OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

District: Vale of White Horse
Application no: P16/V1307/SCO
Proposal: Scoping opinion confirming the scope of an Environmental Impact Assessment to support a planning application for development
Location: Land North of Harwell Campus Harwell

Purpose of document

This report sets out Oxfordshire County Council’s view on the proposal.

This report contains officer advice in the form of a strategic localities response and technical team response(s). Where local member have responded these have been attached by OCCs Major Planning Applications Team (planningconsultations@oxfordshire.gov.uk).
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**Strategic Comments**

Comments:

The proposal comprises a development of up to 1,500 residential units, a neighbourhood centre, a new primary school, open space and ancillary areas.

It is recognised that this Scoping request was made prior to the publication of the Inspector’s interim findings on the Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1 on 9 June 2016. While the Submitted Local Plan proposed two allocations in respect of Harwell Campus, the District has since confirmed that it accepts the Inspector’s proposal to delete these two allocations.

If the applicant wishes to proceed, the County Council would strongly encourage the applicant to engage in pre-application meetings, site visits and further written advice. The attached advice details matters which will need to be covered.

For the avoidance of doubt Oxfordshire County Council believes that due to the size and location of this site an EIA is required. The scoping report contains the areas that need to be assessed but further information is required.

**Officer’s Name:** Lynette Hughes  
**Officer’s Title:** Senior Planning Officer  
**Date:** 17 June 2016
Transport

Key issues:

- Submission provides relatively low detail and therefore restricts the level of comments from a Highways perspective.

- The development site is in close proximity to the growth employment area of Harwell and there is concern of its effect, particularly during peak times, on this traffic sensitive area.

- Any future formal submission should take into account any relevant committed developments in the vicinity, identified at any pre-application stage.

Legal agreement required to secure:

Indicative S106/S278 requirements if this scheme came forward includes but not limited to:

S106

- A suitable contribution towards public transport serving the development site.

- Travel plan monitoring fees

S278

- Provide necessary offsite works connected with the site development access

- Provide any necessary mitigation works to the local highway network, if required.

- Provide pedestrian/cycling links and improvements in the vicinity.

Conditions:

Highway related Conditions would be required at application stage.

Informatives:

Highway related Informatives would be required at application stage.
Detailed comments:

This is about the scope of an Environmental Impact Assessment for an area of 46.5ha that includes:

- Up to 1,500 Residential Units (Use Class C3 and C4);
- Neighbourhood centre / Community Hub (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5,B1, C2, D1, and D2);
- New Primary School;
- Open Space; and ancillary areas (including allotments, sports pitches and LEAP/NEAPs).

Some of the land is contained within the draft allocation in the Submitted Local Plan for North of Harwell Campus, which anticipates 550 homes on some 19ha. It is understood that this draft allocation will be removed in modifications as proposed by the Inspector. The land is owned by the Harwell Campus GP Partnership Ltd. The northern extent of the land is the same as the draft allocation. The additional land includes some Enterprise Zone land.

Assessment Criteria and Methodology

The County Council has its own guidance and requirements for Transport Assessments (TA) and Travel Plans (TP) associated with new developments in Oxfordshire. Therefore this also needs to be taken into account when preparing the Environmental Statement (ES) transport and access chapter, as well as the TA and TP themselves. Further details can be found via the [Oxfordshire County Council website](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk).

Baseline Data Collection and Proposed Assessment Methodology

Given this would be a major strategic planning application, the County expects all ES and TA inputs and methodologies used to assess the proposal's impacts and help identify suitable mitigation to be comprehensively scoped out and agreed in advance with the County Council. It is noted within paragraph 4.37 of the submitted Environmental Scoping Report that any future submitted TA will include the following points, which were previously agreed:

- Details of the site location, current land use, surrounding area and local highway network
- Transport policy
- Sustainability of the site and access by public transport, walking & cycling
- Existing traffic flows on the local highway network
- Summary of recorded road traffic accidents within the study area
- Any local committed developments
- Proposed development schedule
- Access arrangements for all modes of transport
- Any proposed improvements to public transport, pedestrian and cycle facilities
- Parking provision
- Trip generation associated with the proposed development
- Net increase in traffic
- Traffic distribution (the area-wide traffic model held by OCC may need to be used)
- Traffic impact assessment
- Highway capacity assessments
- Highway safety assessment
• Address any specific highways issues raised by DCC/HE as part of the scoping exercise
• Consider suitable mitigation measures as required

Mitigation

Oxfordshire’s Fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4), sets out ambitious proposals for a network of cycle super routes and premium cycle routes that connect different parts of the County.

In planning a new development, there is strong evidence that neighbourhood design, including housing density and layout of routes for public transport, walking and cycling, is a significant influence on use of these modes by residents. Traditional populated areas have lower overall travel demand and car ownership and higher use of sustainable modes than newer suburban developments. Therefore, promoting neighbourhood design that encourages use of more sustainable modes is just as important as improving the transport connections to and from it.

Access and availability of car parking within developments also has a strong influence on travel choices made. The County Council will also want to use a formula to determine the development’s parking standards based on the assessment of future public transport and walking and cycling access.

Given the scale of development proposed, the County Council expects any proposals and transport mitigation, to meet with the objectives and aspirations set out in LTP4. The Council also expects to work closely with the developer to identify and develop all mitigation required if the proposal progresses.

Construction Traffic Management Plan

A Construction Traffic Management Plan will be required and would need to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and agreed prior to commencement of works. For information, this should include, but not limited to:

• The routing of construction vehicles and management of their movement into and out of the site by a qualified and certificated banksman,
• Access arrangements and times of movement of construction vehicles (to minimise the impact on the surrounding highway network),
• Details of wheel cleaning / wash facilities to prevent mud, etc. from migrating on to the adjacent highway,
• Contact details for the Site Supervisor responsible for on-site works,
• Travel initiatives for site related worker vehicles,
• Details of times for construction traffic and delivery vehicles, which must be outside network peak and school peak hours,
• Engagement with local residents and neighbours.

Drainage

Development shall not begin until a surface water drainage scheme and strategy for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro-geological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme shall also include:

• Discharge Rates
• Discharge Volumes
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Maintenance and management of SUDS features
- Sizing of features – attenuation volume
- Infiltration in accordance with BRE365
- Detailed drainage layout with pipe numbers
- SUDS (list the suds features mentioned within the FRA to ensure they are carried forward into the detailed drainage strategy)
- Network drainage calculations
- Phasing
- Run off rate kept to Green Field runoff rates or less

Rights of Way

The applicant should be aware that the County Council has an adopted Rights of Way Management Plan. Further information can be found via the county’s webpage: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/rowip

The section on ‘Countryside Access and the Development Planning Process’ is particularly relevant.

Travel Plans

This is large development site which contains a number of different elements which will all need to be dealt with differently. The main ones that we are aware of so far are:

- Residential development of up to 1500 units
- Community hub, with a range of uses
- Primary School

A school and residential travel plans will be required for this scheme, in support of this application. These will require to be sent to the Travel Plans Team at Oxfordshire County Council for approval before first occupation. Prior to first occupation of the residential element, a Travel Information Pack shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The first residents of each dwelling shall be provided with a copy of the approved Travel Information Pack.

Other elements that make up the Community Hub may also require travel plans/ travel plan statements and associated monitoring fees, if they are above the travel plan thresholds. This could be a Framework travel plan covering the hub or individual plans.

Chargeable Pre-application Highways Advice

If the applicant would like further assistance, either in the form of pre-application meetings, site visits, and/or further written advice, we can provide that in accordance with our charging regime, which is also set out on the Oxfordshire County Council website.

Given the scale of development proposed we would encourage this further input, as experience proves that well formulated plans prior to planning applications being made frequently produce better result for all parties. In addition, should the proposals be wholly unacceptable from a transport / highway safety or policy point of view, a more formal input at this stage can avoid abortive costs were the proposals to proceed further.

Officer’s Name: Ian Marshall
Officer’s Title: Senior Transport Planner
Date: 15 June 2016
District: Vale of White Horse  
Application no: P16/V1307/SCO  
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**Archaeology**

**Key issues:**

The applicant intends to submit an Environmental Statement that will contain a section that considers archaeology and the historic environment. The parameters set out in the Environmental Scoping Report are appropriate and are acceptable.

**Legal agreement required to secure:**

None

**Conditions:**

None currently but they may be required when an application is made.

**Informatives:**

None

**Detailed comments:**

The applicant intends to submit an Environmental Statement that will contain a section that considers archaeology and the historic environment. The parameters set out in the Environmental Scoping Report are appropriate and are acceptable. The Environmental statement will include sufficient information to help assess the potential for surviving archaeology and for advising on the protection of the historic environment.

**Officer’s Name:** Hugh Coddington  
**Officer’s Title:** Archaeology Team Leader  
**Date:** 01 June 2016
District: Vale of White Horse
Application no: P16/V1307/SCO
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**Economy and Skills**

**Key issues:**

- The size of the proposed development suggests that it will require the preparation and implementation of a Community Employment Plan (CEP). Previously known as an Employment and Skills Plan (ESP). This will seek to mitigate the impacts of development through ensuring that local people can better access the training (including apprenticeships) and job opportunities arising from the development.
- The Economy & Skills Team at Oxfordshire County Council would welcome early discussions on the preparation of the CEP.

**Officer’s Name:** Sarah Beal  
**Officer’s Title:** Economic Development and Skills Officer  
**Date:** 15 June 2016
District: Vale of White Horse  
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**Education**

**Key issues:**

- Oxfordshire County Council has a statutory duty under S14 of the *Education Act 1996* to secure sufficient school places to meet the needs of local population, including as a result of housing developments such as this proposal. Under Section 7 of the *Childcare Act 2006* and extended by the *Childcare Act 2016*, the Council has a responsibility to ensure that there is sufficient childcare and early education provision.

- As recognised in paragraph 14.8 of the scoping report, the proposed development will have a significant impact on demand for pre-school, primary and secondary education – this includes on demand for special education places across all sectors.

- Primary and early years education provision needs would be expected to be met within a development of this size, through a new primary school. Paragraph 1.22 of the scoping report states that the proposed development will include up to 1,500 Residential Units, a neighbourhood centre / community hub and a new primary school. The county council can confirm that for this scale of housing, in this location, a new primary school would be required. 1500 homes would typically be expected to generate the need for one 2-form entry primary school, including a nursery. However, this would need to be fully assessed based on proposed housing mixes and timescales.

- Additional early years education and childcare provision could be through a mixed market of private and voluntary providers, including pre-schools, day nurseries and childminders. The inclusion of suitable accommodation within the development, for example within the neighbourhood centre / community hub, could be considered.

- Secondary and SEN education provision would be expected to be delivered off-site, and would need to take into account the wider picture of population growth in and around Didcot, where new schools are planned.

- The EIA needs to include consideration of travel patterns from the development to local schools. For primary education this includes to existing schools during any period between occupations commencing and a new school opening, and in the longer term to the proposed new school. For secondary schools, the likely direction of travel would be towards Didcot, and the new secondary school and University Technical College within Great Western Park. Some families may instead choose King Alfred’s Academy in Wantage, or other schools.

- It should be noted that demand and supply of school places in this area is going through a period of rapid change, and will continue to do so in response to planned housing developments, including this one. The Education Sufficiency team at...
Oxfordshire County Council is able to advise as required on appropriate data regarding school place planning. In the first instance, the OCC Pupil Place Plan (available from www.oxfordshire.gov.uk) should be referred to. Data on the current situation and past trends needs to be supplemented with information about future plans and forecasts. The School Organisation team at Oxfordshire County Council will base its response to any future planning application on the latest available information.

**Officer’s Name:** Barbara Chillman  
**Officer’s Title:** Pupil Place Planning Manager  
**Date:** 15 June 2016
Minerals & Waste

Key issues:
It needs to be resolved whether or not the proposed application site includes the Liquid Effluent Treatment Plant and consequently whether and how this factor needs to be addressed in the application and environmental statement.

Legal agreement required to secure:
None

Conditions:
None

Informatives:
None

Detailed comments:
Paragraph 1.16 of the Environmental Scoping Report states:
‘The site excludes the Liquid Effluent Treatment Plant (LETP) which has recently had planning granted in respect of it for its remediation. Due to this ongoing work the site will be cleaned up and ready for development in the future (between 2019-2021) and any redevelopment of it will be assessed at that stage.’
However, paragraph 12.1 states that the site includes the Liquid Effluent Treatment Plant. This contradiction needs to be resolved and the implications of the LETP for the proposed development considered accordingly.

Officer’s Name: Peter Day
Officer’s Title: Minerals & Waste Policy Team Leader
Date: 01 June 2016
District: Vale of White Horse
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Fire Service

Detailed comments:

Access for Firefighting:

Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service (OFRS) assumes that access to the proposed sites and to the premises will be in accordance with the guidance in the current edition of Approved Document B to the Building Regulations volumes 1 & 2.

Water Supplies for Firefighting:

We strongly recommend the provision of adequate and appropriate water supplies (fire hydrants) in accordance with the guidance in the current edition of Approved Document B to the Building Regulations volumes 1 & 2. We would also recommend that the development conforms to British Standards BS 9999:2008 (Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings – Section 23 Water supplies for fire and rescue service use - 23.2 Location and access to external water supply) & BS 9990 (Code of practice for non-automatic fire-fighting systems in buildings – Section 5, Private fire hydrants - 5.2 Provision and Siting)

Automatic Water Suppression Systems:

Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service also believe that fitting of Automatic Water Suppression Systems (AWSS) will materially assist in the protection of life, property and fire fighter safety. AWSS such as sprinklers and water mist systems do save lives; therefore OFRS strongly recommend the provision of such systems particularly in new build properties for the proposed sites.

Officer’s Name: M Carlile
Officer’s Title: Area Manager
Date: 01 June 2016
District: Vale of White Horse
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Waste Management

Key issues:

Maintaining and increasing high rates of recycling and composting in Oxfordshire which are currently the best in the country and the impact of new development on waste management infrastructure.

We welcome consideration of waste management issues in section 12 of the scoping report. A development of 1,500 dwellings will increase the amount of domestic waste arising and demand for services at household waste recycling centres (HWRCs). The nearest HWRC is Drayton which experiences capacity issues and queuing on the highway. The proposed development would be likely to increase capacity issues. This should be taken into account in the assessment of baseline conditions.

In relation to our duties as WDA and in terms of HWRC provision we agree with the analysis in table 12.1, including the identification of non-hazardous waste recycling as medium sensitivity and the statement that additional capacity for recycling is required up to 2031.

Regardless of the outcome of the EIA we expect the detailed design of the development to facilitate waste collection, recycling and composting to enable residents to fully participate in district council collection schemes and allow high recycling rates to be maintained.

Legal agreement required to secure:

N/A

Conditions:

N/A

Informatives:

N/A

Detailed comments:

See above.

Officer’s Name: Frankie Upton
Officer’s Title: Waste Project Manager
Date: 15 June 2016