

Comment

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Event Name	Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part One - Publication
Comment by	Hazel Oliver
Comment ID	LPPub2654
Response Date	20/01/15 14:08
Consultation Point	Core Policy 13: The Oxford Green Belt (View)
Status	Submitted
Submission Type	Email
Version	0.4
Files	DRAFT Objection letter to the Vale 1 April 2014.docx
Q1 Do you consider the Local Plan is Legally Compliant?	No
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

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 is inconsistent with planning guidance and government policies on the protection of Green Belts. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes it very clear that a Green Belt boundary may be altered only in 'exceptional circumstances'. Moreover, recent guidance (6 March 2014) states that: 'Unmet housing need (including traveller sites) is unlikely to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and other harm to constitute the "very special circumstances" justifying inappropriate development on a site within the Green Belt.' The Government's position on Green Belt policy therefore is very clear. The fundamental aim remains to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Boundaries of Green Belts should only be changed in 'exceptional circumstances', and unmet housing need is not

an exceptional circumstance to justify taking land out of the Green Belt. An announcement on 4th October 2014 by the Government Communities Secretary, The Rt Hon Eric Pickles and the Housing and Planning Minister Brandon Lewis confirmed that Councils must protect our precious Green Belt and that Ministers have underlined the Government's commitment to protect the Green Belt from development.

The inclusion of the Peachcroft Farm site which the VWHDC added at a late stage in October 2014 and therefore late into the local plan process was not identified as a potential housing site when the Green Belt Review took place and the VWHDC did not recommend this area should be withdrawn from the Green Belt. It was not taken out of the green belt by the review so its inclusion seems to contradict the VWHDC's own evidence base and is therefore unsound.