

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 Carter Jonas

on behalf of Mr. Anthony Mockler

March 2026

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) has been prepared by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils (“the councils”), and Mr. Anthony Mockler (as landowner), 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 land at Milton Fields (North West of Valley Park), Didcot, within Policy AS9, for the development of approximately 800 new homes, 90 units of housing with care for older people, between 6 and 10 pitches for gypsies and travellers, 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.

¹https://data.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=910615757&CODE=E5A5ABA68697A82C9E3C40AB599CD4D9

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

- Site Specific Matters on which the Parties Agree
- Spatial Strategy and Evidence Base
- Policy AS9 and LS1
- Infrastructure
- Range of Land Uses
- Housing Trajectory

1.6. Section 4 identifies outstanding matters between the parties.

2. Background / Context

2.1. The site allocation comprises New Farm and its surrounding land. The allocation is presently served by its own entrance track direct from the A4130 and is located two miles west of the centre of Didcot. To the east of the allocation lies the Valley Park site (currently under construction), allocated for development in the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1, and to the west are the Milton Interchange Services. The A34 lies to the south of the site and the A4130 and Swindon to Didcot railway line lie to the north. The site is subject to limited rail and road noise from these transport routes, particularly from the north.

2.2. The site lies within Didcot Garden Town and the Science Vale area.

Local Plans

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (adopted 2016)

2.3. Core Policy 15 within Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 allocated the site for approximately 800 homes.

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041 (submitted December 2024)

2.4. A proposal to increase the housing numbers has been put forward in the Joint Local Plan 2041, where Policy AS9 allocates the site to deliver approximately 800 homes, with 90 units of housing with care for older people in addition to this, as well as between 6 and 10 pitches for gypsies and travellers, supporting services and facilities.

- 2.5. There is considerable infrastructure investment planned for the Didcot area, as outlined in Policy IN3 – Transport Infrastructure and Safeguarding. For example, on 11 December 2024, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government issued a decision granting planning permission for the Housing Infrastructure Fund (“HIF1”) infrastructure scheme. This is a significant infrastructure project that will unlock planned growth across Science Vale – notably around Didcot. Some infrastructure improvements related to this scheme will be situated within and alongside this site.
- 2.6. The allocation and its surrounding agricultural land have been owned by the Barrett family, based at Milton Manor, for many generations.

3. Agreed Matters

Site Specific Matters on which the Parties Agree

- 3.1. The site is sustainable, suitable, available and developable.
- 3.2. The site is under single ownership control and is not subject to any insurmountable environmental, legal, ownership, or technical constraints that would otherwise impede development.
- 3.3. The parties agree that the site will deliver a high-quality sustainable development.
- 3.4. The parties are committed to regular meetings, to ensure the optimum outcome for the site allocation that delivers new residential development in a sustainable location.

Spatial Strategy and Evidence Base

- 3.5. The parties agree that the site allocation accords with the Spatial Strategy of the Joint Local Plan, as set out in Policy SP1 – Spatial Strategy.
- 3.6. The parties agree that the site selection process, as set out in the Site Selection Topic Paper ([examination library reference TOP07.1](#)), is robust and soundly based, supported by the councils’ evidence base and demonstrates that this site is sustainable.
- 3.7. The site provides an opportunity to deliver high-quality new development in accordance with Policy SP3 – The Strategy for Didcot Garden Town. The parties support the inclusion of the Didcot Garden Town principles and requirements for development within the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan area in the Joint Local Plan.

Policy AS9 and LS1

- 3.8. The parties agree that Policy AS9 identifies an appropriate approach to ensuring development is delivered comprehensively. An agreed comprehensive masterplan will be produced, taking into consideration the indicative concept plan as set out in Policy AS9 and the councils' Joint Design Guide.
- 3.9. The councils acknowledge that the landowner has prepared a masterplan that was submitted as part of their representation to the Joint Local Plan Publication Period (Regulation 19).
- 3.10. The parties agree that the allocation of AS9 is robust and soundly based and is supported by the councils' evidence base.
- 3.11. The parties agree that the general large scale major development requirements identified in Policy LS1, and the site-specific requirements set out in Policy AS9 identify the key requirements for this site to deliver.
- 3.12. The parties acknowledge that any future planning applications for the site, determined after the Joint Local Plan's adoption, should demonstrate consistency with Policy AS9 and the Joint Design Guide principles to maximise walking, cycling and public transport connectivity, including high-quality provision for non-car modes to key nearby destinations. The parties are very supportive of a transport and movement hierarchy which promotes non-car modes of travel (including car-free development), and permeability across the site. The councils acknowledge that the landowner would like to bring forward a car-free development.
- 3.13. Where any development is proposed within the site allocation on land that falls within Flood Zones 2 or 3, or where there are significant surface water flow paths, the parties agree that detailed modelling would be required at the planning application stage, within a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). 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).
- 3.14. The parties are supportive of the proposed change to the site allocation name, to 'Milton Fields'. The councils will propose a modification regarding the name change.

Infrastructure

- 3.15. The parties will work positively together to ensure the councils are adequately planning for infrastructure for this site, and that appropriate infrastructure will be delivered as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 3.16. The parties agree the site-specific requirements set out in Policy AS9 generally identify the key infrastructure requirements for this site to deliver. The parties

support the Joint Local Plan vision and are committed to promoting non-car modes of travel and improving site permeability, including high-quality provision for non-car modes to key nearby destinations. This includes creating layouts that minimise the use and impact of private motor vehicles and measures to discourage car-dependent development and promoting non-car modes of travel (including car-free development).

- 3.17. The parties agree that the councils will adequately plan for infrastructure for this site, and that appropriate infrastructure will be delivered.
- 3.18. The parties will work positively with Oxfordshire County Council to ensure that infrastructure is planned to come forward in a timely manner for this site.

Range of Land Uses

- 3.19. The parties agree with the principle that the site should be allocated for a mix of uses, including housing, housing with care for older people, and supporting services and facilities.
- 3.20. The parties agree that the site can deliver these land uses through a high-quality sustainable design, taking into account the councils' Joint Design Guide. To support this, the parties will explore the potential of a bespoke design review process, as set out in Policy DE3 – Delivering well-designed new development, which will involve input from the landowner's design council.

Housing Trajectory

- 3.21. The councils consider that the site can deliver approximately 800 dwellings within the plan period up until 2041. The councils consider that the first dwellings will be delivered from 2031/32. The parties will explore opportunities to maximise housing delivery on the site within the plan period.
- 3.22. 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.
- 3.23. The councils' 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
800	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2031/ 32	2032/ 33	2033/ 34	2034/ 35	2035/ 36	2036/ 37	2037/ 38	2038/ 39	2039/ 40	2040/ 41
	60	120	120	120	120	120	120	20	0	0

3.24. The landowner considers an earlier delivery start date to be achievable. The landowner's 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
800	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	120	120
	2031/ 32	2032/ 33	2033/ 34	2034/ 35	2035/ 36	2036/ 37	2037/ 38	2038/ 39	2039/ 40	2040/ 41
	120	120	120	120	20	0	0	0	0	0

4. Outstanding Matters

4.1. Mr Mockler's Regulation 19 response details his concerns with the site-specific policy requirements for the allocation, including the provision of Gypsy and Traveller pitches.

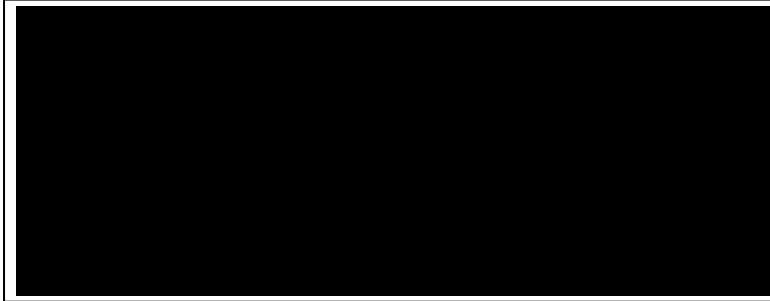
5. Conclusion

5.1. Mr. Mockler supports the allocation of land at Milton Fields, Didcot, within Policy AS9 save for the outstanding matters detailed in his Regulation 19 responses (see paragraph 4.1), and the parties agree that the site is suitable, available and developable for sustainable housing development.

5.2. The parties are working jointly to enable delivery of the planned residential development within the plan period. The parties will continue to work cooperatively on all matters of mutual interest.

Signatures

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



Name: Tim Oruye

Job Title: Head of Policy & Programmes

Date: 27 March 2026

Signed for and on behalf of Mr Anthony Mockler – Landowner of the Milton Fields (AS9) site allocation



Name Christopher D'Oalley

Date 27/03/2026