

I wish to register my support for the Parish Council of East Hendred's views, which include some of my own from their consultation. In addition, I have attempted to fill in your form which is attached.

In particular, there appears to be no evidence that the sub areas have correctly interpreted National Government planning data or prepared their plans in conjunction with each other. As a consequence, the employment levels seem unlikely to be reached and the residential areas are not located in the most effective places - the larger agglomerations such as Wantage/Grove and Didcot for the Science Vale. Inadequate funding has been provided to take the traffic off the road and to e.g. substitute train journeys from a new Wantage/Grove station to Didcot and Milton Park or to provide frequent buses (as was the requirement for office developments near Newbury).

Nor have the planners taken all information into account. National Government plans state that financial and administrative jobs are the most likely growth area. Yet, the plans assumes that it will be "high tech" growth in the Science Vale. The first group (financial and administrative jobs) have very different needs and tend to be better paid and thus can afford different houses. They are also more likely to cluster in Oxford and Abingdon. Secondly, successful companies, have tended to move from R&D to exploitation of their discoveries, requiring different staff and different locations to be close to their markets. Thus rather than assuming that all jobs, once created will continue to exist, the planners should have introduced the concept of "net new jobs", which allows for some companies failing and other being successful and moving away.

In the way of planners, there is an assumption that their plans will come to pass. For instance, there is a policy to build near work places. This has not been carried through in the planning detail as the housing is designated before the jobs will arrive. To avoid this, it would be much more effective to designate sites on the basis of prioritisation, based on the number of net new jobs created. Failing to do that will generate housing dormitories for commuters to Oxford, Abingdon, Reading and London because of the availability of easy transport links to those areas and this will be in violation of their own policy.

The consequence would be that housing stock would not go to locals or to those working locally as the jobs would be arriving later and would, for the main part, not provide sufficient income to support their purchase.

Too much emphasis is placed on "larger villages" . There is no such definition in law and their arbitrary designation is not sufficient to support adding several thousand houses identified in another part of the plan to existing communities of 450 houses.

Housing should be proportionate to the size of local centres so that it does not overwhelm some areas. Thus Wantage/Grove and Didcot should be the first priority for new houses for local net new jobs. Had the sub areas worked together this would have changed the plan. Faringdon might be a better place to develop houses as it is a difficult commute to London but could provide housing for Abingdon and Oxford as well as some to the Science Vale.

Only when a very significant number of net new jobs have been created should new areas be opened up for development.

Generally building on AOBN should be avoided absolutely.

There are some brownfield sites including Grove Airfield and Didcot power station. They should be first priority. After that the Harwell brown field site could be addressed. No extension into AOBN should be allowed. Greenfield sites such as Rowstock have no community centre, would destroy local food producing (and selling) land and become dormitories. Because of easy access by commuters to Didcot station and to the A34, they are unlikely to be affordable or inhabited by local workers.

In summary, it would appear that the planners have ignored and/or misinterpreted nationally prepared information, not worked together, have prepared policies which are unlikely to be successful on the basis of their own plans, nor made a robust plan which recognises that not all aspects will turn out how they expect it.

Kind regards

Anthony Gilbert



Vine House  
Chapel Square  
East Hendred  
Oxon OX12 8JN