

## Comment

Consultee	Dr James Vincent (872363)
Email Address	
Address	5 Horsa Lane Chilton Didcot OX11 0UE
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Comment by	Dr James Vincent
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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.**

Paragraph 5.54 states that "The South East Vale Sub-Area also houses many attractive villages and approximately half of the area lies in the North Wessex Downs AONB. These more rural settlements

are an important part of the wider community and their historic character should be preserved?. It also states in the box on 'How the South East Vale Sub-Area will change by 2031?' that 'The countryside and villages will have maintained their distinctive character?.'

'Like many of the villages in Oxfordshire, Chilton has been in existence since before the Domesday survey and its present church since a few years after that time. Also like many other villages, many changes have taken place over the centuries, most of them probably within the last 100 years.'  
(SOURCE: <http://www.oxfordshirevillages.co.uk/valevillages/chilton.html> )

The Vale of White Horse District Council has designated Chilton as a 'Smaller Village' and is defined as a village with a low level of services and facilities, where any development should be modest and proportionate in scale and primarily be to meet local needs .?

Chilton has increased in size by ~80% with the completion of 275 new houses at Chilton Field by Autumn 2014. This is a substantial increase in housing for a 'Smaller Village'.

The proposal by the VWHDC to build a further 850 houses at the East Harwell Oxford Campus will place a further 425 houses in Chilton, bringing the total number of houses in Chilton to  $365+275+425=1065$ . This represents a further 68% increase in the number of dwellings compared to the 625 houses that currently form Chilton village, and a circa 300% increase in the number of houses compared to the original Chilton village with ~365 dwellings.

Further to this, the position of the additional 275 houses in Chilton has been omitted from all maps in the Local Plan, and is therefore misleading in terms of housing provision within the AONB, and housing provision close to the Harwell Oxford Campus. Note Chilton Field was built on a brownfield site that was within the perimeter of the Harwell-Oxford Campus

Moreover, the failure to include the additional 275 houses on the strategic site maps makes it more difficult to assess the true extent of urban sprawl into the AONB, and must be considered in terms of the cumulative impact further developments may have on the sensitivity of the AONB.

Therefore, the plan to continually expand the smaller village of Chilton, within the legally protected landscape of the North Wessex Downs AONB, does not comply with Paragraph 4.7, making the plan unsound. Indeed, the proposed development at the East Harwell Campus will ensure the coalescence of Chilton into the greater Harwell Oxford Campus.

Furthermore, the decision to allocate 1400 houses to the legally protected landscape of the North Wessex Downs AONB (an unprecedented volume of housing within any National Park or AONB within the UK) will ensure that countryside and character of the landscape around Chilton, entirely within the North Wessex Downs AONB, will be irreversibly damaged.

Summary: Chilton is a small village entirely within an AONB and the allocation of 1400 houses near it (425 within the parish) is unsound

**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.**

In order to make the Local Plan sound , the following modifications are necessary:

- 1 Remove the entire allocation of 850 homes from the Harwell East Campus.
- 2 Remove the additional allocation of 150 homes from the North West Harwell Campus (eg reduce the number of houses from 550 to 400 (including the 125 already given outline permission)).
- 3 Include provision of up to 400 new homes at the North West Harwell Campus( including the 125 already given outline permission), provided that all development is contained within the perimeter of the Harwell Oxford Campus and is controlled by the Harwell Oxford Campus.
- 4 Reallocate the 850 homes from the Harwell East Campus and the additional 150 houses from the North West Harwell Campus (1,000 houses in total) to other sites already identified by the Vale of White Horse, for example:
  - 1 (a) Valley Park (which has already been assessed as having additional capacity for up to a further 1,200 homes)

- 2 (b) Didcot A (capacity for 425 houses), or
  - 3 (c) Land West of Steventon (capacity for 350 houses), or
  - 4 (d) Distributed throughout the West Vale in order to encourage and support economic growth and prosperity more equally across the district.
  - 1 Or reduce the total SHMA allocation for the District by 1000
  - 1 Remove the North Wessex Downs AONB entirely from the Science Vale ?Ringfence? in order to protect it from future speculative development should the Science Vale fall behind in delivery of its housing targets.
- Only by implementing these steps in full will the character of Chilton be preserved.

**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