

St. Helen Without Parish Council

LPP2 Written Statement, St Helen Without Parish Council

We submit this additional response to clarify some of the points made in our original submission and to take account of the work undertaken in the preparation of our Neighbourhood Plan which, at the time of writing, is in its Pre Submission Consultation Phase. Our Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have submitted their own response.

Matter 5

Question 5.1/5.2

We believe that our residents have adopted a remarkably mature approach to the proposed development of Dalton Barracks and Abingdon Airfield, accepting the need for additional housing nationally, notwithstanding concerns as to whether the Strategic Housing Management and Oxford's Unmet Housing Need calculations are sufficiently robust and accurate. Our own consultations and those of our Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group indicate an overwhelming majority of our residents, particularly in Shippon object to the village being removed from the Green Belt with the prospect of being subsumed into the planned development. Their view is based not on NIMBYism but on a desire to preserve the identity of their village, particularly its historic aspects.

As previously stated, we do not believe that the NPPF requirement for exceptional circumstances to justify removal of land from the Green Belt has been met since, inter alia, there is more than adequate brownfield land on the site to meet the Vale's requirement for the provision of 1200 houses during this plan's currency. The only rationale we have been given is that 'it is policy to remove the whole of a settlement from the Green Belt where part of it is removed'. We do not understand and indeed are not convinced by this. LPP2 states that 'Garden Village' principles would be applied to the proposed development. Garden Villages are defined as discrete standalone developments. LPP2 itself commits the Vale to the preservation and protection of existing settlements. All of this, however, is dismissed by the assertion that 'Shippon will form a contiguous part of the new settlement'. If for any reason, as yet unknown to us, it is deemed necessary to remove land from the Green Belt to facilitate this development we respectfully ask that consideration be given Shippon itself remaining in the Green Belt.

5.4

We have been fully involved in the two workshops held to develop the Supplementary Planning Document. We have yet, at the time of writing, to be briefed on the outcome of these. We acknowledge that this is a strategic document but we have seen little in the way of roads infrastructure proposals other than the identification of exit points from the proposed development into the existing road network. As we have previously highlighted our local roads are predominantly 'B' or unclassified highways with limited capacity which is currently severely tested especially during peak hours. Barrow Road, immediately to the South of the proposed development, is particularly unsuited to further traffic load owing to 'pinch points' created by ancient walls and buildings in the direction of Abingdon (it provides the shortest access to Abingdon Town Centre). We believe that a credible proposal for infrastructure links to the A34 is required before the plan can be considered sound and the development sustainable.