of plan making, such as the duty-to-cooperate and demonstrate that it is positively prepared; justified; effective and consistent with national policy.

#### Duty to Cooperate and the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment

5.3.6 The Duty to Cooperate set out in the Localism Act is both a legal duty and test of effective plan-making. It requires cooperation on issues of common concern in order to develop sound local plans.

5.3.7 Within Oxfordshire co-operative working is managed through the Oxfordshire Growth Board (superseding the former Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership Board, SPIP). The board comprises the leaders of all Oxfordshire councils supported by an executive committee and officer working groups. Vale of White Horse also works directly with authorities within and outside the county area where that is necessary to plan effectively on matters of strategic and sub-regional significance or cross border interest that are not Oxfordshire-wide.

5.3.8 As part of implementing the duty to cooperate the leaders of all Oxfordshire authorities including Vale of White Horse have agreed a joint Oxfordshire Statement of Cooperation. This sets out that all the Oxfordshire councils agree to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in any process that involves the following. The parties also agree to act expediently when undertaking joint working to avoid unreasonable delay.

- The preparation of development plan documents.
- The preparation of other local planning documents.
- The planning and prioritisation of infrastructure and investment in Oxfordshire to support economic growth of the area.
- Activities that support any of the above so far as they relate to sustainable development or use of land that has or would impact on more than one of the Parties.

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<sup>11</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2014) Housing Standards Review – Technical Consultation [online] available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/354154/140911\\_HSR\\_CONSULTATION\\_DOCUMENT\\_-\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/354154/140911_HSR_CONSULTATION_DOCUMENT_-_FINAL.pdf) (accessed 10/14)

- 5.3.9 Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)<sup>12</sup> provides up-to-date evidence on the level of housing need in the District over the period up to 2031. The Housing Topic Paper November 2014<sup>13</sup> discusses the final housing targets and the associated evidence base in more detail. The SHMA proposed a new housing target for the District, and also identified additional strategic sites for housing development, so that the new housing target can be delivered.
- 5.3.10 The Oxfordshire Statement of Cooperation sets out how the outcomes of the SHMA would be managed, should any of the Local Planning Authorities in Oxfordshire not be able to meet their full objectively assessed housing need. The Duty to Cooperate Topic Paper November 2014 discusses this in more detail.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> GL Hearn (2014) Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment Summary – Key Findings on Housing Need [online] available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/node/13109> (accessed 10/14)

<sup>13</sup> Vale of White Horse District Council Housing Topic Paper November 2014

<sup>14</sup> Vale of White Horse District Council Duty to Cooperate Topic Paper November 2014



## Appendix B - Baseline

*Part 1, Section 6 of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Vale of White Horse District Local Plan 2031 Part 1 – SA Report (October 2014)*

## 6 WHAT'S THE SUSTAINABILITY 'BASELINE'?

The SA Report must include...

- The relevant aspects of the current state of the sustainability baseline and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan'
- The characteristics of areas / populations etc. likely to be significantly affected.
- Any existing sustainability problems / issues which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas / populations etc. of particular importance

### 6.1 Consultation on the scope

6.1.1 Another important step when seeking to establish the appropriate 'scope' of an SA involves reviewing *the situation now* for a range of sustainability issues. Doing so helps to enable identification of those key sustainability issues that should be a particular focus of the appraisal, and also helps to provide 'benchmarks' for the appraisal of significant effects.

6.1.2 A review of the sustainability baseline is presented within the 2012 SA Scoping Report. This section presents a summary, updated as necessary.

#### *Population*

6.1.3 The 2011 census lists the population of the Vale as 121,000, a rise of 4.6% (from 115,627) in the 2001 census<sup>15</sup>. In 2001 the population of which live in rural areas constituted just over 51%, however it is projected that that the majority of the population are now likely to live within the urban areas of the Vale as development has been focussed on these areas.

6.1.4 The population of the Vale is predicted to be 131,300 in 2035, an increase of 10,400 from 2010<sup>16</sup>. The figures suggest that the Vale has an increasing ageing population and that the number of working age population (16-64 males/59 females) is estimated to remain fairly static which, in terms of a growing population, has implications for the ability of the working population to support those who are not working.

6.1.5 Oxfordshire County Council commissioned their own population forecasts that took into account planned development in the area and housing targets in the South East Plan<sup>17</sup>.

6.1.6 Using this information it was predicted that from 2001 to 2026 the total population would increase from 115,770 to 138,150; that the economically active population would increase from 61,340 to 68,860; the number of households increase from 45,380 to 59,880; and the average household size would decrease from 2.46 to 2.25.

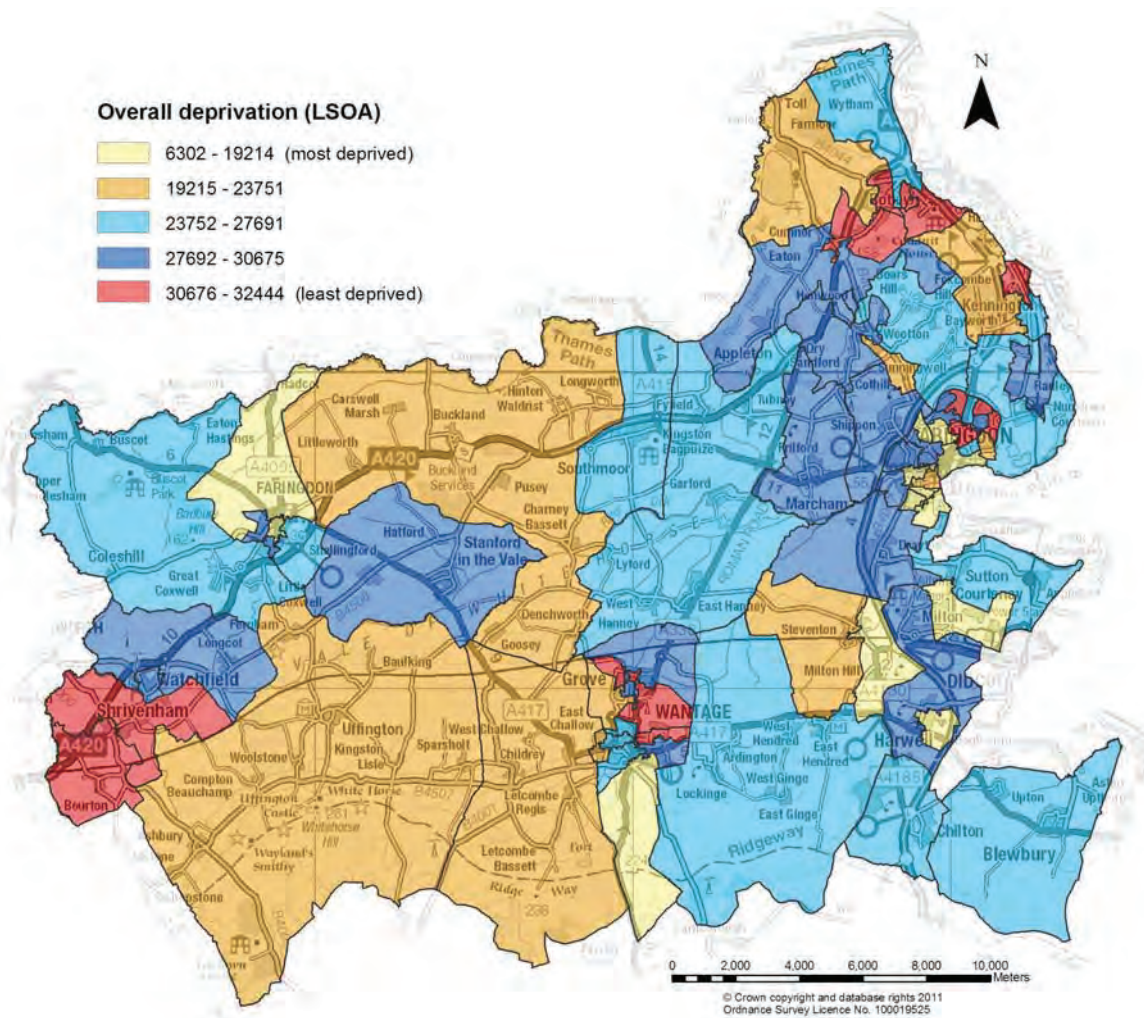
6.1.7 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD, 2010) ranks the Vale 306<sup>th</sup> out of 326 local authorities, with the 326<sup>th</sup> being the least deprived. There is however one Lower Super Output Area (LSOA), located in Abingdon, that is in the bottom 20% nationally. **Figure 6.1** shows the spatial distribution of the IMD results.

<sup>15</sup>Office for National Statistics (ONS) / Census 2011

<sup>16</sup>ONS Neighbourhood Statistics (2012)

<sup>17</sup>The South East Plan was officially abolished in February 2014.

Figure 6.1: Overall Deprivation in the Vale (IMD, 2010)



### Housing

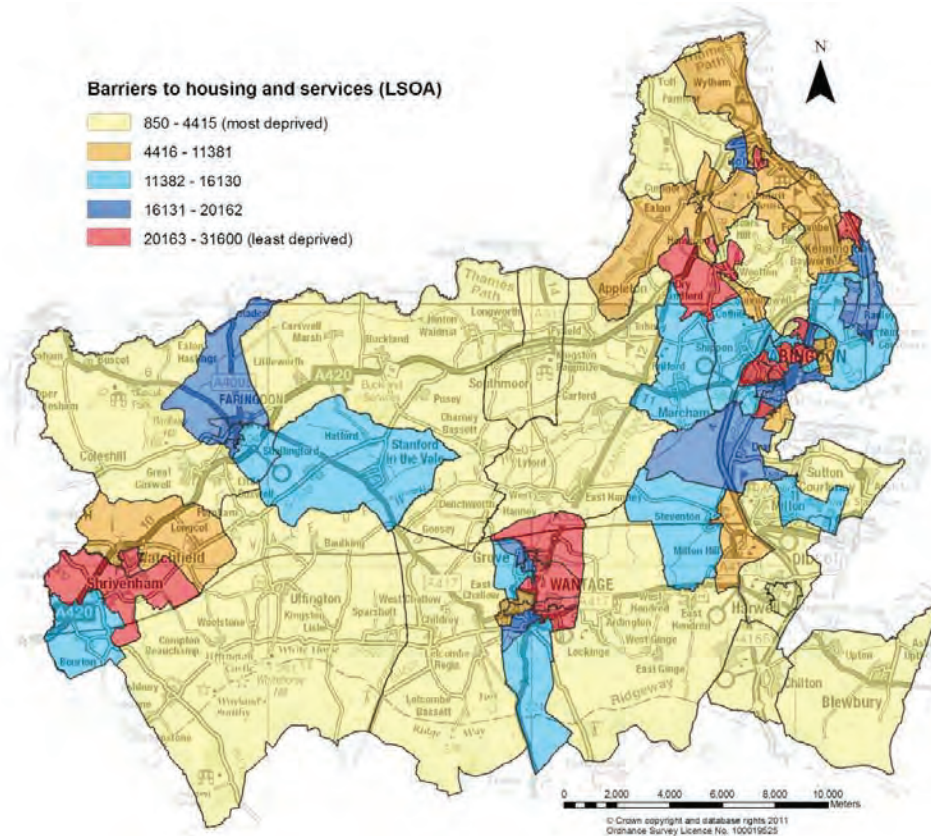
- 6.1.8 The total number of dwellings in the District at 31st March 2010 was 50,650 of which Council Tax records indicate that some 1,263 were vacant (an increase of almost 30% on 2004 levels).
- 6.1.9 The key features of the existing housing stock as reported in the council's Housing Needs Assessment<sup>18</sup> (HNA) are that:
- The property type profile is skewed towards semi-detached and detached houses and bungalows, 71.0% of the current stock which is higher than the national level of 55%.
  - Based on a calculation of occupants to bedroom numbers, under-occupation affects approximately 49.0% of all households, higher than the average found in recent HNA surveys (around 40%). Over-occupation affects just 0.7% of all existing households, well

<sup>18</sup> DCA UK (2011) Housing Needs Assessment Update [online] available at: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/HNA%20Vale%20of%20White%20Horse%20Final%20Report%20Published.pdf> (accessed 10/14)

below the average UK level indicated by the Survey of English Housing 2001/2 (3%). This is in line with the high proportion of larger properties as mentioned above.

- 6.1.10 There has been an increase in the number of households, and a trend towards smaller and rapidly changing households. Average household size is predicted to drop from 2.46 to 2.26 (2001 to 2026) which means that even if the Vale's population had remained static at 115,627 in 2001 there would be about 5,500 extra households in the Vale by 2026.
- 6.1.11 The lack of affordable housing is an issue in the Vale. The average house price to earnings ratio for the Vale is lower than the average for Oxfordshire (8.6) although it has increased from 7.2 to 8.2 from 2009 to 2010. Both market and affordable housing completions are below the previous Local Plan 2011 targets.
- 6.1.12 One of the components of the IMD (2010) deprivation calculation is access to housing including the level of household overcrowding, homelessness rates and the proportion of households aged under 35 whose income means they are unable to own a home. The results show that rural areas suffer the most in this regard, as shown in **Figure 6.2**

Figure 6.2: Barriers to Housing and Services in the Vale (IMD, 2010)



*Economy*

- 6.1.13 The Vale benefits from a very strong knowledge-based economy and has almost 5,500 businesses located within the District<sup>19</sup>. The Vale's workforce is highly skilled with a higher

<sup>19</sup> ONS Business Demography 2012 dataset [online] available at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcn%3A77-329345> (accessed 10/14)

than average proportion of managers, professionals and associate professionals<sup>20</sup>. Furthermore, the Vale is consistently ranked within the top 20 % of Districts in the UK Competitiveness Index.<sup>21</sup>

- 6.1.14 The strategic focus for economic and employment growth in the District is the Science Vale area, which extends east-west from Culham and Didcot to Wantage and Grove. Science Vale is an internationally significant location for innovation and science based research and business. It is home to around 13 % of research and development jobs within the south-east of England<sup>22</sup>. The two key Science Vale employment sites within the District are the science technology and business campus at Harwell Campus and the prestigious business area at Milton Park, both of which were awarded Enterprise Zone status in 2011.
- 6.1.15 A Growth Strategy is being prepared to maximise the world class assets of the Science Vale area and this has been boosted by the Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal . Part of the City Deal programme, and its £95 million of local and national public sector investment, will be directed towards Science Vale. This includes delivering the Oxford Science Transit; a fully integrated public transport system that connects the area's centres of innovation with Didcot and Oxford including a high frequency bus and rail service using 'smart' ticketing.
- 6.1.16 The tourism industry in the Vale generated approximately £202 million worth of income for local businesses in 2011. However, a significant proportion of this was generated by day visitors. This presents an opportunity to increase the economic impact and value of tourism by taking steps to convert day visitors to overnight visitors, in particular by addressing the shortage of hotel accommodation.
- 6.1.17 The recent recession has had an impact on the Vale's economy. Unemployment (demonstrated as the number of people claiming Job Seeker's Allowance) has increased from 0.7% to 1.6% (2006-2011), although this is lower than the South East (2.5%) and UK (3.8%) as a whole. The rate of claimants is highest around Abingdon and Wantage. In spite of the recession the Vale's economy is still performing considerably better than elsewhere in the country and south east. This is highlighted by the findings of the UK Competitiveness Index<sup>23</sup> which has consistently ranked the Vale within the top 10% in the country.
- 6.1.18 The percentage of working age population with an NVQ4 qualification or above is substantially higher than the national and regional figures<sup>24</sup>. This seems to suggest that residents are well suited to take up the level of high-tech jobs available in the District.
- Travel*
- 6.1.19 The Vale of White Horse is easily accessible from other parts of the UK, particularly the south west and east, and the midlands. The A34 trunk road provides good access between the M4 to the south, and the M40 to the north. The A420 and A417 roads cross the District and provide links to Swindon in the west and Didcot in the east. Whilst there are two railway main lines (Bristol to London and Oxford to London) running through the District, there are only two stations on the Oxford line and none on the Bristol line within the Vale, although there is a station at Didcot just to the east of the District. The Vale benefits from some very good bus services, particularly between the main settlements. However, in the more rural parts of the District, buses cannot viably provide an attractive alternative to the car.
- 6.1.20 Census 2011 results show home working and use of public transport have increased in Oxfordshire Just over 43,000 people worked mainly at or entirely from home across

<sup>20</sup> NOMIS (2014) Vale of White Horse District Labour Market Profile [online] available at: <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157326/report.aspx> (accessed 10/14)

<sup>21</sup> Centre for International Competitiveness (2013) UK Competitiveness Index [online] available at: <http://www.cforic.org/downloads.php> (accessed 10/14)

<sup>22</sup> Science Vale UK (2014) [online] available at: <http://www.sciencevale.com/> (accessed 10/14)

<sup>23</sup> Centre for International Competitiveness (2013) UK Competitiveness Index [online] available at: <http://www.cforic.org/downloads.php> (accessed 10/14)

<sup>24</sup> NOMIS (2014) Vale of White Horse District Labour Market Profile [online] available at: <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157326/report.aspx> (accessed 10/14)

Oxfordshire in 2011. Rural parts of the district continue to have an above average proportion of workers who are based mainly at or from home. The Vale of White Horse District has above average of home workers at 15% of those in employment. The rate in all areas has increased since 2001.

- 6.1.21 32,700 people used public transport (train or bus) to travel to work in Oxfordshire in 2011. The percentage of public transport users has increased in all districts; however the percentage of people using public transport out of those employed is below average at 9%.
- 6.1.22 Average traffic flow in Oxfordshire as reported by Oxfordshire County Council has fallen by 0.3% on all roads between 2009 and 2010. Oxfordshire has experienced a smaller reduction in traffic flow when compared to the national picture (a 2% reduction in traffic flow). This decline may reflect increasing fuel prices, but also suggests a resilient local economy. Trunk roads in the county experienced the greatest reduction in traffic flows (-1.2%), in contrast traffic flows on the M40 in Oxfordshire increased by 0.7%.
- 6.1.23 The rate of traffic flow on Oxfordshire's roads over the last 10 years (2000 to 2010) increased by 2%. Traffic on Oxfordshire's non-strategic roads, i.e. those roads for which Oxfordshire County Council are responsible, was 3% over ten years. Over the past five years (2005 to 2010) there has been a reduction in average traffic flow of more than 3% for all roads in the county (-3.18%). For the non-strategic roads there has been a decrease of -2.1%. Traffic growth generally across the South East has been forecast to rise by 24% between 2003 and 2015, and by 35% by 2025.
- 6.1.24 There are a number of roads within the District that suffer from congestion including the A34 trunk road. Abingdon-on-Thames and Botley are also congested internally and the road network around Science Vale suffers from peak time congestion. It is important the road network operates safely and efficiently for the economic success of the District to be maximised.

#### *Historic environment*

- 6.1.25 The area covered by the Vale has supported human habitation for thousands of years and it therefore has a rich and varied historic environment. Ancient remains dot the Downs to the south and the Vale's three market towns grew to prosperity in the middle ages. The Vale currently has 52 designated Conservation Areas within which there are certain limitations on development. There are also over 2,000 Listed Buildings in the Vale where changes to their structure or setting are strictly controlled. The Vale also has eight historic parks and gardens that are included in the English Heritage National Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.
- 6.1.26 The Vale also has a significant number of important archaeological sites. At present there are 68 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the District. These recognised monuments include significant sites such as the Neolithic long barrow called Wayland Smithy and the Roman temple at Frilford. New archaeological sites are also constantly being found and assessed in the District and development is likely to lead to the discovery of further sites and artefacts. **Figure 6.3** shows the spatial distribution of designated heritage and archaeological assets in the Vale.

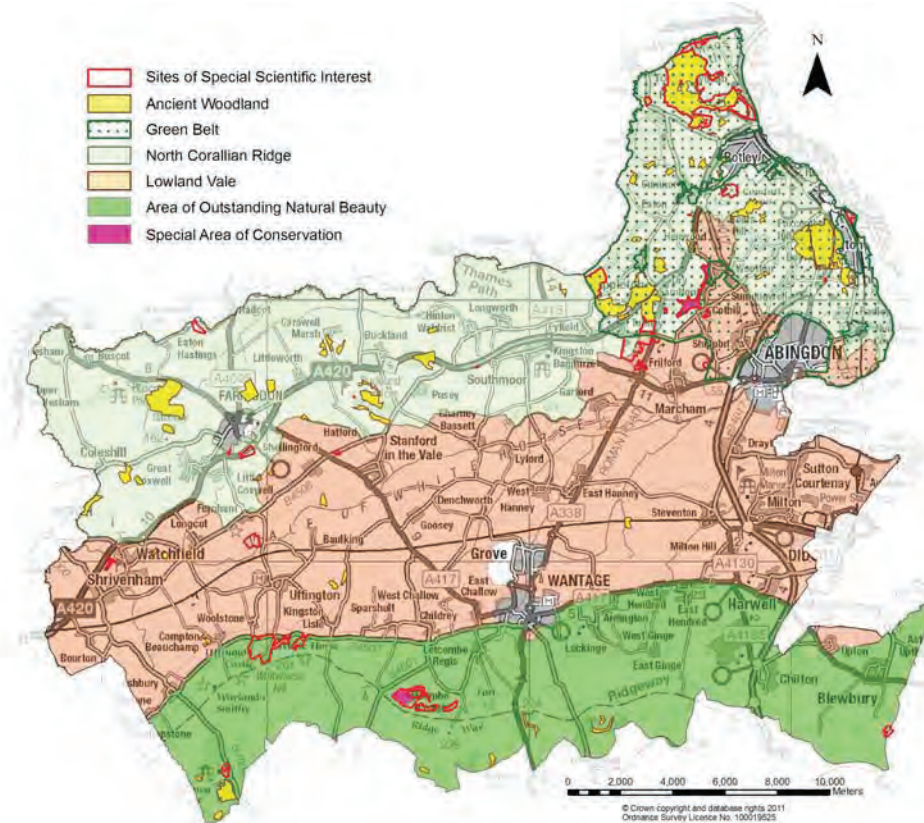
Figure 6.3: Designated Historic Environment Assets in the Vale of White Horse District



*Natural environment*

- 6.1.27 The Vale also has a rich and diverse natural environment. Among the diverse habitats are a broken band of Ancient Woodland on the north Corallian Ridge, the Chalk Downs, which are designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), fenland, chalk streams, and heathland forming some of Oxfordshire’s rarest habitats and some traditional hay meadows in the floodplains of the Thames and Ock rivers. The area of the Vale within the AONB is 23.4% or 135 sq km of its total land area.
- 6.1.28 There are 23 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) that cover some 908 hectares. Of these sites 98.97% are in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition. Two SSSIs are also European Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) at Cothill Fen, which consists of calcium-rich springwater-fed fens, and Hackpen Down, which is unimproved chalk grassland. The SSSI component of Hackpen Down SAC is in favourable condition. The SSSI component of Cothill Fen is in favourable recovering condition.
- 6.1.29 Among the diverse habitats in the Vale are a broken band of Ancient Woodland on the North Corallian Ridge. **Figure 6.4** shows the spatial distribution of these designations throughout the Vale. In addition to these designations are two Local Nature Reserves and a number of Local Geological Sites and Local Wildlife Sites.

Figure 6.4: Nature and Landscape Designations in the Vale



### Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 6.1.30 The need for HRA is set out within Article 6 of the European Community's Habitats Directive 1992, and interpreted into British law by the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010. The ultimate aim of the Habitats Directive is to "maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of Community interest" (Habitats Directive, Article 2(2)). This aim relates to habitats and species, not the European sites themselves, although the sites have a significant role in delivering favourable conservation status. European sites (also called Natura 2000 sites) can be defined as actual or proposed/candidate Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Areas (SPA). It is also Government policy for sites designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) to be treated as having equivalent status to Natura 2000 sites.
- 6.1.31 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the emerging Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (LPP1) has been undertaken. The objective of the assessment was to identify any aspects of the Local Plan 2029 Part 1 (LPP1) that would have the potential to cause a likely significant effect on Natura 2000 or European sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites), either in isolation or in combination with other plans and projects, and to devise appropriate mitigation strategies where such effects were identified. The Local Plan 2029 Part 1 was previously referred to as the Core Strategy, and URS has already undertaken HRA work on a previous iteration of the Preferred Approach Core Strategy in 2010.

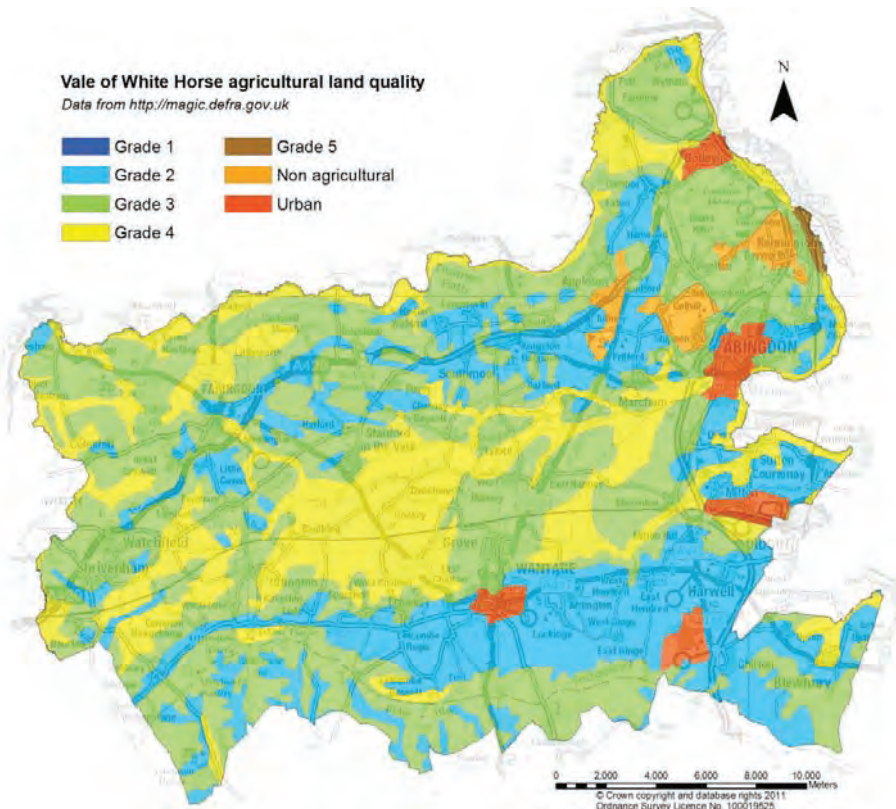


- 6.1.32 Following publication of a Local Plan Part 1 consultation document in February 2013, VoWH drafted an Additional Consultation document (January 2014) that set out new proposed housing numbers and additional preferred locations for housing to be delivered during the lifetime of the Local Plan (to 2031).
- 6.1.33 A HRA was undertaken to update the original consultation document. Following this, further revisions to housing numbers and locations have been made, along with further revisions to some Local Plan policies – this has resulted in the Final Draft (Publication Version) Local Plan 2031 version. Conclusions of the HRA process are set out in a separate HRA Report, but are summarised in Part 3 of this SA Report.

#### Agriculture

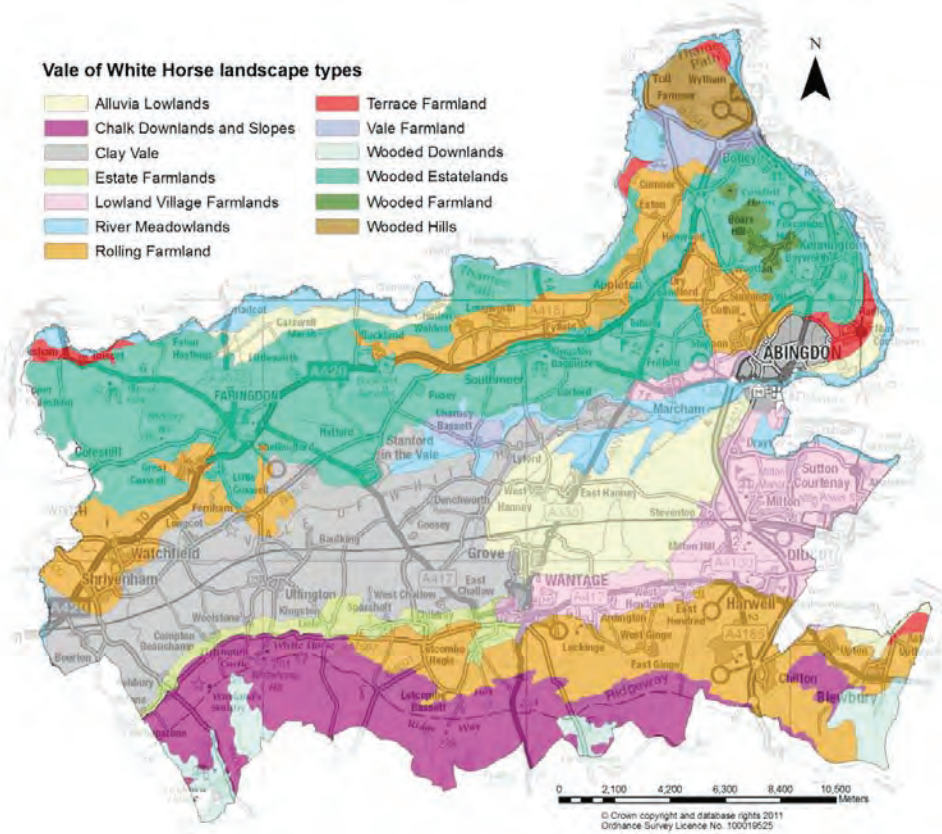
- 6.1.34 The Vale is predominantly rural with a significant part of its land under cultivation for farming. The quality of the farmland ranges from Grade 4 up to Grade 2 in a number of locations (Grade 1 is the best quality). The Agricultural Census from DEFRA indicates that in 2007 there were 565 holdings covering 47,162 ha in the Vale. A map showing agricultural land quality is shown at Figure 6.5.

Figure 6.5: Agricultural land quality across the District



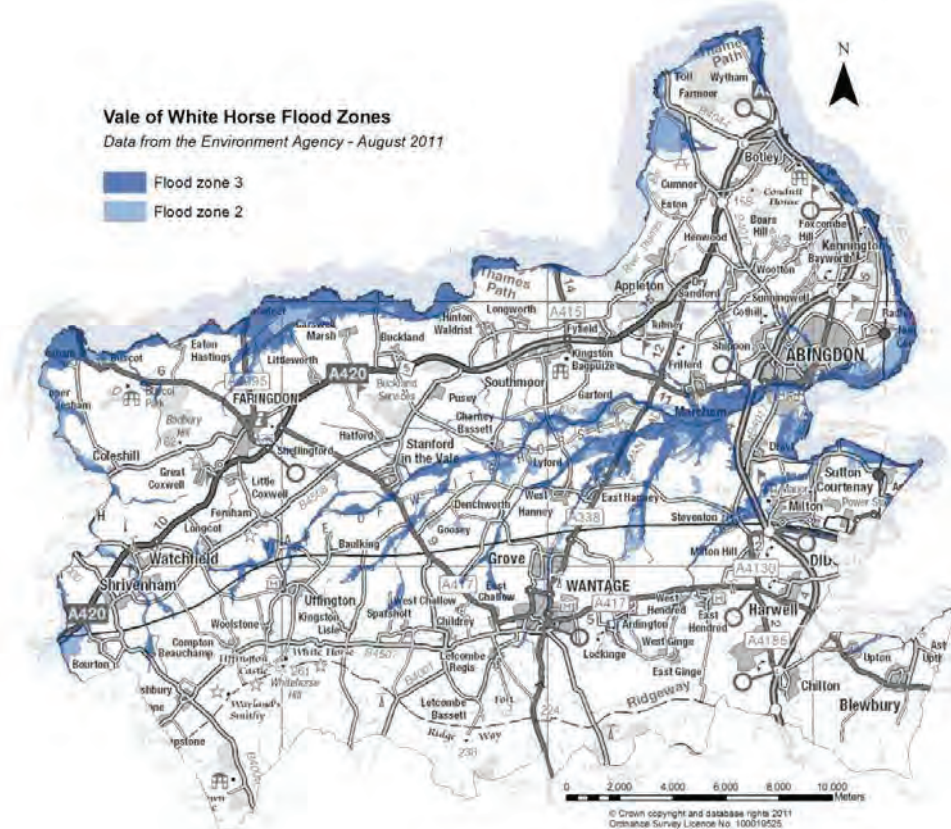
- 6.1.35 As stated earlier, a substantial part of the Vale (23.4%) lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and consists of extensive areas of chalk downland. Much of the remaining part of the Vale is also made up of attractive landscapes. The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) compiled in 2004 also identified a range of other landscape types in the rest of the Vale (see **Figure 6.6**). These include significant areas of wooded estate lands and rolling farmland to the north and south with alluvial lowland, clay Vale and lowland village farmland landscapes in the centre, all running generally east west. There are also river meadowlands in close association with the rivers which cross the District.

Figure 6.6: Vale of White Horse Landscape Types



- 6.1.36 The Vale is included within the Thames River Basin District and is covered by the Vale of White Horse catchment although this also includes Didcot and Swindon. The main watercourses are the Rivers Ray, Cole, Ock and Ginge Letcombe and Mill Brooks. This catchment contains 33 river water bodies and one lake, three of which are artificial or heavily modified. Twenty four per cent of rivers currently achieve good or better ecological status/potential including the Cole and Dorcan brook. Forty six per cent of rivers assessed for biology are at good or high biological status now, with 29 per cent at poor biological status, and no assessed river water bodies at bad status. Surface water quality in the catchment is generally good, with the Rivers Ock, Key and Ginge Brook having the poorest water quality in the catchment. It is expected that the other chemicals monitored under the Water Framework Directive will achieve good status by 2015, with an overall good ecological status by 2027.
- 6.1.37 There are a number of water-dependent Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in the area, designated in the main for their fen and meadow communities. These areas are characterised by a variety of vegetation types that are found on groundwater-fed peaty or mineral soils. These may be permanently, seasonally or periodically waterlogged.
- 6.1.38 The District has a number of areas which are at risk from flooding. **Figure 6.7** provides an overview of Flood Zone 2 and 3a and the effects that climate change is expected to have on flood zone 3. Flood zones 2 and 3 both have restrictions in terms of the types of development that are allowed according to the National Planning Policy Framework. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment highlights that the risk of flooding to properties is an issue in Abingdon, Grove, Kennington, Shrivenham, Steventon, Sutton Courtenay and Wantage.

Figure 6.7: Areas across the District covered by flood zones 2 and 3



6.1.39 There are currently two Air Quality Management Areas in the Vale, one in central Abingdon and the other along the A34 in Botley as a result of high levels of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>. There are also Air Quality 'hot spots' in Didcot along Station Road. These areas experience high levels of Nitrogen Dioxide and PM10 (Particulate Matter 10) which is primarily associated with car traffic and construction work. High levels can cause respiratory problems such as coughing, asthma and wheezing. In serious cases it can lead to long term lung damage.

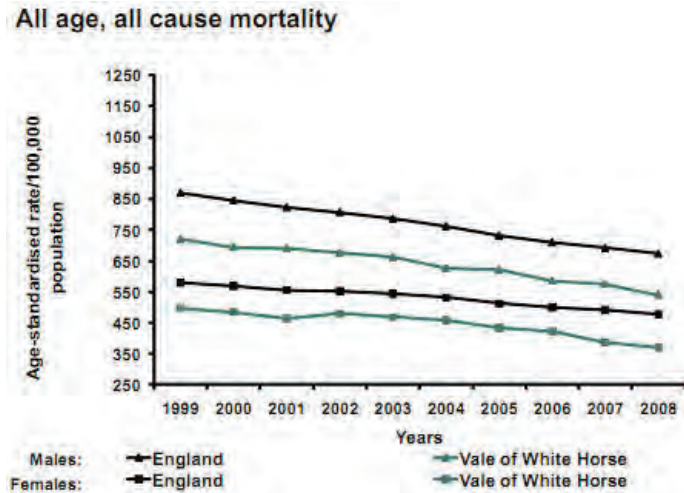
6.1.40 Government guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning authorities should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed or brownfield land. The trend in recent years has been towards increasing levels of development on greenfield land as brownfield sites gradually get built out. Due to the predominantly rural nature of the District and, given the level of housing that is required, it is inevitable that a substantial proportion of future development will need to be located on greenfield land. Given this, it is vital that all sites are allocated as sustainably located and cause the least amount of environmental harm. The Vale is a predominately rural area, with a substantial part (23.4%) lying within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is particularly sensitive to noise, air, and light pollution.

#### *Living environment*

6.1.41 Data showing the rate of domestic burglaries per 1,000 households indicates that the Vale is an extremely safe place to live and is one of the safest across the county. This can largely be attributed to its rural nature. Of crime recorded the majority of cases are to do with either 'violence against a person' or 'criminal damage'. The prevalence of these types of crimes is in line with trends across the region and England

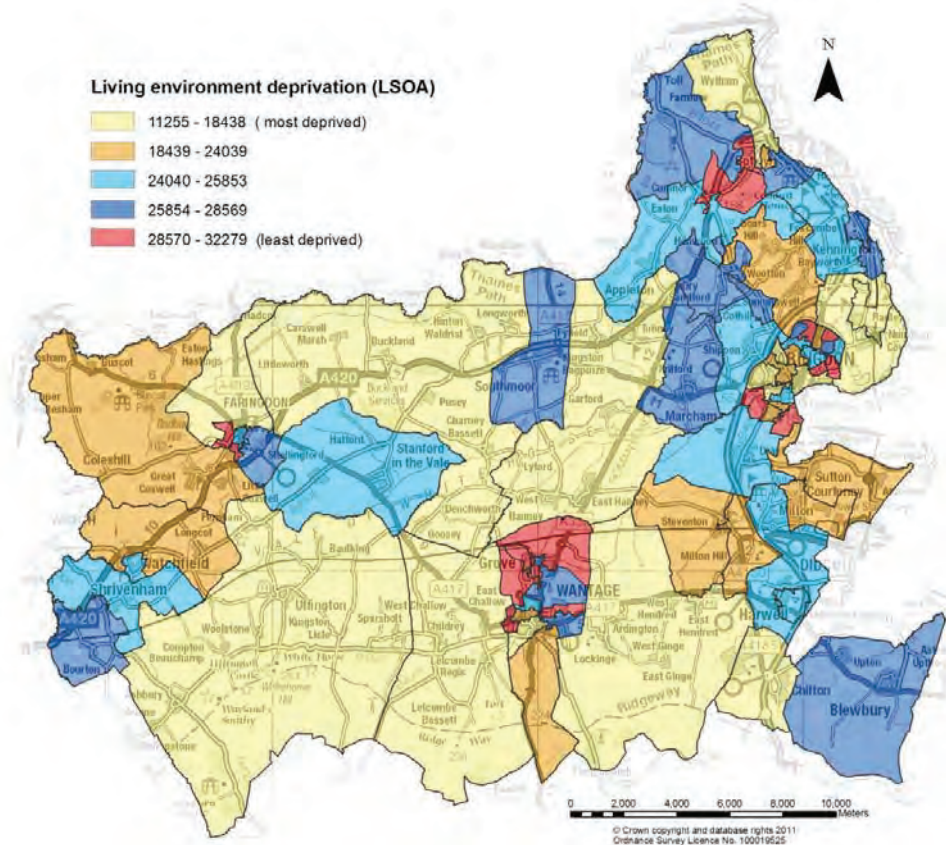
- 6.1.42 The health of the Vale's residents was found to be generally better than the average for England. **Figure 6.8** shows that all-cause mortality rates have fallen over the last 10 years. Early death rates from cancer and from heart disease and stroke have also fallen and are better than the England average.

Figure 6.8: All cause mortality rate per 100,000



- 6.1.43 Another contextual health indicator which can be used to assess the relative health of residents in the Vale is the number of residents seeking Disability Living Allowance (DLA). Although this trend appears to be worsening, it is probably being exacerbated by the effects of the economic downturn. Nevertheless in spite of the worsening trend the Vale has one of the lowest figures of all the Oxfordshire authorities. Generally the areas around the main settlements are worst affected.
- 6.1.44 Natural England has developed a model which sets out the standards that are needed to ensure that all people have access to a variety of different types and sizes of open space, called the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt). This can help local authorities in drawing up their Greenspace Strategies and will show the areas which are particularly deficient. It has been assessed (2005) that 0% of households meet all of the ANGSt standards and 51% meet none of the standards.
- 6.1.45 Another factor assessed by the IMD is that of deprivation of the living environment, which takes into account the quality of housing, quality of the air and number of road accidents. The findings (**Figure 6.9**) show that deprivation is found across rural and urban environments.

Figure 6.9: Living environment deprivation (IMD, 2010)



### Resources

- 6.1.46 OFWAT's report Security of Supply: 2006-07 report contains estimates of household consumption. Residents within the Thames Water region used on average 154 litres/head/day of water, down from 164 in 2005-06. Although consumption has decreased in the region, it is still higher than the industry average in England and Wales of 148 litres/head/day.
- 6.1.47 The Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) produce statistics on CO2 emissions per capita and it is clear from the data that the Vale of White Horse is performing considerably worse than all other Oxfordshire Districts. This discrepancy is caused predominantly by the 'road transport' component of the figure which was between 1.0 and 2.6 tonnes of CO2 per capita more than the others Districts, which can most probably be attributed to the heavily congested stretch of A34.
- 6.1.48 The figures suggest that the Vale of White Horse uses more gas and electricity per capita than the South East average. This is most probably due to its rural nature and may also be caused in part by the higher than average proportion of higher earners in the Vale of White Horse.
- 6.1.49 The 2009 EU Renewables Directive includes a target that by 2020 15% of all energy consumption should be from renewable resources. Further work carried out by Thames Valley (TV) Energy shows that the Vale is performing extremely well in this indicator and is already producing some 11.5% of its energy needs through renewables. A total of 22.256 MW was produced within the Vale in 2011 of which 6.521 were from onshore wind and 14.893 MW were from landfill gas. The latter displaced some 84,544 tonnes of carbon each year.
- 6.1.50 The District runs a joint waste service with South Oxfordshire. Household Recycling rates are

extremely high and both councils are amongst the top performing in the country. The District also performs well in terms of the amount of waste it produces per household. In 2010/11 this figure was 355.35 kg when the year-end target was 404.00 kg.