

Comment

Consultee	Dr Stephen King (830994)
Email Address	
Address	unknown unknown unknown
Event Name	Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part One - Publication
Comment by	Dr Stephen King
Comment ID	LPPub59
Response Date	07/12/14 21:48
Consultation Point	5.68 Paragraph (View)
Status	Submitted
Submission Type	Web
Version	0.1
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.	East Harwell Campus (Harwell and Chilton Parishes)
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 5.68 states *?There is an ambitious programme of jobs creation and growth for the Science Vale area, including two Enterprise Zone sites at Harwell Campus and Milton Park designated in 2011. It is important this growth is delivered alongside new housing and the provision of appropriate*

infrastructure to help make the area more self-contained and to achieve a sustainable pattern of development?.

The Local Plan is proposing 1400 homes, split between two locations, in the immediate vicinity of the Harwell Oxford Campus. Whilst it is true that these locations would be within easy walking/cycling distance of the Campus and thus in many ways would be ideal for employees at the Campus, there is a fundamental flaw in the argument: namely that it presupposes that employees will be able to occupy the new homes. There are only two ways that can happen, either the Campus employers take a substantial financial stake in the new homes (and there is no evidence that any are keen to take this route), or the developers agree to covenants restricting sales to Campus employees (unlikely) or the homes are offered at substantial discounts to Campus employees.

Most employees at the Harwell Oxford Campus are employed by the Government on increasingly below-market salaries, with a surprising fraction receiving State benefits. It is difficult to envisage developers being prepared to 'gift' away enough of their profit margin in discounts for the utopia envisaged by the Local Plan to become a reality. The far more likely scenario is that the vast majority of the proposed homes would be sold on the open market.

The Harwell Oxford Campus has a Campus Masterplan for its future development, but that is a 50 year vision. The Local Plan is thus disingenuous when using employment growth at the Campus as an argument for large-scale housing development on its doorstep within the next 17 years.

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.

To make the Local Plan sound, legally compliant, and protect the North Wessex Downs AONB it is necessary to moderate threats to the tranquillity and character of the AONB from large-scale housing developments leading to increased traffic (and its associated air, noise and light pollution).

This could be achieved by reallocating all housing proposed in the vicinity of the Harwell Oxford Campus (1000 homes) except that wholly contained within the perimeter of the Campus (400 homes) to other sites in the Vale of White Horse outside of the AONB (of which sites for 2490 homes have already been identified), or by reducing the SHMA for the Vale of White Horse district by 1000 homes.

The 400 homes proposed within the perimeter of the Harwell Oxford Campus should be controlled by the Campus management so that they can meet the needs of employees and long-term visitors.

Any further housing expansion in the vicinity of the Campus must be clearly linked to associated economic development.

The North Wessex Downs AONB should also be entirely removed from the Science Vale 'Ringfence' in order to protect it from future speculative development.

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