

South and Vale Joint Local Plan 2041

Statement of Common Ground

between

South and Vale District Council

and

Oxfordshire County Council

and

National Highways

in relation to the Joint South and Vale Local Plan 2041

December 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (“SOCG”) has been prepared by South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council (“the Councils”), Oxfordshire County Council (“OCC”) and National Highways (“NH”) hereafter referred to collectively as “the parties”. It sets out matters that are agreed and those that are not between the parties in relation to the emerging South and Vale Local Plan 2041 (“the Plan”).
- 1.2 The agreed matters in this SOCG do not preclude any further written or verbal representations that the Councils, OCC, and NH may wish to make as part of the Local Plan Examination, in relation to any other matters which may not have been agreed and/or which do not form part of this SOCG.
- 1.3 To date, the Councils have consulted on the emerging Joint Local Plan as follows:
 - Regulation 18 Part 1 stage - June 2022,
 - Regulation 18 Part 2 stage - Jan 2024, and
 - Regulation 19 - Oct 2024.
- 1.4 NH has engaged with the preparation of the Joint Local Plan (JLP) at all stages. The Councils support and recognise the value of this on-going working relationship for a positively prepared local plan.
- 1.5 At each stage of the plan making process the Councils have prepared a range of evidence-based documents and published them on the Councils’ website. These have informed the policies within the Joint Local Plan. The Councils intend to submit the new Local Plan to the Secretary of State for the purpose of examination in public in December 2024.
- 1.6 South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils are working together on a Joint Local Plan which will guide development of new housing and employment, through informing planning application decisions for the districts. The Joint Local Plan proposes planning policies that help address the climate emergency, restore nature, and meet the needs of our residents, such as delivering the right infrastructure to support travel opportunities.
- 1.7 The Strategic Highways in South and Vale, which NH operates and maintains, comprises the A34 and M40.

National Highways

1.8 National Highways (NH) is a Prescribed Body as defined in part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

NH is a public body that is:

- “Responsible for operating, maintaining, and improving England's motorways and major A roads,
- Contributing to the government's long-term plan for the Strategic Road Network, and
- Improving truck safety on UK roads”.

2. Evidence

2.1 The parties agree that the evidence and supporting documents for the Joint Local Plan are robust and proportionate to inform the development of the Joint Local Plan and its policies.

2.2 The parties agree that the transport evidence base supporting the Joint Local Plan includes:

- Existing Transport Conditions Report,
- South and Vale Modelling Report,
- Study of Active Travel for Allocations, and
- Transport Safeguarding Topic Paper.

2.3 The parties agree that the transport evidence base demonstrates that the preparation of the plan is considered to meet the tests of soundness.

3. Highway Issues

Chilton Interchange

3.1 There are capacity issues identified in the 2041 DM and DS AM and PM peak hours in the Transport Modelling Report. A scheme to address this issue has been identified through close working between OCC, NH, and developers, and is secured through the S106 legal agreements with developments in the vicinity.

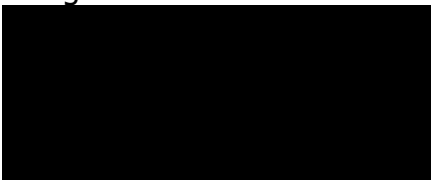
Milton Interchange

- 3.2 There are capacity issues identified in the 2041 DM and DS AM and PM peak hours in the Transport Modelling Report. A study, led by National Highways, into improvement options at Milton Interchange is underway. Growth identified in the South and Vale Joint Local Plan 2041 is not reliant on an improvement at this junction.

4. Duty to Cooperate and Engagement

- 4.1 NH engaged with the preparation of the Joint Local Plan (JLP) at Regulation 18 Part 1 stage, Regulation 18 Part 2 stage, and Regulation 19. Furthermore, ahead of Regulation 19 the initial draft modelling report was shared with NH to enable review of the modelling findings ahead of publication. The Council supports and recognises the value of this on-going working relationship for positively prepared local plans.
- 4.2 Employees at NH have worked with colleagues at the District and County Councils in developing and advising on the policy approaches to the Strategic Highway in South and Vale.
- 4.3 The parties agree that the Council has discharged its Duty to Cooperate.
- 4.4 The parties acknowledge the need to continue to engage as the JLP examination progresses.

Signed:



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Signed:



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