

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041

Statement of Common Ground

Between

Vale of White Horse District Council,

South Oxfordshire District Council,

and

Persimmon Homes (Wessex)

July 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) has been prepared by Vale of White Horse District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council (“the councils”) and Persimmon Homes, hereafter referred to as “the parties”. This SOCG documents those matters agreed with regard to the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041 and supporting documents, to assist the Inspectors during the examination of the local plan.
- 1.2. This SOCG particularly relates to the proposed allocation of North West of Grove within Policy AS8 for the development of approximately 600 homes, 60 units of housing with care for older people, and supporting services and facilities.
- 1.3. The councils propose the site for allocation for housing development in the Joint Local Plan, having considered reasonable alternatives, including assessing the relevant evidence, and following consultation with stakeholders and the public.
- 1.4. A previous SOCG was prepared for this site as part of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 process, which is available to view on the council’s website¹.

1

https://data.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1954970245&CODE=68207DD042482103C3B2EC7395606488

1.5. This SOCG sets out the background/context of the site and previous engagement between the parties. Section 3 then sets out the agreed matters in relation to the following key topics:

- Spatial Strategy
- Site Specific Matters on which the Parties Agree
- Infrastructure
- Range of Land Uses
- Housing Trajectory

1.6. Section 4 identifies outstanding matters between the parties.

2. Background / Context

2.1. The site is located to the North-West of Grove. The site measures approximately 28.35 hectares. It is bordered on its northern edge by Denchworth Road and the railway line, and positioned between two other allocated sites, with Monks Farm to the east and Grove Airfield to the south. The site is entirely greenfield land and is comprised of several fields, with tree lines and hedgerows defining the western boundary.

2.2. There are no statutory landscape or wildlife designations on this site. The site is subject to some rail noise from the adjoining railway land and lies partly over the former Grove airfield.

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 (adopted 2019)

2.3. Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 allocated the site via Core Policy 15a: Additional Site Allocations for South-East Vale Sub Area, for 400 homes, with the acknowledgement that the site has capacity to deliver more housing beyond the plan period.

Joint Local Plan 2041 (submitted December 2024)

2.4. Joint Local Plan 2041 Policy AS8 allocates the site for approximately 600 homes, 60 units of housing with care for older people, and supporting services and facilities.

2.5. The site will be delivered in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan, taking into consideration the indicative concept plan contained in the JLP, which must be prepared in collaboration with Vale of White Horse District Council, in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council.

Land Control and Planning Applications

- 2.6. Persimmon Homes control the land and have the ability to develop the site within the timescales proposed in Section 3 below. Persimmon Homes submitted an outline planning application (reference [P20/V3113/O](#)) for the site in November 2020, for '*residential development, new access points and vehicular, cycle and pedestrian links, strategic landscaping and green infrastructure including areas of informal and public open space, other associated site infrastructure and community uses, and potential land for school*'.
- 2.7. This application is currently under consideration by the Local Planning Authority.
- 2.8. The application seeks consent for up to 624 homes.
- 2.9. Since the application was submitted, a number of consultation responses have been received which have resulted in the preparation of an addendum pack to supplement the original application. This also included an Environmental Statement Addendum. The addendum pack was submitted in February 2025 for formal consultation with an amended description of development as follows: '*residential development, new access points and vehicular, cycle and pedestrian links, strategic landscaping and green infrastructure including areas of informal and public open space, other associated site infrastructure, and an extension to the cemetery*'.
- 2.10. Persimmon Homes intend to work with Vale of White Horse District Council to secure a resolution to the application in a timely fashion.
- 2.11. Persimmon Homes also control land at Grove Airfield, which bounds the site to the south. Grove Airfield was allocated for 2,500 dwellings in the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 and was carried forward into the Local Plan 2031. The site was granted outline permission in July 2017 and a number of reserved matters have been submitted and approved since then. As of 31 March 2024, 702 homes have been built, a further 343 homes have detailed permission, and further reserved matters applications are under consideration.
- 2.12. The parties are committed to further partnership working, including regular meetings, to ensure the optimum outcome for the site that delivers new residential development in a sustainable location.

3. Agreed Matters

Spatial Strategy

- 3.1. The parties agree that this site is in accordance with the Spatial Strategy of the Joint Local Plan, as set out in Policy SP1 (Spatial Strategy).

Site Specific Matters on which the Parties Agree

Policy AS8

- 3.2. The parties agree the site North West of Grove is sustainable, suitable, available and deliverable. The site is not subject to any insurmountable environmental, legal, ownership or technical constraints that would otherwise impede development.
- 3.3. The parties agree that this site can be delivered in general accordance with the policies contained in the Joint Local Plan 2041. The parties agree that the site will deliver a high-quality sustainable development.
- 3.4. The parties agree that the allocation of AS8 is robust and soundly based and is supported by the council's evidence base.
- 3.5. The parties agree that approximately 600 dwellings can be delivered within the AS8 site allocation boundary.
- 3.6. The parties agree that allocating this site will ensure the masterplanning for this site can be considered alongside planning for the Monks Farm and Grove Airfield sites, ensuring they are fully integrated.
- 3.7. The parties agree that there is a clear need for deliverable sites to meet identified housing needs in a timely manner and to sustain a five-year housing land supply.
- 3.8. Where any development is proposed within the site allocation on land where there are significant surface water flow paths, the parties agree that detailed modelling would be required at the planning application stage, with a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) provided. The councils' Flood Risk Engineers would also provide further advice. The parties agree with the flood risk requirements set out in Policy CE6 (Flood Risk).

Infrastructure

- 3.9. The parties are working positively together to ensure the councils are adequately planning for infrastructure on this site and agree that appropriate infrastructure will be delivered.
- 3.10. The parties are working positively with Oxfordshire County Council to ensure that transport infrastructure is planned to come forward in a timely manner for this site.

Range of Land Uses

- 3.11. The parties agree with the principle that the site should be allocated for a mix of uses, including housing, supporting services and facilities.
- 3.12. The parties agree that the site can deliver these land uses through a high-quality sustainable design.

Housing Trajectory

3.13. The parties agree that the site has capacity for approximately 600 homes, 570 of which are currently expected to be delivered within the plan period up to 2041. The first dwellings are expected to be delivered from 2029/30. The parties will continue to explore opportunities for maximising the delivery of housing on the site within the plan period.

3.14. The estimated development trajectory is as follows:

Total 2021 to 2041	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	2025/ 26	2026/ 27	2027/ 28	2028/ 29	2029/ 30	2030/ 31
570	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	50
	2031/ 32	2032/ 33	2033/ 34	2034/ 35	2035/ 36	2036/ 37	2037/ 38	2038/ 39	2039/ 40	2040/ 41
	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50

4. Outstanding Matters

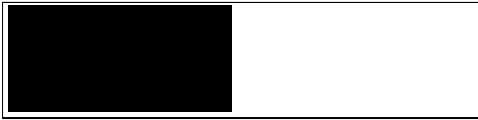
- 4.1. Persimmon Homes' Regulation 19 response details their concerns with the site-specific policy requirements for the allocation.
- 4.2. The parties agree that concerns raised by Persimmon Homes regarding site-specific requirements, including: infrastructure; units of housing with care for older people; and land used for noise buffers not being counted towards meeting open space requirements, are matters for the examination and/or could be addressed through the planning application process.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. Persimmon Homes support the allocation of North West of Grove, Grove within Policy AS8, and the parties agree that the site is suitable, available and deliverable for sustainable housing development.
- 5.2. The parties are working jointly to enable delivery of the planned residential development of approximately 600 homes within the plan period. The parties will continue to work cooperatively on all matters of mutual interest.

Signatures

Signed on behalf of South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council



02/07/2025

Name – Tim Oruye
Job Title – Head of Policy and Programmes

Date

Signed on behalf of Persimmon Homes



15/07/2025

Name – Thomas Bostock
Job Title – Senior Planner

Date