

## **8.1 Sites.**

The Vale Liberal Democrat Group agree with the detailed submissions made by the CPRE and other parishes and organisations concerned with finding creative housing solutions that also protect our open spaces. Many people have put in hundreds of hours of careful thought and consideration; their arguments are worthy of full consideration. Our comments are intended to provide some additionality to those comments and to add weight to them.

Our comments here relate primarily to sites 1 to 4. The only comment we have to make on sites 6 and 7 is that they could contribute as alternatives to taking land out of the Oxford Green Belt.

Development at sites 1 to 4 will contribute to a feeling that the settlements of Kennington, Radley and Abingdon-on-Thames are heading towards a coalescence. This is something previous Plans have always tried to prevent in order to preserve the individual character of the three settlements. We believe that this movement toward coalescence is contrary to saved policy NE10 which relates to settlement fringes and gaps.

We conclude that sites 1 and 2 were put forward largely in order to generate sufficient section 106 monies in order to facilitate the two new slip roads (Southbound) on the A34 at Lodge Hill. This is not a sufficient reason to justify a decision not to protect the open spaces in this area.

## **8.2 Other sites**

The Leader of Vale told Scrutiny Cttee last year that there were many other potential housing sites not selected because they were deemed not as sustainable as the selected sites. Our view is that any site in the Oxford Green Belt is by definition not sustainable, because in order to develop the site, the Green Belt is lost forever.

All potential for the brownfield site at Didcot A power station should be fully exploited before considering any Green Belt sites.

### **8.4.c Botley Central Area CP11**

Figure 5.3, the map showing Botley Central Area, was provided by a developer and corresponds 100% (exactly) to the site defined in their planning application. That application was refused by Planning Committee in Dec 2014. It's a poor policy that's derived from a single developer's failed planning application.

The area within Figure 5.3 includes one local church but excludes another. It includes the Vicarage to Sts Peter and Pauls Church, but not the church itself. It includes a sheltered accommodation facility for the elderly, and some private housing. These facilities would not normally be described as suitable for retail redevelopment.

The map includes some businesses but not others, and the reasons for such exclusion are not apparent, other than that wasn't part of the developer's plans. Those plans are now

defunct, and to adopt this site as defined unnecessarily constrains future redevelopment opportunities.

Figure 5.3 should be redrawn to represent the actual local service centre of Botley, which could reasonably be expected to include businesses on the north side of West Way. Or removed as being a hindrance rather than a help.

Section 5.29 says 'Botley functions as a district centre in the Oxford City context'. There is no justification for this statement. Botley isn't part of Oxford City. Vale did not discuss this definition or the policy with Oxford City. The population of Botley is about 10,000. The populations in Oxford's District Centres are between 24,000 and 40,000. There is no reason to say something like this in the Vale's local plan. It adds no value and may add confusion about what policies apply in Botley. For example, does it imply Oxford several policies regarding district centres now apply to Botley?

Section 5.30 makes the case for a food superstore in Botley. This came solely from the developer's plans. Times have changed for food stores. A superstore is not now a viable business model.

Section 5.30 also aspires to make Botley a 'destination', which is contraindicated in this congested area just of the over-capacity A34 in an AQMA.

None of the responses from local people were taken into consideration in this final version of CP11.

CP11 –iv. Should read Arthray Rd, not Arthray Way.