

Comment

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Event Name	Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part One - Publication
Comment by	Mrs Karen Bradshaw
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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. South of East Hanney

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? No

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.

Local Plan 2031 Part 1, Sustainability Assessment, Part 3, Findings and Recommendations

Flawed Process

I am responding to the above proposal to build a large new housing development on land south of East Hanney and would comment that the process to date has been flawed and lacking in transparency.

At a first public meeting to discuss proposals for a development of 200 houses on land to the east of East Hanney (I refer to *Local Plan 2031 Part 1, Consultation Statement, East of East Hanney*) a number of objections were raised, however no mention was given at the time to alternative proposals for a similar number of houses to be built on land to the south of the village. It is therefore not correct to record in *Local Plan 2031 Part 1, Sustainability Assessment, Part 3, Findings and Recommendations* that the land to the south was an "alternative site promoted through the consultation" (Point 243). Only through reading subsequent documentation have residents now begun to understand the full extent of plans for one or more housing developments adjacent to the village.

Potential for Flooding

The newly identified site would be significantly at risk of flooding, as it lies adjacent to the Letcombe Brook and would be on green field land, which presently absorbs excess water. The village, with its high water table, has suffered over recent years from significant flooding without the introduction of additional developments in Hanney and further afield to the south around Grove and Wantage. As a result of the onset of serious episodes of flooding in 2007, a volunteer group has been relied upon to clear ditches in and around the village on a regular basis. Past failures to recognise the potential for flooding together with increasingly unpredictable weather patterns have necessitated the creation of such self-help measures, which no doubt go unnoticed by the wider community. The plan finds development will have a "neutral effect" on the existing village and estimates there will be a "small area of flood risk." I do not believe the plan takes "full account of flood risk", which is a criteria identified in *the National Planning Policy Framework* when considering any new build.

Village services

Local Plan 2031 Part 1, Sustainability Assessment, Part 3, Findings and Recommendations refers to East Hanney having "a range of services and facilities". Reference is specifically made to "shops", which is inaccurate as East Hanney has one small volunteer-run shop, much valued by residents, but not large enough to sustain the needs of a large population. East Hanney does have a sub-Post Office, a range of clubs and sporting facilities, but little in the way of employment opportunities and day to day service providers, including a secondary school, medical and dental facilities. St James C of E Primary School is small and well-subscribed. Plans are under discussion to add three classrooms to accommodate new children in the village, however this does not address the problem of additional dining and toilet facilities. The school hall is currently reported to be at full capacity and other negative outcomes of expanding the number of classrooms could be the loss of the school's historic character and the diminution of the sports field. If the school is not able to cope and services are not sufficient in the village, residents of a new housing development will need to travel to meet their everyday needs.

Sustainable Transport Links

Local Plan 2031 Part 1, Sustainability Assessment, Part 3, Findings and Recommendations designates the promotion of sustainable transport as a "minor positive", which will "reduce the need to travel" because of "good access to shops and services". The reality, however, is a different matter. Access to local bus services is an obvious advantage for residents of East Hanney, however most households will, as they do now, need to rely on cars to access employment and vital services. Increasingly, the volume of traffic on the A338 is becoming unsustainable, particularly at peak commuter periods.

The junction of the A338 with the A415 at Frilford, is a case in point, leading to major tailbacks each morning. Any additional road works or traffic incidents can delay journeys significantly. Residents of a large development will clearly add to the congestion on the roads and contribute to the ever-increasing air pollution and erosion of road surfaces.

Access to the Village and Safety Issues

Local Plan 2031 Part 1, Sustainability Assessment, Part 3, Findings and Recommendations reflects "a reduced need to travel and good access to shops and services" as a "minor positive" consideration. *Local Plan 2031 Part 1, Appendix A Site Development Templates South of East Hanney* refers to access being proposed from the A338 however the natural outcome of this will be to force people into their cars even if they wish to make their way to the heart of the village as there will not be easy pedestrian access under these terms. If pedestrian access were to be a consideration, this would

raise issues of safety because alternative potential links to the village are likely to be at the very point where there are dangerous corners and no pavements. The narrowness of the roads and proximity of existing housing will not allow for pavements to be mitigated, whilst buses which provide a bus service through East Hanney barely manage to negotiate the corners and oncoming vehicles on a daily basis.

The Natural Environment, Cultural Heritage and Character of the Village

The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning for new developments should "take account of the different roles and character of different areas protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside". The proposed site to the south of East Hanney is a green field site playing host to a wealth of flora, fauna and ancient orchard, whilst the eye line from the southern boundary of the village provides an unspoilt view of the Downs by day. By night, East Hanney is essentially unlit, therefore the addition of street lighting for a new housing development will not relate successfully to the existing village. The plan is correct in this instance to recognise the potentially negative effect of building on an "important wildlife corridor" to the south of East Hanney.

In summary, there are many reasons why the proposed build to the south of East Hanney will "not relate more successfully to the existing village" than the original proposition to the east. It remains unsubstantiated why any development of the size intended is absolutely necessary in a rural area where employment is not readily on the doorstep and services are a reasonable distance away. Clearly, in a bid to fall in line with government quotas the whole planning process is ruining the Oxfordshire countryside and appears lacking in transparency, clear detail and joined-up thinking.

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.

There are no options that will make this plan sound.

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