

Comment

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Please provide us with your comments

Core Policies 12 and 13: In 2011, we commented to the Council in respect of its proposals to be incorporated in the then Core Strategy being prepared by the Council. We received a reply dated 4 October 2011 in which the principle of the development was accepted by the Council's officers given the current uses and the adopted local plan designations. In particular, we drew attention to the existing strategic employment allocations of land at premises around Didcot Power Station (shown on Page 163 of the draft Local Plan 2029). We indicated that since the allocation of the land a further planning permission had been granted for additional employment development adjacent to Sutton Courtenay Lane, and sought the allocation of a broader area for employment purposes. Since that time, we have entered into discussions with the Council's officers in respect of the development of the land, so far with positive results with a view to the submission of a planning application in the near future. As noted above, the discussions have been positive and favourable, including the acceptance in principle set out in the Council's letter of 4 October 2011. Whilst the draft Local Plan seeks to take a positive approach in respect of the provision of employment land and economic growth, it is unclear from the plans included or the text of the policies whether the land identified and discussed with the Council is included: the only clarity appears to be the current allocation of part of the land. Figure 5.4 shows the

South East Area Vale Sub Area. It shows a number of sites with a purple notation which is not included in the key. It is unclear from the Figure whether the land to which these comments relate is included in the reference to Milton Park, whilst no reference is made to Didcot Power Station or the land adjacent to it. In relation to the identification of Strategic Employment Sites, a number of areas are noted as being included. However, whilst there is reference to the "Existing Business Premises around Didcot Power Station" the words in parenthesis "not including vacant surplus land" are included, albeit there is no explanation of this and no indication as to what areas the comment relates. The comment is at odds with other land for which provision for employment development is made. Whilst there is reference to the potential for some 58 ha. of land to be provided for employment development at Didcot A Power Station, there is no indication as to what areas are included. Paragraph 5.62 makes clear that the employment land review indicated a potential mix of employment at Didcot A including some 10 ha of 88 uses. Core Policy 13 relates to Didcot A Power Station, which is identified broadly on a small scale plan but that broad identification does not appear to include the site the subject of this response. There is clearly a need for additional 88 provision, as set out in the employment land review, and the objection site is a suitable one to accommodate at least part of it, bearing in mind the existing allocation, the extant planning permission and the Council's expressed views in October 2011 and since. There is no justification for the exclusion of the site from the identification of strategic employment land and no justification for the exclusion of some of the land, if the reference to "vacant surplus land" is intended to relate to it. Given the existing allocation of part of the land as a strategic employment allocation in the adopted local plan, the grant of planning permission on other parts of the land and the lack of planning justification for the exclusion of the other land (and the positive preapplication response from the Council's officers to the inclusion of all of the land) the site should be included as a whole as a strategic employment allocation. The exclusion from the policies is not justified, and the draft Plan has not been positively prepared in respect of the land as it has not been objectively assessed. The exclusion of the site, to which there are no reasonable planning objections given the allocation of adjacent land and the need for employment development of a large scale, would be contrary to national planning policies: the development would be sustainable and would be effective in delivering employment and economic benefits to the District

If you are objecting, please tell us how your objections can be overcome.

Core Policies 12 and/or 13 should be amended to include the whole of the site as a strategic employment site.

Stage of comment approval

Officer initial draft