

14.12.14

Vale of White Horse District Council

Dear Sirs

Objection to draft Local Plan Part One 2031

I wish to object to the above plan because it is unsound. It is the Vale's responsibility to preserve both the suburban character of Botley and the Vale's rural character for future generations.

Botley

The community is thrilled that the Planning Committee all voted against Doric's grandiose but ugly and totally unsuitable plans. Botley should remain a local service centre serving the community: it is not suitable as a leisure destination. Above all Elms Parade should be retained as it is totally in keeping with the housing opposite, stands well back from the road creating space for convenient short-term parking and is, furthermore, a non-designated heritage asset. May one hope that the Vale will reassure the vulnerable Field House residents that Miss Field's bequest will not be included in the Local Plan? Clearly the Vicarage should remain by the church. That still leaves a considerable site for development, hopefully on one level as at present.

The Green Belt

The National Planning Policy Framework states that a Green Belt boundary may be altered only in "exceptional circumstances" Nick Boles' letter to the Chief Executive of the Planning Inspectorate of 6 March 2014 states that "we would maintain key protections for the countryside and, in particular, for the Green Belt....Unmet housing need... is unlikely to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt", Why then remove five Green Belt sites protecting Cumnor, that is Land Parcels nos 3, 4, 5, 6 and 24 in the village, and a further three in the Parish? It is not legitimate to remove parcels from the Green Belt without first setting out your intentions, and once removed, developers will persist in trying to build on them, ruining a historic village in a beautiful landscape. These five Cumnor parcels include a football field and a cricket club. Should these parcels be removed from the Green Belt, there would be no land available for playing fields, even though the Government is concerned that the population needs more sports facilities.

Tiny Sunningwell would certainly be destroyed were the suggested 240 houses built there, with an additional 800 houses proposed somewhere vaguely between Sunningwell and Radley.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment is unsound, being based on very high forecasts of housing need in this controversial and much criticised document. How is it that this Assessment would add an additional 20,000 houses, more than 2 ½ times the Government's household projections? No consideration has been given to the environmental and social constraints. In any event, the necessary infrastructure could not be built in time. And where will the 23,000 new jobs come from?

For all these reasons, I find the proposed Local Plan unsound.

Joyce Encer

