
EAST HANNEY

A view from local residents immediate to the strategic site

December 2014

Ref: CP4 Spatial Abingdon on Thames and Oxford Fringe sub Area
Proposed Strategic Site to South of East Hanney

The strategic plan published by The Vale has proposed a site to the south of East Hanney, this is a new site and not subject to prior consultation.

As a consequence there has not been an appropriate consideration of public opinion relevant to the current proposal. The proposal does not therefore take into account any consideration of the wishes of the resident community, or an understanding of the issues arising from development of the site, which we as local residents understand, is an obligation of The Vale.

Previously, the site proposed was to the east of East Hanney and this was the subject of an open public meeting and consultation. The outcome from this meeting was that there was little public opinion against the area proposed, the area to the East being agricultural land with good access to both the A338, and the Steventon Road. There are also existing footpaths through the village from the East to the school and the heart of the village.

The VOWH report in their Local Plan 2031 said the “land east of East Hanney we replaced with an alternative site to the south of East Hanney better connected to the village and also preferred by the community.” We are angry as it is incorrect to say it is better connected and a complete fabrication by The Vale that the South is preferred by us because no consultation was undertaken in order to ascertain our opinion.

As part of this response we want to highlight to The Vale and the Inspector the significant impact which a development of the land to the south of East Hanney would have compared to that which would have been the case with the East.

There are issues in a number of areas from the new proposal these include:

- * The Vale’s assessment on sustainability
- * Conflict with the national guidance of the NPPF
- * Loss of important ecological habitats
- * Risk of flooding to the existing settlement
- * Impact on the conservation areas and the village’s identity

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- * Direct and adverse impact on our properties as the site proposed is immediate to our homes and an existing Local Wildlife Site.
 - * Increase in traffic and mobility issues; within, and turning in and out of the village

This reflects a large group of residents who support this response, their views being reflected because of the immediacy of the site to their homes, and the direct impact that any development will have on their lives.

This view also reflects the general view of the community as evidenced by the ballot organised by the Parish Council which was overwhelmingly opposed to the new plan to develop the site to the south of East Hanney.

The site to the East by comparison was non contentious and did not impact immediately on any existing residents. We do not know why The Vale has switched sites without consultation, and cannot see how the South can be promoted above that of the East where there are known to be far fewer issues. There are significant complications that the site to the South attracts combined with the loss of our heritage.

You will have received the Parish Council response which is a genuine response from the whole community which we support. This document is intended to give you an insight to the concerns of the residents who are immediate to the development and whose lives would be seriously impacted.

We believe The Vale's plan to build on the southern site is illogical, uninformed and misinformed

This Response

This is an independent response from residents of East Hanney who wish to demonstrate that The Vale's plan to develop to the south of East Hanney is flawed, unjustified, unsustainable and does not show a robust assessment of the new site. We wish to evidence that their original and "preferred" site to the East has the least impact on flooding, biodiversity and is the most sustainable option.

We are absolutely opposed to the development of the current proposed site in East Hanney

The following photographs show Brookside in flood, and not in flood, as well as the main road to the school.



Flooding

We are assessed to have a 1 in 100 chance of flooding, we have had four in the last ten years.

A majority of village of East Hanney is between 62 and 64 metres above sea level, Letcombe Brook is 63.65 metres as it enters the village. There does not have to be too much of an increase in the level of the brook before the village begins to flood.

To the south of the village and to the west of the brook excess water populates the fields reducing the volumes through the village. It is this area that holds the water, as seen below, which if built over will have an impact on the village downstream from run-off alone.

It is this landscape, which for as far back as records go has acted as a protection to the village, and is therefore susceptible to flooding and must have been influential in The Vale's initial assessment saying part of this area is undeliverable.



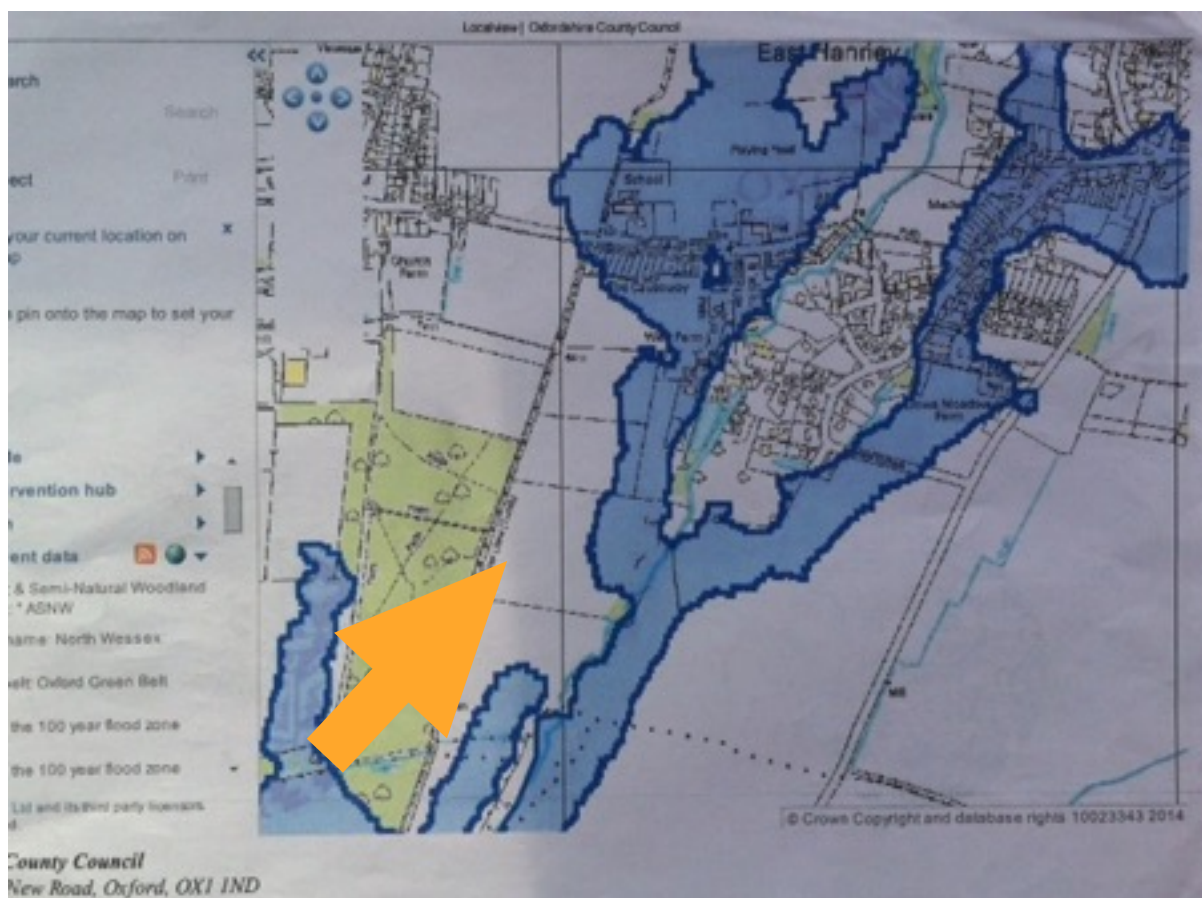
24th December 2013

Photograph showing the ground water in the distinctive ridge and furrow pattern. All livestock were removed but the village did not flood, only the gardens of the most southerly properties



Two further photographs taken that day showing the ridge and furrow patterns taking flood water away from the village.

Severe flooding to the village was averted and the centuries old defences did their job, it is these defences on which The Vale propose to build over.



Oxfordshire County Council map 2013 showing natural flow of flood water in East Hanney that forks to the South over the proposed development area and so reducing flow into the village.

The following is an account by residents of East Hanney and their flooding experience

THE 2007 FLOOD

On the afternoon of the flood I walked down to the Dandridge Mill and met a neighbour who lives close to the southern site. She had, accidentally, locked herself out of her cottage and her husband who was wheelchair bound was inside. At this time the flood water was quite high and had already flooded her garden . I climbed into the kitchen window and let her in. By this time the water had entered the cottage and was just entering the lounge. We managed to get her husband out of his chair and into the wheelchair. When I opened the front door flood water was gushing forcefully down the lane. I went out to get help because I was not strong enough to control the wheel chair with the gushing water . Fortunately, I found another neighbour who helped me get them both out of the house and another neighbour took them in. It took nearly four years for their cottage to be habitable again, by which time he had died.

I then went over to Weir Farm because I knew the owner was away. The horses were in their stables and the water was up to their stomachs. I haltered each one and walked them individually out of the stable yard onto higher ground.

Gill Panton

and

Ron Watkins

“I can confirm that I have lived in East Hanney for 80 years and have lived in five different houses in the village. I know the land to the South and what it was, and is used for, it stops the village from having far more flooding than it does. To build on that land, and especially the old orchard is madness, whoever is responsible for allowing building on that land will put everyone at risk and will destroy the most important wildlife site we have.”

As you have read we are a real village, there is no desktop analysis and office bound assessment, it's a true account and a real tragedy. The village is in fear of further flooding, our homes and the vulnerable members of our community are at risk.

The Vale's own consultants JBA Consulting said in their 2013 assessment “The AStGWF map suggests **that all East Hanney is at the highest risk of groundwater emergence**. No incidents of groundwater flooding recorded by the Environment Agency.”

The EA may not have any recorded but we the community do.

Biodiversity

Letcombe Brook is a rare chalk stream one of only 200 in the world, it is a BAP Priority Habitat.

The Traditional Orchard is BAP Priority Habitat Site reference OXON 0694

The current proposal is build over one priority habitat and up to another.

WHY?

The site to the East does not have the same aggregation of priority habitats, and will not interfere with protection required for up to twenty red listed species.

This is what people say who have assessed the site

Dudley Iles B.Sc. M.Inst. Biol, Dip Ed *“The plan of building 200 houses or more to the south of the existing village would threaten much of this environment the stream and the immediate surroundings would be destroyed”*

Sally Wallington, Letcombe Brook Project *“This site should be disregarded due to the important biodiversity interest and ecological assets on site. There other sites such as the eastern site (opposite La Fontana) that would be less damaging on the environment.”*

PTES *“Traditional orchards such as this have been classified as Priority Habitats under Section 41 (S 41) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006). The inclusion of such an important and long established habitat parcel in the Local Plan ignores guidance in not only the NERC Act, but also the National Planning Policy Framework, the Habitats Directive, Oxfordshire County Council’s own Biodiversity and Planning in Oxfordshire guidance, and even closer to home, the White Horse Vale Mission Statement, quoted above.*

It would appear that the department responsible for this proposal have failed to take biodiversity, cultural heritage, a community asset and the region’s landscape into account in this instance. An oversight of such obvious gravity will inevitably lead to delays and local objections so it is always beneficial to avoid such complications from the outset rather than engender public resistance and invite greater scrutiny and criticism of the Local Plan.

In addition to the obvious cultural heritage considerations, the traditional orchard habitat is important for thousands of species of wildlife. Biodiversity loss is a serious consequence of many factors of modern life including countryside fragmentation and industrialised farming methods, so where further loss and damage can be avoided, it should be actively pursued.

In addition to the orchard in this case is the brook running alongside. Loss or degradation of riparian habitat and disturbance will be detrimental to water voles (a ‘priority’ species). Foraging patterns of bat species along the brook may be disrupted by light pollution (Daubentons, soprano pipistrelle and brown long-eared feed over water, and the last two are ‘priority’ species).

Loss of arable habitat may be detrimental to harvest mice and brown hare (both 'priority' species)."

And those that haven't assessed the site say

VOWH Core Policy 46 *Development likely to result in the loss, deterioration or harm to habitats or species of importance to biodiversity or of importance for geological conservation interests, either directly or indirectly, will not be permitted unless:*

i. the need for, and benefits of, the development in the proposed location outweighs the adverse, effect on the relevant biodiversity interest;

ii. it can be demonstrated that it could not reasonably be located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm to the biodiversity interests;

The Vale could revert to the East and that development could be reasonably located as their assessments show.

DEFRA Biodiversity 2020 Strategy

The mission for this strategy is "*to halt the overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks*"

The proposed location to the south of East Hanney alongside a chalk stream and covering a traditional orchard and will destroy the natural habitat of protected species of this rare biodiversity.

The strategy also states "*we need to reduce direct pressures on our biodiversity*"

There is nothing more direct than this proposal that proposes to develop in this area

The strategy also states "*We will protect water ecosystems, including habitats and species*"

Building near one of the world's rarest water courses is not protecting but endangering habitats and species.

Priority action of the strategy is to "*establish more coherent and resilient ecological networks*" by joining up "*existing areas of priority habitat, increasing the opportunity for wildlife to move around the landscape*"

Directly opposite, the proposed site and over the chalk stream is an existing Local Wildlife Site these can be joined and thus adhere to DEFRA's priority action.

Pet Predation

An often overlooked consequence of development, next to either a LWS or rare biodiversity assets, is that of the pets people have.

The Pet Food Manufacturers' Association 2013 report says that 19% of all UK households have at least one cat.

The Mammal Society's five month research assessed that

"4. Based on the proportion of cats bringing home at least one prey item and the back-transformed means, a British population of approximately 9 million cats was estimated to have brought home in the order of 92 (85-100) million prey items in the period of this survey, including 57 (52-63) million mammals, 27 (25-29) million birds and 5 (4-6) million reptiles and amphibians."

200 homes are being proposed to be built alongside a LWS and a protected Chalk Stream, so it is a reasonable assumption that 40 new cats will be in this sensitive area at the cost of 1700 mammals and birds in the first year. The Mammal Society's research showed that protected species such as bats, owls, water voles and protected birds are represented in a cat's prey.

This rare biodiversity we have in this area of East Hanney is under threat and a reversion to the East would stop this threat

The Wildlife in East Hanney

Both Letcombe Brook and the traditional orchard are home for up to 20 red listed species. For example recently evidenced

Birds. *Lapwing, Turtle Dove, Cuckoo, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Skylark, Starlings, Fieldfare, Curlew, Snipe, Little Grebe, five species of owl*

Mammals. *Water Vole, Hares, Otters, there are also known to be four species of bat*

At least four varieties of *Wax Capped Fungi* together with *Lady Smocks, Bee and Pyramid Orchids, Cowslips*

We have a full list available of the more notable species that have been identified if required, and is detailed in the Parish Council response.

It is, in our opinion that the effects on the ecology and biodiversity are considerable, it is illogical, misinformed and uninformed to build in the South rather than the East.

Sustainability

Development on the Southern site is not a sustainable option as there are insufficient pathways to the village, the roads are too narrow and access to the village will be by car via the A338 so increasing traffic and pollution in the village. The Eastern site has sufficient pathways to the village and already in place is pedestrian access to the school, village hall, recreational facilities, pub and restaurant opposite. Please note that East Hanney does not have any commercial convenience stores, GP surgery or dentist.

The original assessment of the East highlighted the fact that the A338 had to be crossed. That is still true but, the development in Grove and Wantage assessed the need for traffic lights at the main junction of the A338, the village and the Steventon Road, these are being installed at the cost of that developer. Please also note the inadequacy of the roads to accommodate any increase in traffic that would arise from the South site that would exit onto the A338 and then have to negotiate three 90 degree, blind bends, to access the centre of the village.



Blind bend at green arrow



Blind bend at Blue arrow



The orange arrow is the bridge over Letcombe Brook which is another congestion point and 90 degree bend.

Water Supply and Sewerage

Thames Water made it clear to the Vale that the current sewage treatment works at Wantage is close to capacity, and that any modelling for all the developments will not take place until spring 2015.

We are very concerned about the volume of treated water that will be entering Letcombe Brook, our estimations based on average waste water per person per household and the number of houses to be built downstream of East Hanney (419,000,000 litres per year see the Parish Council document) is going to severely increase the risk to our village.

Our concern is that the proposed development to the South then robs the village of it's defence system when there surely is an increased risk of flooding.



Picture showing pressure build up in Main Street with untreated waste water entering the street.

We suffer regularly from the sewage treatment plant not being able to cope as water levels rise. In 2007, 2010 and most recently in December 2013 waste water backed up and the man hole covers were raised by the pressure.

Building in the South is therefore illogical and unsustainable.

Could this be the only reason why the location changed?

02044 South and Vale District Councils - Local Plan 2031 Housing Delivery Update - Figure 4.16: Proposed allocation East of East Hanney

Are you:
Supporting

Please provide us with your comments:
Re: Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Housing Delivery Update

Submission of land to the West of the A338 at East Hanney

I am writing by way of formal response to the Consultation Draft Local Plan 2031 Housing Delivery Update in support of a housing allocation on land to the West of the A338 at East Hanney.

As the owner of this land I wish to make the Vale aware that it is wholly available for development. I note the draft allocation of 200 houses on the land to the south of the Hanney Road and I do not object to that but feel that my land is equally and perhaps more sustainable in planning terms.

My land is on the same side as the village and would enable easy access, by any future residents to the Primary School and village facilities. I also own sufficient land to enable a footpath to be created between the village and Gove Railway Station should that ever be reopened, which would of course be a major benefit for all.

I can confirm that the land is shown edged black on the attached plan, it does not flood and there are no reasons why it could not come forward for development in the short term to deal with the Councils Housing Land Supply problem.

Would you like to help us review how we consult?
No

Comment ID: ADDON2111
Response Date: 11/04/14 14:50

[View consultation point](#)
Figure 4.16: Proposed allocation East of East Hanney ;

Messrs J, A & D Cottrell (ID: 831616) PDF

<https://consult.southandvalerail.gov.uk/portal/teleplanning/poll/1/app/1-additional/addon/points/ID=2756456-FIGURE-4.16-PROPOSED-ALLOCATION-EAST-OF-EAST-HANNEY&donview> 4/24

This is a submission to The Vale, dated 11/04/14, after the only consultation that ever took place regarding East Hanney and appears to be the only source of responses promoting the land that is currently proposed. Has the Vale been drawn into negotiations as a result of this which has derailed the original process and led to the revised proposal, which in the cold light of day carries a number of significant difficulties compared to the original site?

The following comments are interesting

Para 3 “My land is on the same side as the village and would enable easy access.”

The recent larger, and current, developments totalling over 50 houses have taken place on the Eastern side of the village, so any further development would be a natural progression looking into the village. Development to the South could not be integrated into the village successfully because of the number of constraints so it is illogical and unsustainable.

cont'd

As the photographs in the sustainability section shows, it would not be easy access. The EA had confirmed that they will not culvert the stream that runs alongside Summertown because of flooding, and the road is too small and dangerous for pedestrians, especially with push chairs.

Para 3 “I own sufficient land to enable a footpath between the village and Gove (Grove) Railway Station should that ever be reopened”

The new proposed development in the South in that case would have better connection to a village three miles away than the village it is supposed to integrate with. As regards the railway station; that is highly speculative and not in the gift of The Vale or OCC and so should be disregarded.

Para 4 “I can confirm.....that it does not flood”

That is in complete contradiction to the OCC map shown above, and local knowledge.

Density and sympathy with the existing village

Developers try to extract maximum value from their sites.

The proposed area to the South is next to a conservation area and there are a number of listed buildings close by, and as earlier stated is classified as part undeliverable.

Several properties that adjoin the orchard are bungalows, how is any development going to compliment this? The current trend of new developments in The Vale is high roofed, high angle, roof lines completely contrary, and out of keeping with the surrounding properties.

The original site to the east again holds none of these constraints or hinderances

**All we ask is not to build in the
current proposed location but revert
to the East
The Vale's original preferred site.**