

Comment

Consultee	Mrs Ticia Lever (872355)
Email Address	
Address	62 Alexander Close Abingdon Oxon OX14 1XB
Event Name	Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part One - Publication
Comment by	Mrs Ticia Lever
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Consultation Point	Core Policy 8: Spatial Strategy for Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area (View)
Status	Submitted
Submission Type	Web
Version	0.2

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. North of Abingdon-on-Thames

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.

Core Policy 13

I consider the plan is unsound.

The North Abingdon site should not be removed from the Green Belt. Plan ignores Government advice that protecting the green belt should be paramount and that boundaries should only be altered in 'exceptional circumstances'. The Council has not demonstrated any exceptional circumstances. Previous Local plans have said that protecting the Green Belt is a priority and an inspector stated that the extension of building northwards towards Lodge Hill should be 'resolutely avoided.' The site is a valued landscape.

Green Belt Review did not recommend that the land to the east of the Oxford Road be taken out of the Green Belt. The Green Belt Review Phase 3 Report did not recommend that this land to the east should be removed from Green Belt. Yet this has now been included at a late stage in the Local Plan process.

Any development on the land would have a large and significant impact due to the rising land and will affect the setting and special character of Abingdon. The characteristics of the site have not been properly assessed. The Green Belt Review classed the site in 2 land parcels. I do not agree with the findings, for instance that the land to the west in parcel 9B is heavily influenced by urban uses or that it makes little contribution to the perception of open countryside.

The site makes a significant contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment in line with Green Belt purposes and is a valued landscape.

The land provides a distinctive gap between the village of Radley and Abingdon and its development for housing would erode the distinctive sense of place currently enjoyed by residents of Radley and Abingdon.

The landscape characteristics of the site have not been thoroughly assessed nor has the Agriculture land been investigated to find out how much falls within the best and most versatile land. The Council has not recognised Blake's Oak Ancient Woodland immediately bordering the site to the West of the Oxford Road.

Government advice published in October 2014 significantly states that advice in the National Planning Policy Framework should read as a whole: need alone is not the only factor to be considered when drawing up a Local plan. I am concerned that the Council is proposing releasing this prominent site from green belt for proposed housing in order to provide sufficient housing land at the expense of Government advice on Green Belts.

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.

The site should remain in the Green Belt and not be released for housing.

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? Yes - I wish to participate at the oral examination

Please note the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the oral part of the examination.

Q7 If you wish to participate at the oral part of the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

I have lived in North Abingdon for over 30 years and know the site well. I have researched the site and the Green Belt implications and have written a detailed paper on the North Abingdon site in relation to the Green Belt which I have submitted on behalf of the North Abingdon Local Plan Group . However I do not consider that the Council or their consultants have properly assessed the Green Belt implications of the proposal or undertaken a thorough landscape assessment of the whole of the site. .