

WOOTTON AND ST HELEN WITHOUT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN BASIC CONDITIONS STATEMENT

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1. Legal Requirements

- 1 This statement has been prepared by the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Wootton and St Helen Without Parish Councils to accompany the submission to Vale of White Horse District Council of the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Development Plan under section 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.
- 2 The Neighbourhood Plan was itself prepared by the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Wootton and St Helen Without Parish Councils.
- 3 Wootton Parish Council is the Qualifying Body in respect of the Neighbourhood Area covering the Parishes of Wootton and St Helen Without (excluding the area relating to the strategic housing site “North West Abingdon on Thames”), as designated by Vale of White Horse District Council on 19th July 2017.
- 4 The Neighbourhood Plan proposal relates to planning matters (the use and development of land) in the designated Neighbourhood Area and covers the period from 2018 to 2031.
- 5 The Neighbourhood Plan does not contain policies relating to excluded development as laid out in the Regulations.
- 6 This Basic Conditions Statement addresses the ‘*basic conditions*’ as required by the Regulations and explains how the Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirement of Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.
- 7 The Regulations state that the Neighbourhood Plan will have met the basic conditions if it:
 - Has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
 - Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - Is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area;
 - Does not breach, or is otherwise incompatible with European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Right (ECHR) obligations.

2. Introduction and Background

- 8 Neighbourhood planning provides communities with the power to establish their own policies to shape future development in and around where they live and work.

“Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need.”

(Paragraph 183, National Planning Policy Framework)

- 9 As set out above, Wootton Parish Council is the *Qualifying Body*, ultimately responsible for the Neighbourhood Plan and in line with the aims and purposes of neighbourhood planning, as set out in the Localism Act (2011), the replacement National Planning Policy Framework (2018) and Planning Practice Guidance (2014). St Helen Without Parish Council is the Partner Parish to the Qualifying Body.
- 10 The Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan is the result of sustained community effort totalling thousands of hours volunteered by local people with a single aim in mind – the production of a land use plan to provide for sustainable growth, whilst at the same time, protecting those things that make Wootton and St Helen Without a very special place.
- 11 Wootton and St Helen Without is under tremendous pressure for development, whilst at the same time, unaffordability and unavailability of appropriate housing for local people is a major issue. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address these and other issues and so help to provide for appropriate sustainable development over the long term. The aim is to ensure that high quality development is carefully managed and that those things that make the Neighbourhood Area so attractive are nurtured.
- 12 Plan-makers have sought to carefully craft the Neighbourhood Plan in a way that achieves this very difficult balancing act whilst meeting the basic conditions.

- 13 The reports from key Steering Group meetings and all important documents relating to the development of the Neighbourhood Plan are available for scrutiny on the dedicated Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan website: <http://www.wshwnp.org.uk>
- 14 A Consultation Statement has been produced to support the Submission of the Neighbourhood Plan and this details how the Steering Group has engaged the local community and stakeholders during the plan-making process.

3. Having Regard to National Planning Policy and Advice

- 15 The Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF was originally published in April 2012. A replacement version of the NPPF was published in July 2018. This Basic Conditions Statement has regard to the NPPF, as published in July 2018.
- 16 In so doing, the Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to the 12 core planning principles contained in paragraph 17 of the NPPF, alongside other national policies. The Neighbourhood Plan has also had regard to ongoing National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), first published by the Government in April 2014.
- 17 The table on the following pages sets out a summary of how each policy of the Neighbourhood Plan has regard to national policy and advice. The NPPF paragraphs referred to are considered to be the most relevant to the respective policy and are not intended to comprise a comprehensive or exhaustive list of every possible relevant paragraph.

Table 1: How the Neighbourhood Plan policies have regard to national policy and advice

<i>NP Policy Number and Title</i>	<i>NPPF Paragraph(s)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
SS1 Green Belt	Paras 133-147	The Policy protects Green Belt land in accordance with Chapter 13 of the NPPF.
SS2 Separation of settlements	Para 127	The Policy seeks to ensure that development responds to local character and history, and adds to the overall quality of the area.
SS3 Local Green Space	Paras 99-101	The Policy seeks to protect areas identified as special to the local community.
SS4 Strategic Vistas	Para 127	The Policy seeks to ensure that takes account of and responds positively to local character.
SS5 Barracks and Airfield	Paras 138, 145	The Policy supports the redevelopment of brownfield land in accordance with national Green Belt policy and/or Garden Village principles.
IN1 Housing	Paras 59-61	The Policy sets out a framework for the strong support of the provision of a wide range of high quality housing to meet needs.
IN2 Timing of Infrastructure	Paras 7-14	The Policy seeks to provide for a holistic and sustainable approach to significant development.

IN3 Transport Mitigation	Para 108	The Policy seeks to ensure highway safety and encourage sustainable modes of transport.
IN4 Transport Opportunities	Paras 102, 108 and 98	The Policy encourages sustainable modes of transport and the enhancement of public rights of way.
IN5 Business Infrastructure	Paras 83, 84 and 112	The Policy supports the development of the rural economy and provision of high quality telecommunications infrastructure.
IN6 Community Infrastructure	Paras 91-95	The Policy promotes the development of healthy communities.
DG1 Design for the Area	Paras 124-132	The Policy promotes high quality design.
DG2 Heritage Assets	Paras 184 and 197	The Policy identifies locally important heritage assets and requires that the significance of the assets should be taking into account, such that any harm arising is judged against the significance of the asset.
DG3 Design Requirements	Paras 124-132	The Policy promotes high quality design.

4. General Conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Development Plan

- 18 The Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to ensure that it is in general conformity with the development plan for the area.
- 19 The current development plan for the area comprises the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (LPP1), adopted in December 2016 and the saved policies of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011.
- 20 It is a basic condition that the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the *adopted* policies of the development plan. The Neighbourhood Plan achieves this. The Table below sets out how each policy is in general conformity with the adopted strategic policies of the development plan.
- 21 In addition, in producing the Neighbourhood Plan, plan-makers have been conscious that the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 is still emerging. Consequently, in line with national guidance, plan-makers have considered and been mindful of relevant information associated with this emerging document.
- 22 The Table on the following pages does not seek to provide a comprehensive list of every possible strategic adopted Local Plan Policy that each Neighbourhood Plan Policy might possibly be in general conformity with, but simply provides examples of general conformity.

Table 2: How the Neighbourhood Plan policies are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Vale of White Horse development plan

<i>NP Policy Number and Title</i>	<i>NPPF Paragraph(s)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
SS1 Green Belt	Core Policy 13	The Policy protects Green Belt land in accordance with Core Policy 13.
SS2 Separation of settlements	Core Policy 4	The Policy focuses development on settlements and steers development away from the open countryside.
SS3 Local Green Space	Core Policies 44-46	The Policy seeks to protect areas of green space identified as special to the local community.
SS4 Strategic Vistas	Core Policy 44	The Policy protects important views in conformity with Core Policy 44.
SS5 Barracks and Airfield	Core Policy 13 and Core Policy 37	The Policy supports the redevelopment of brownfield land in accordance with LPP1 Green Belt policy and in conformity with the design and local distinctiveness framework set out in Core Policy 37.
IN1 Housing	Core Policy 22 and Core Policy 27	The Policy supports development that meets housing needs, including those of the ageing population
IN2 Timing of Infrastructure	Core Policy 7	The Policy seeks to ensure that development provides

		for necessary infrastructure in a timely manner, in conformity with Core Policy 7.
IN3 Transport Mitigation	Core Policy 33 and Core Policy 35	The Policy supports safe access and sustainable modes of transport.
IN4 Transport Opportunities	Core Policy 33 and Core Policy 35	The Policy promotes sustainable forms of movement, including cycling and public transport; and encourages the enhancement of public rights of way.
IN5 Business Infrastructure	Core Policy 6 and Core Policy 36	The Policy promotes economic development and supports the provision of high quality telecommunications infrastructure.
IN6 Community Infrastructure	Core Policy 1	The Policy promotes the development of healthy communities, an essential element of sustainable development.
DG1 Design for the Area	Core Policy 37	The Policy promotes high quality design.
DG2 Heritage Assets	Core Policy 39	The Policy recognises that all heritage assets are important. It identifies locally important heritage assets and seeks to provide for their conservation and enhancement in line with their significance.
DG3 Design Requirements	Core Policy 37	The Policy promotes high quality design.

5. Contribution to the Achievement of Sustainable Development

- 23 A Neighbourhood plan must take into account the need to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This involves working to address the three strands of sustainability: economic, social and environmental.
- 24 The Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan encourages sustainable growth, echoing the aims of the NPPF to provide for economic, social and environmental progression for future generations.
- 25 The Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of **economic** sustainability by supporting appropriate housing, retail and employment development (example Policies SS5, IN1, IN5, IN6).
- 26 The Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of **social** sustainability by supporting the provision of a range of housing types to meet a range of housing needs, promoting new public rights of way, supporting the regeneration of brownfield land, promoting good design, promoting new community facilities, and by protecting green spaces that are especially important to the local community (example Policies IN1, SS3, SS5, IN3, IN6 and DG1).
- 27 The Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of **environmental** sustainability by protecting the Green Belt, local character and heritage assets, by safeguarding special green areas, and by making the most effective use of brownfield land, thus protecting the most environmentally sensitive parts of the Neighbourhood Area from inappropriate development (example Policies SS1, SS2, SS3, SS4, SS5, DG2).
- 28 As set out later in this Basic Conditions Statement, further to screening carried out by the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, it is considered that neither a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) nor a Habitats Regulations Assessment is required because the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any land for development and is not likely to result in any significant impacts upon the environment not already considered through the development plan process.

6. Compatibility with EU Obligations and Legislation

7. The Neighbourhood Plan has regard to fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the ECHR and complies with the Human Rights Act 1998.
8. A detailed screening assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan and its policies has been undertaken. This assessment has been submitted for examination alongside the Neighbourhood Plan. It concludes that neither a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) nor a Habitats Regulations Assessment is required. This is because the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any land for development and is not likely to result in any significant impacts upon the environment not already considered through the development plan process.
9. Further to the above, the screening assessment was re-visited prior to Submission, in order to take into account the European Court of Justice ruling of April 2018, which impacts on the way a screening is conducted. This review of the screening assessment also resulted in a *“no significant effects report.”*
10. A detailed statement in the above regard is included on page 21 of the Neighbourhood Plan. The statutory consultees, Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency have been consulted on the screening assessment.
11. The Neighbourhood Plan does not breach and is compatible with EU obligations and human rights legislation.

7. Conclusion

8. The Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are met by the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan.
9. Taking this into account, it is the consideration of Wootton Parish Council, as the Qualifying Body, that the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan complies with Paragraph 8(1)(a) of Schedule 4B of the Act.