

## Comment

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| Consultee  | Mr Matthew Pryor (872798)                                    |
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| Event Name   | Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part One - Publication   |
| Comment by   | Mr Matthew Pryor   |
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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.  | North of Harwell Campus (East Hendred and Harwell Parishes)  |
| 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.**

Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that "*Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape*

*and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight" .*

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that *"Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that they are in the public interest"*.

In the VOWH DC wanting to build an additional 150 houses within green-field land, which lies fully within the North Wessex Downs AONB - the North Harwell Campus site - it is not legally compliant with the above paragraphs included in the NPPF. Not only that, the habitat of the abundance of birds, deer and other wild mammals that live in the area will be severely disrupted.

The employment numbers used in the Local Plan are inconsistent and should not be used to phase housing delivery. It is highly unlikely, as the VOWH DC suggests, that future residents at the site will work at the Harwell Science Campus and is not sound justification to build a vast amount of homes adjacent to the Science Campus.

It is appalling that such housing should be considered in a heavily protected AONB when all developments from the Oxford Green Belt - which holds lesser legal protection - have been removed. Oxford is the most expensive city to live in the UK - including London - when taking wage earnings and housing costs ratios. Last financial year not one affordable house was built in Oxford or its surrounding green belt. Truly appalling.

**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.**

Due to the non-legalities of VOWH DC proposal for the North Harwell campus the additional 150 houses should be completely withdrawn, and should be relocated to either of the following:

- 1 The Valley Park site, which has already been assessed as having capacity for an additional 1600 homes.
- 2 The Didcot A site, which has capacity for 425 houses.
- 3 Land west of Stevenson, which has capacity for 350 houses.
- 4 Distributed throughout the rest of the Vale in order to encourage and support economic growth and prosperity more equally throughout the district.

I have no issues with providing up to 400 new homes in the North West Harwell Campus, provided that all development is contained within the perimeter of the Harwell Science Campus, i.e. brown-field areas.