

## Comment

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Comment by	Dair and Vicki Farrar-Hockley
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**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.**

### POLICY 6 MEETING BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

The policy is unsound because it does not provide sufficient focus on redeveloping existing employment sites in Towns, and at Didcot Power Station, before sites in the rural area and AONB, e.g. at Harwell Campus.

The incentive of lower business rates for new companies coming to the Enterprise Zone ends in March 2015, so there is no certainty that these incentives will any longer apply.

This objection supports the Highway Agency objection in 2009 which sought redevelopment to create Class B Business jobs in the Towns, to mitigate the adverse affect on the road network of jobs in the countryside.

The Science Vale UK Study justifies the proposed 2% p.a. growth in jobs in the Vale,(24,000 new jobs), as also being achieved at Milton Keynes, the fastest growing town in the South East Region.

However, this growth rate was only achieved over a 40 year period since 1970, based on Structure Plan policies to divert development away from the rest of Bucks and Beds County areas to a Sub-Regional Capital.

The current Milton Keynes Core Strategy reduces new housing from 52,000 dwellings in the South East Plan to 28,000 dwellings, on the grounds that any increase in new housing or jobs above the rate in 201-11

was unrealistic. There are significant differences between Milton Keynes (250,000 pop.) and the Vale.

The preferred employment forecasts estimate that two thirds of new jobs will be in finance and business. However, with the exception of Milton Park, neither Didcot, Harwell Campus or Wantage is an

established centre for finance and business, so it is more likely that new jobs in this sector will be attracted to Oxford, Reading, Swindon, Newbury or London, than the rural area of the Vale.

Clarification is sought on how the forecast growth in home-working, arising from the growth of self-employed, is likely to effect the demand for new jobs requiring new employment land.

The Economic Forecasting to inform the Oxfordshire SHMAA Table 6.2 also showed that there would be a significant surplus of site capacity of 7,000 jobs on employment land,

above the forecast growth in jobs on employment in Oxford City.

Oxford would be a much more sustainable location than the Vale, where development is constrained by Green Belt, AONB, and rural areas comprising mainly villages of less than 500 dwellings, e.g. East Hendred.

The proposed amendment is for the plan to allocate sufficient land for 11,000 jobs, instead of 24,000 jobs, for which there is unlikely to be a need for new employment allocations.

The proposed 219 hectares of employment land is similar to total existing employment land in Milton Keynes, which is forecast to provide up to 40,000 new jobs, so its implementation is likely to be unrealistic.

Rural Districts with similar characteristics to the Vale, such as Green Belt, AONB, and adjoining a City constrained by Green Belt, like South Oxfordshire and Tewkesbury (which is meeting housing needs which cannot be met in Gloucester/Cheltenham, and also attracted 5,000 jobs (201-11), propose 13 hectares of employment land (S.O.D.C.) and 35 hectares (Tewkesbury where 10,000 new dwellings are proposed).

The Oxford Growth Board estimated that the Enterprise Zone would attract 8,000 jobs by 2015 on 2 million sq.ft of business development. It was unrealistic.

It estimated that 70 hectares of new employment land was needed (2010-15), 24 hectares (2015-20), and 100 hectares (2020-30). This is the first opportunity to challenge these forecasts at a public inquiry.

At Harwell Campus the number of jobs has grown from 4,000 in 2006 to just 4,500 jobs 2001-11, against an estimated growth of 4,500 jobs in the current Local Plan 2011, and repeated in the Local Plan 2031.

The growth at Milton Park 2001-11 is now estimated to be limited to just 1,600 jobs, whilst at Culham the European JET project is transferring to France, leaving to a fall in employment.

Clarification is sought on what allowance has been made for existing businesses leaving Harwell Campus due to redevelopment or other reasons, making the net increase appreciably lower.

The net increase described in the background evidence only refers to businesses transferring into the Enterprise Zone from elsewhere within the surrounding area.