

21 NOV 2017

19 November 2017

Dear Sir,

VoWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2 Consultation

Although we had been given the impression (by Cllr. Matthew Barber no less) that there was a very good chance that the 'preferred option' of 80 houses north of Ashfields Lane, East Hanney might well be dropped from the version of the Plan now presented for consultation (in favour of the Dalton Barracks site), this, regrettably, has not happened.

I don't intend to detail the litany of reasons why this suggested development is completely inappropriate as these have been set out most cogently by others on several occasions. In summary they cover, inter alia, increased flooding risk, encroachment on a conservation area, access problems and dangers (on the already crowded A338), extending the natural envelope of the village, housing density, insufficiency of local supporting services, further erosion of habitat etc. etc.

Let me focus instead on just one thing – the seemingly wanton destruction of an attractive village and a rural community. In the last five or so years over 200 new houses have been built in East Hanney, a further 100+ are planned for Dews Meadow (Summertown) and Steventon Road, and the Plan proposes an additional 130. This means that the number of houses in East Hanney would have doubled in less than a decade. This growth is completely UNSUSTAINABLE, whatever the pressures from central government and the City of Oxford may be (in fact it is now suggested that Oxford may have significantly overestimated its housing needs). A village the size of East Hanney simply cannot assimilate expansion on that scale and at that rate without a breakdown of social cohesion.

And all this as the consequence of a basic error on the part of VoWH, namely the erroneous designation of East Hanney as a 'large village' (on the basis of the Council's criteria) and therefore suitable for the developers' feeding frenzy! I wonder if you have any concept of the strain that this error is putting on villagers and on the Parish Council in particular trying to resist developments that respond to no established local need (and, given the types of houses that are often proposed, to any other need for 'affordable' housing) and which threaten the very existence of East Hanney as a 'real' village (rather than some sort of satellite suburb).

For all the above reasons, I urge you to look beyond the target-driven approach to planning (cf. the disastrous impact of this approach on the NHS) and consider the real impact on communities 'on the ground'. In this spirit I also urge you to exclude East Hanney from any further large-scale development, and specifically that currently proposed in the 2031 Plan.

Yours faithfully

Derek ~~E.~~ Bowland

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