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Vale of White Horse Local Plan

17/12/14

The latest draft of the Local Plan 2031 includes provision for the construction of 200 houses to the South of East Hanney. We have lived in this village for many years and we are horrified at the proposal and strongly opposed to it.

East Hanney is typical of many villages in the Vale in that it comprises a collection of old and modern houses of many styles constructed from a wide range of materials including timber-frame, stone, flint and brick, some with roofs of thatch and stone tiles. A glance at the monthly village newsletter shows that the residents take part in a wide range of communal activities and keep the village alive and full of interest. To build an estate of 200 homes thereby increasing the number of houses by almost 60% would have a profound impact on the existing community reducing the quality of life and the availability of services, many of which are supplied by volunteers.

East Hanney is prone to flooding and this development would make the problems much worse. The Letcombe Brook runs through the village and carries water from Wantage and Grove together with processed water from the sewage works. The additional houses will increase the volume of water flowing through the village. In 2007 Ebbs Lane was completely inundated along its length when the brook overflowed and several houses were flooded. We were not affected but the repair claims from owners that were have resulted in insurance companies now regarding this as a flood risk area and our premiums have increased by 60% as a result.

Another factor to consider is the amount of sewage generated by the proposed development which will inevitably lead to problems in the village. The sewage works will be overloaded by these increased sewage levels plus those from the 2500 houses to be built at Grove. The works should be upgraded now to handle this increase but Thames Water have no plans to do so.

At present there are housing developments completed, under construction and planned alongside the A338 North of the Steventon Road. At the Saxon Gate and Paddocks sites 40 homes are completed or under construction and there are planning applications for a further 51 houses behind the above developments. Assuming these plans are approved there will be a total of 91 additional homes in East Hanney and this should be regarded as the village contribution to the strategic housing supply listed in the Local Plan 2031. Other villages at present not making a contribution to the housing supply should be including in the list.

Loss of character and village identity and integration.

An increase of 60% in the total number of homes in East Hanney would need facilities for teenagers and young families. Volunteer groups provide help for the present community e.g. Community Shop, Hanney News, toddlers group, and all would be swamped by the numbers envisaged in the Plan.

Schools and education.

The South site does not have good access to a Primary and Secondary School. The village Primary School has already exceeded its capacity and pupils in the catchment area have to attend alternative schools. The Secondary School is 7km away.