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## Key Objectives

- 6.5 The Publication Version Local Plan states that the development should take into account the design and layout of nearby strategic housing sites; deliver an exemplar, sustainable and mixed use urban extension; create a sustainable community that is integrated with Didcot, Great Western Park and the Milton Park Enterprise Zone; contribute to balanced employment and housing growth in Science Vale; contribute towards infrastructure in the Science Vale Area Strategy as set out in the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan.
- 6.6 The development has been conceived where possible taking into account the design and layout of nearby strategic sites, particularly Great Western Park and North West Valley Park (albeit that we are not aware of any planning application having been submitted for the latter). It will provide a significant network of 'green' and 'blue' corridors for pedestrians, cyclists and joggers that will link directly into Great Western Park and North West Valley Park, utilising existing footpaths public rights of way and cycle routes. The main local centre is located at a key junction with the primary east-west transport route which links the site into Great Western Park to the east and future North West Valley Park development; this route will provide opportunities for high frequency direct bus routes.
- 6.7 Sports pitch provision is incorporated into the southern part of the site that could be combined with pitch provision within Great Western Park (subject to an amendment to the layout of that development, which the developer has agreed to in principle) to provide a larger area of provision; sports pitches will also be located within the northern part of the site, together with a separate area containing allotments within the triangular parcel of land, that would be within close or immediate proximity to North West Valley Park.
- 6.8 The development will include sufficient primary school provision to accommodate pupils generated by the development. Discussions with OCC are continuing on this issue, and in particular whether the need for a fifth form of entry on the site is a temporary or permanent one. At the present time, we are showing one two-form and one three-form entry. This latter school could have a permanent two and temporary third-form of entry. This is subject to further discussion. In determining the final quantum and location of school provision during the determination of this application, it will be necessary to take into account the likely need primary school provision at North West Valley Park so that provision can be planned comprehensively across the entire Valley Park site.
- 6.9 The development is conceived as a sustainable and mixed use urban extension, that will provide an environmentally sensitive, inclusive and accessible scheme.
- 6.10 Key sustainability measures that form part of the project include: sustainable access linkages into the established road, cycle and pedestrian network; provision of public open space areas, including a range of green infrastructure, sports facilities and connections to footway and cycleway infrastructure; provision of flood mitigation measures in the form of an integrated drainage strategy, taking into account climate change; retention of the existing hedgerows, streams and areas of tree planting where possible; additional areas of native planting proposed together with the creation of new areas of habitat.
- 6.11 The development will provide a mix of housing sizes and tenure, and employment opportunities (both during construction stages and operation associated with the function of local facilities and services), that will contribute towards future growth and employment within the Science Vale.

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- 6.12 The development will help to facilitate the implementation of new infrastructure identified in the Science Vale Area Strategy, as also required by Core Policy 17 contained in the Publication Version Local Plan. Within the application site, the development will provide potential linkages and corridors to accommodate the A4130 dualling and Science Bridge routing, the Harwell Link Road as well as enabling improvements to the bus network. A financial contribution will be agreed with the Councils to help deliver this, to mitigate against the impact of the proposed development. As a consequence, the development will also comply with Core Policy 7.

## **Urban Design Principles**

- 6.13 The accompanying Design and Access Statement summarises the extensive design process and considerations that have been taken into account in developing the illustrative masterplan and design principles, and demonstrates the commitment of the Applicants to deliver a sustainable new community which will integrate well with the town, employment areas and the countryside. It summarises key design principles that have informed the development in relation to: access and movement principles; character and context; delivering a sustainable development; responding to landscape; and delivering housing that responds to local needs. For example, in relation to the first of these, the development will provide safe, convenient and direct connections through the creation of a legible development structure and streets are designed as places and layout of development to encourage low traffic speeds; in relation to the second, block frontages will provide for active frontages and key spaces and routes will be defined by interesting and varied built form; for the third, the masterplan makes efficient use of existing established landscape and physical site features, a permeable block structure which exploits solar opportunities where possible and consideration of community facilities located to create natural nodes of activity. In terms of landscaping, a green infrastructure network will be created around established trees and hedgerows to define the site's edges and create connections; a mix of housing will deliver a range of sizes and types to reflect local needs.
- 6.14 The development addresses key urban design principles listed in the draft Site Development Template for Valley Park. As mentioned previously, the development has been conceived where possible taking into account both North West Valley Park and Great Western Park, particularly in terms of providing east-west traffic/transport routes and the location of facilities. The Design and Access Statement considers the distinctive character areas within the site. A 'Gateway' Character Area will provide the main access to the site, with buildings being arranged to create a sense of arrival; a 'High Street' Character Area is a higher density mixed use area and the focus of the site; a 'Northern Residential Neighbourhood' is a medium density urban area making up the majority of the northern half of the site; a 'Southern Residential Neighbourhood' is a low density area making up the majority of the southern part of the site. These can be broken up into smaller character areas at a later stage in the process as the development progresses towards reserved matters applications. It makes clear that the development seeks to provide an appropriate edge along the A4130, partly through the inclusion of a green corridor and opportunity for new tree planting to create a 'boulevard' landscaped approach to Didcot.
- 6.15 The gateway feature to the A4130 and the main internal strategic routes provide an opportunity in the Valley Park development proposal for the highest development densities to make the best use of possible bus stop locations.

## 3.0 ASSESSMENT YEAR AND COMMITTED DEVELOPMENTS

### Assessment Year

- 3.1 As suggested by OCC an assessment year of 2024 has been adopted. The growth rates for growing the background traffic to 2024 are provide in **Appendix B** and summarised in **Table 1** below.

**Table 1 Tempo Growth Rates**

Base Year	Future Year 2024	
	AM Peak	PM peak
2013	1.12640401	1.13124087
2014	1.12327945	1.12803707

### Committed Developments

- 3.2 It is understood that there are a number of committed developments in the area and also a number of allocated sites, particularly for residential development, in the local area.
- 3.3 OCC as highway authority have undertaken strategic traffic modelling of the area to understand the cumulative impacts of all the planned developments. This exercise has identified the need for strategic highway improvements to accommodate the traffic increases associated with all the developments. These strategic highway improvements include the Science Bridge and Link Road.
- 3.4 A number of these strategic highway improvements are being delivered via pooled developer contributions. This approach means that there will be an element of 'pain' in the operation of the highway that will need to be accepted. This is because traffic flows from the development will come on line before the improvements can be delivered as the required contributions are triggered and collected from the various developments.
- 3.5 As a strategic brownfield redevelopment site that is providing a mixed use development the redevelopment of the Didcot A site is a clear priority. The site is also delivering, as part of the access strategy for the site, a significant element of the strategic highway improvements, part of the science bridge link road.
- 3.6 The end conclusions of the highway impact of the various developments in the area is known through the work completed by OCC. However, as part of the impact assessment work for the Didcot A redevelopment proposals it is important to understand the implications as the various development come forward. This assessment should not take into account the full completion of the various developments, as this will not happen in the build out programme of Didcot A, but should consider elements of these development coming forward.
- 3.7 Given the varying types, locations and status of the various developments in the area it has been agreed with OCC that the easiest and simplest way to consider the changes in traffic flows is through traffic growth assumptions. Therefore the housing trajectory for the area has been reviewed and it has been agreed that 3000 households should be included in the baseline growth assumptions up to 2024. The