

Comment

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Comment by	Greenlight Developments Greenlight Developments
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Files	APPENDIX 1 (Greenlight Developments).pdf
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

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.

The Council is proposing to adopt a 'ring-fence' approach to housing supply, which it says will help ensure that jobs, homes and infrastructure are provided together. The aim of this approach is said to be to support the delivery of the Local Plan Spatial Strategy to focus on development in Science Vale.

It is important to consider this in a robust fashion, so as to reduce to a minimum the risk of underdelivery. The approach being taken with the creation of a 'ring-fence' area for Science Vale, means that for the purposes of Paragraph 47 the Council can rely upon a reduced housing target figure ('policy-on') below the OAHN (objectively assessed housing need) for the remainder of the District (the area outside of the Science Vale). A large proportion of the Council's need (OAHN) is then contained within the 'ring-fence' area for Science Vale (on a 'policy-on' basis), which according to our interpretation of the wording contained within Core Policy 5 will have its own separate five-year housing land supply calculation. There is no specific reference in the actual policy as to whether or not the apportionments are non-transferable between the 'ring-fence' area for Science Vale and the rest of the District. The consequences of an approach that the apportionments are non-transferable is that the 'ring-fence' area has the potential to become somewhat of an 'abyss', where the Council can shift its housing need. Any non-delivery in that 'abyss' is then sealed, in the sense that the Council can disregard it when applying Paragraph 47 of the NPPF.

This approach is concerning, and becomes even more concerning if/when the 'ring-fence' area for Science Vale fails to deliver/perform to the required housing trajectories. This would mean that the OAHN for the District is not being delivered, but there is no mechanism for delivering this housing by alternative means, particularly if the policy approach in the Local Plan is that the apportionments are non-transferable between the 'ring-fence' area and the rest of the District. The net result is that this housing need is stuck in the 'ring-fence' area with no obligation on the Council to accommodate for any failure to maintain a five-year housing land supply in the District as a whole.

Such an approach clearly goes against one of the underlying aims of the NPPF under Paragraph 47 of significantly boosting the supply of housing, and by identifying and updating annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against a District's housing requirement with the appropriate additional buffer of 5% or 20%, whichever is applicable.

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.

The Council's approach is considered to be contrary to National policy. The Vale of White Horses' housing need has to be calculated as one five-year housing land supply calculation. It cannot be artificially divided up to suit. On this basis the emerging Local Plan is unsound.

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? Yes - I wish to participate at the oral examination

Please note the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the oral part of the examination.

Q7 If you wish to participate at the oral part of the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

The nature of our representations is strategic and has key implications.