

From: Matt West [REDACTED]
To: <planning.policy@whitehorsedc.gov.uk>
Date: 12/12/2014 16:41
Subject: Objection to the Draft Local Plan Part One 2031

Vale of White Horse Planning,

Regarding your proposed housing development for the Chilton/Harwell area, I wish to make representations in opposition to the plan on the basis that the current plan in its existing form does not comply with legislation, in respect to the proposed development within the designated AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).

Section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework entitled, Conserving and enhancing the natural environment;

Paragraph 115 states that "Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.

Paragraph 116 states that " Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
- the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

I do not believe in relation to this development that the requirement for "exceptional circumstances" that are in the public interest "can be demonstrated"

Within the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, Part IV, Section 85, concerned with Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the general duty of public bodies "In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty, a relevant authority shall have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty."

This duty as a "public body" extends to

- (a) a county council, county borough council, district council, parish council or community council;
- (b) a joint planning board within the meaning of section 2 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990; 1990 c. 8.
- (c) a joint committee appointed under section 102(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972;

The Vale of Whitehorse Planning dept. are therefore statutorily obliged to take into account the objective and purpose of the AONB with respect to any planning decisions affecting the AONB.

Within the plan are numerous references to the employment numbers and requirements for growth within the Science Vale, however the numbers are inconsistent and are presented without any supporting evidence. There is also no evidence to suggest that the occupants of any new houses in the region would be employees of the Harwell campus and not commute out of the region.

On the basis of the points raised above, I do not believe that the justification for development within the AONB is either sound, or legally compliant. I understand that there is a need for housing development within the Vale, but feel that it is more appropriate to meet that need by development on locations without damaging the beauty of the AONB.

Regards,

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