

# Cabinet Report

Report of Head of Policy and Programmes

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To: CABINET

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022

## Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation SPD

### Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

(a) Adopts Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) subject to the modifications set out in this report and its appendices.

(b) Authorises the Head of Policy and Programmes, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Transformation, to make the changes set out in this report and its appendices, and any other minor amendments or typographical corrections to the SPD, prior to publication.

### Purpose of Report

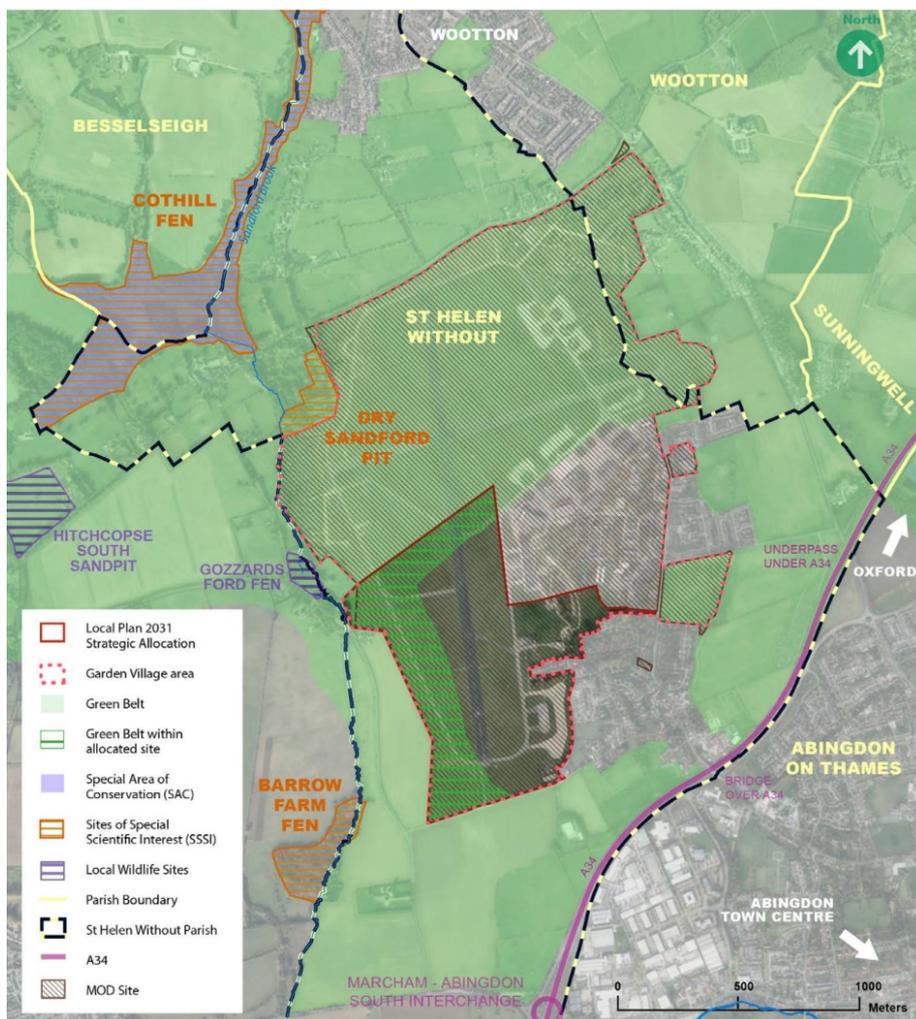
1. To consider the adoption of the Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation SPD in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), informed by the main issues raised during the public consultation of the Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation draft SPD, and officers' proposed modifications in response to the consultation feedback.

### Corporate Objectives

2. The Dalton Barracks SPD helps to meet Vale's Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Objectives by supporting the themes of 'Providing the homes people need', 'Tackling the Climate Emergency', 'Building healthy communities' and 'Working in partnership'.

## Background

3. Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2 was adopted in October 2019 and allocated a mixed-use development at Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation. This included 1,200 homes, as well as a release of land from the Green Belt. The Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation forms part of the wider Ministry of Defence (MOD) base at Dalton Barracks.
4. The 'Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation' policy (Core Policy 8b in Local Plan Part 2) set out the Council's intention to produce additional guidance on the approach for masterplanning the allocated site. This guidance is in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), as set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme. The Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation draft SPD was prepared and published for public consultation from 21 October to 18 November 2021. This is available at Appendix 1. The consultation responses have shaped the final document.
5. The wider MOD base at Dalton Barracks was selected to join the Garden Communities Programme as a Garden Village in 2019. The SPD is focused on the Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation - the part of the base that was allocated for development in the Local Plan 2031 Part 2. As the Strategic Allocation forms part of the Garden Village, it is important that the new development reflects the Garden Village status of this area.
6. The plan below shows the site boundary of the Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation that the SPD relates to, as well as the wider area of the MOD base and Garden Village.



7. SPDs are described by the National Planning Policy Framework as documents which add further detail to the policies in the Development Plan. The 'Development Plan' being those plans, such as the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan, that planning decisions must be made in accordance with, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan. When adopted, SPDs become material considerations in assessing future planning applications for a site.
8. The Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation SPD sets out the design requirements and the information required to support any planning applications for the site to ensure that an exemplar, high quality development is delivered. The design and delivery of this new village will follow Garden Village principles, as explained throughout the SPD.
9. The SPD also references the Wootton and St Helen Neighbourhood Development Plan, which along with the Local Plan, forms part of the Development Plan relevant for the allocated site. Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
10. The process for considering the development of the larger Garden Village site, which has an overall capacity of around 4,500 homes and other supporting land uses over the longer term, will take place through the preparation of future development plans.

## **Outcome of public consultation on the draft SPD**

11. Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation draft SPD was produced and published for public consultation from 21 October to 18 November 2021 (see Appendix 1). Consultation responses have now been considered and a table of modifications to the draft SPD has been prepared for Cabinet's consideration (see Appendix 4).
12. Regulation 12 of the Local Planning Regulations states that, before a local planning authority can adopt an SPD, it must first prepare a statement setting out the persons consulted during the preparation of the document, with a summary of the main issues raised and how they have been addressed in the SPD. The Consultation Statement (at Appendix 3) addresses these requirements. A Consultation Statement – Pre-Public Consultation (Appendix 2) was prepared and was available during the public consultation period alongside the draft SPD.
13. Overall, there were 218 respondents to the public consultation, making a total of 863 separate categorised comments on the draft SPD. A schedule of consultation responses and officer responses is set out in the Consultation Statement at Appendix 3.
14. The main issues raised in the consultation can also be found in the Consultation Statement. Highlighted within these are the main issues from key organisations such as the County Council, the landowner, and Parish and Town Councils.
15. The main themes we received comments on during the consultation included: the scope of - and suggestions for - the SPD; cycling; traffic and travel; the environment and zero carbon development; the community; green space (including green buffer and green belt); and housing. There were also comments addressing potential wording, mapping and factual amendments.

16. The landowner commented on the ambit of the SPD and wrote to the Council in January 2022 raising this point again. In response officers have confirmed that it would not be lawful to extend the scope of the SPD to cover a greater area as requested.
17. Appendix 4 provides a Table of Modifications to the SPD, for Cabinet's approval. This sets out the proposed modifications to the SPD in the order they appear in the document. These include, for example, rewording, removal of wording, typographical changes, mapping amendments and factual/weblink changes. The modifications proposed have resulted from the consideration of the representations received and other amendments considered appropriate.
18. [Scrutiny Committee considered the draft SPD](#) on 25 November 2021 and were pleased that the development is aiming to be exemplar and sustainable. The committee encouraged delivery of the site as a sustainable development.
19. The idea of park runs at the site was also raised, with the need for new developments to have unbroken paths for exercising safely. The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Transformation agreed to take these ideas away to explore further with officers. The SPD includes the design requirement for integrating circular walking, jogging and cycle routes along green corridors throughout the development. It also requires appropriate surfacing to ensure use in all weathers and lighting where possible to enable use at all times.
20. Since the consultation closed, responses from Natural England and CPRE, and an updated submission from the landowner, were received. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) require responses to be made during the formal consultation period. None of these late responses raise new main issues that have not already been considered as part of the consultation process. Copies of these late responses are available on request.

## Options

21. There are two options to consider for the SPD:

**Option 1:** Adopt the Dalton Barracks SPD with the proposed modifications, authorising officers to prepare the final document for publication as soon as practically possible.

**Option 2:** Not to adopt the Dalton Barracks SPD.

22. Option 2 is not recommended. Failure to adopt the SPD would risk it being overtaken by planning applications relevant to the allocated site and the adopted Local Plan Part 2 proposes that an SPD be prepared for this site.

## Climate and ecological impact implications

23. Because Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation is an allocated site in Part 2 of the Local Plan, the principle for development on this site is therefore in place. The SPD provides additional guidance, including on climate change and ecological matters, that will be material considerations in the determination of future planning applications. This includes providing green space, exemplar energy efficient / zero carbon housing and promoting sustainable transport in the draft SPD. Planning policies support addressing the climate emergencies, including Core Policies 40, 41, 42 and 43. The SPD also

seeks to encourage 20-minute neighbourhood characteristics, which will reduce car reliance and support local shops.

24. There are several designated wildlife sites located close to the site. Of greatest significance is the Cothill Fen Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to the north (beyond the Strategic Allocation and to the north of the airfield). Oxford Meadows SAC is also located within 10km of the site.
25. In accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) the Council prepared a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening statement to determine whether the SPD should be subject to further SEA. The report also considered whether the document would need to be subject to Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).
26. The Council prepared a screening opinion report and consulted on this with the three statutory bodies: the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England between 6 September and 11 October 2021. The Council considered that further SEA and HRA were not necessary, and the three statutory bodies did not challenge this position. The Environment Agency did not respond to this consultation, but the responses from Historic England and Natural England are available to view in the [Screening Statement on the Council's website](#).
27. A key objective to delivering the allocated site, required by Core Policy 8b and the supporting Site Development Template, is to avoid all direct and indirect impacts to Cothill Fen SAC, Dry Sandford Pit SSSI, Barrow Farm Fen SSSI and Frilford Heath ponds and Fen SSSI. This requirement is also clearly emphasised in the SPD.

## **Financial Implications**

28. The cost of finalising the publication version of the SPD can be met from existing team budgets (Planning Policy and Garden Communities Teams).
29. There are no other financial implications arising.

## **Legal Implications**

30. The SPD has been prepared and consulted upon in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
31. The Consultation Statement (see Appendix 3) addresses the requirement of Regulation 12 of the Local Planning Regulations that, before a local planning authority can adopt an SPD, it must first to prepare a statement setting out the persons consulted during the preparation of the document, with a summary of the main issues raised and how they have been addressed in the SPD.
32. The SPD does not form part of the development plan, it will, however, be a material consideration in decision-making when adopted.

## **Risks**

33. As explained in Options, failure to adopt the SPD would risk it being overtaken by planning applications relevant to the allocated site.

34. The landowner of the site commented during the draft SPD consultation period on the ambit of the SPD and wrote to the Council in January 2022 raising this point again. In response officers have confirmed that it would not be lawful to extend the scope of the SPD to cover a greater area as requested.

## **Conclusion**

35. Officers recommend that the Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation SPD is adopted by Cabinet, to allow it to provide guidance on the design and development of the Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation, to provide further detail to the policies in the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 and to ensure that development at the Strategic Allocation follows Garden Village principles.

36. The SPD will also help to deliver the new mixed-use community envisaged for the site, incorporating on-site services and facilities, including education provision, a local centre, and excellent public transport, cycle way and footpath connections.

37. In line with current national policy and guidance, the SPD will also provide strategic design requirements and more detailed design guidance to ensure a high-quality development, of an exemplar standard, is achieved.

## **Background Papers**

- Appendix 1 – Consultation version of Dalton Barracks SPD – October 2021
- Appendix 2 – Consultation Statement (Pre-Public Consultation) - October 2021
- Appendix 3 – Consultation Statement - March 2022
- Appendix 4 – Table of Modifications to the Draft Dalton Barracks SPD – March 2022