

Comment

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Event Name	Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part One - Publication
Comment by	Mr Oliver Gardiner
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Consultation Point	How the South East Vale Sub-Area will change by 2031 (View)
Status	Submitted
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Q1 Do you consider the Local Plan is Legally Compliant? Yes

Q2 Do you consider the Local Plan is Sound (positively prepared, effective and Justified) No

If your comment(s) relate to a specific site within a core policy please select this from the drop down list. N/A

If you think your comment relates to the DtC, this is about how we have worked with the Duty to Cooperate bodies (such as neighbouring planning authorities)

Q3 Do you consider the Local Plan complies with the Duty to Co-operate? Yes

Q4 Please give details of why you consider the Local Plan is not legally compliant or is unsound or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Local Plan or its compliance with the duty to co-operate, please also use this box to set out your comments.

The Plan has no effective mechanisms to deliver the aim stated in 5.57 [blue box] that: ? *The countryside and villages will have maintained their distinctive character. The Larger Villages will have retained*

their separate identities??. This aim is ignored in paras 5.81-5.84 which discuss the proximity of Harwell (and other villages) to Didcot

Nor does the Plan have an effective mechanism to deliver CP 44 (ii) for Harwell Village, which sets out to ? *protect from harmful development ?[the] important landscape settings of settlements?* .

Saved Policy NE10 states

In the urban fringes and important open gaps between settlements, as shown on the proposals map, development or changes of use which would harm their essentially open or rural character will not be permitted.

The saved proposals map shows the whole area of Valley Park, and a buffer area west of the A34 and east of the village.

However this policy is clearly in need of revision because it indicates that no development should take place on the land now allocated to Valley Park.

There is nothing specific anywhere in the Plan which defines unambiguously what constitutes ?maintenance of distinctive character/separate identity for Harwell village?, particularly on its east side with encroachment by Valley Park.

[Note the definition of a Green Wedge is provided in the NPPG: **Green wedges** *comprise the open areas around and between parts of settlements, which maintain the distinction between the countryside and built up areas, prevent the coalescence (merging) of adjacent places and can also provide recreational opportunities.*]

Q5 Please set out what modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound, having regard to the test you have identified above where this relates to soundness. (NB Please note that any non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination). You will need to say why this modification will make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

First change

Saved policy NE10 should be updated to reflect the reality of the Valley Park allocation, and the proposals map should be extended to provide protection to Harwell Village. All land in Harwell Parish, north of the Icknield Way, and west of the A34, and outwith the existing Village built up area, should be protected from development within the meaning of saved policy NE10.

Second Change

Additionally, to mitigate the against the coalescence of Harwell Village with Valley Park, a green wedge should be introduced east of the A34, with land excised from the Housing Allocation, or, alternatively, designated for Public Open Space within the Valley Park targets.

Hence, in the **Site Template for Valley Park** , Landscape considerations, (Plan appendices, page 28) extend the existing bullet with new words (bold below)

The boundary between the development areas and Harwell village must be carefully treated in order to protect the separate identities of Valley Park and Harwell, **and a green wedge must be provided on both sides of the B4493 until the edge of the Great Western Park development, and no housing should be provided in this area.**

Please note your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested modification, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on the original representation at publication stage.

After this stage, further submissions will be only at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.

Q6 If your representation is seeking a modification, do you consider it necessary to participate at the oral part of the examination?

No - I do not wish to participate at the oral examination