

EIP Stage 2- comments from Save Chilton AONB

Key: *EiP/Vale text in red*

Matter 7 – Supporting Infrastructure and Services (CP7, CP12, CP17-CP19, CP21 and CP33 – CP36)

7.1 Does the plan make adequate and soundly-based provision for the infrastructure and services necessary to support new development?

Core Policy 7 refers to providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services and requiring all new development to provide for the necessary on-site and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal.

There is a lack of detail on how infrastructure and services will be delivered in order to support any new development, and how any new such services would provide for the unaddressed need that is required by the existing population.

For example, if some housing is permitted within the perimeter of the Harwell Campus, then schooling provision should include provision for the ~90 houses that are already situated at North Drive, to the north of the Campus, and the for the ~120 houses that have already been granted permission adjacent to North Drive. Details on such matters are notable by their absence.

OCC estimate that a one form entry Primary School is required for approximately 700 houses on the open market; a number that may change depending on projected demographics, e.g. if housing is controlled by the Campus for campus employees.

By way of example, Chilton Primary School is already substantially oversubscribed from within catchment (~625 dwellings), with families from the old side of the village experiencing great difficulty securing a school place for the September 2015 intake (Source: OCC school admissions statistics).

Core Policy 33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

This policy lacks substance especially on sustainable transport measures and the detail necessary for it to be monitored and enforced.

Core Policy 34: A34 Strategy

The Council will continue to work with the Highways Agency, Oxfordshire County Council and other partners to develop and implement a Route Based Strategy for the A34, which enables it to function as a major strategic route thereby reducing consequential congestion on the local road network. The Council will continue to work with the Highways Agency, Oxfordshire County Council and other partners to develop an air quality monitoring framework associated with the A34 within the Vale of White Horse District to monitor any impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC.

By building >15,000 houses in very close proximity to the A34, the Plan serves only to encourage use of the A34 by local traffic; it is difficult to foresee what steps the council can/will take to measurably reduce congestion on this “already at capacity” road.

The upgrade of the Chilton interchange from 2-way to 4-way simply enables easier access to the A34 for local commuter traffic to/from Oxford, Abingdon, Milton Park, Newbury, Reading, Didcot and Swindon.

Core Policy 35: Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking

The Council will work with Oxfordshire County Council and others to:

i. encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport and support measures that enable a modal shift to public transport, cycling and walking in the district

This policy lacks substance and the detail necessary for it to be monitored and enforced. For instance, the progress of a cyclist-friendly route to the Harwell Campus from nearby commuter towns has been painfully slow. The Didcot route 544 was pieced together only to be cut by current upgrading of the Hagbourne Hill road without cross-carriageway provision at its intersection. Similarly, neither the A417 from Wantage nor the B4017/A4185 from Steventon/Drayton/Abingdon has satisfactory cycle commuter provision.

ii. ensure new development is located close to, or along, existing strategic public transport corridors, where bus services can then be strengthened in response to increases in demand for travel.

Recent experience in Chilton is to the contrary e.g. the substantial new Chilton Field 275-house development has been followed by a reduction in Chilton's sole bus service (X32).

vii. ensure adequate parking is delivered on new developments in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council's published standards.

Experience of recent developments e.g. Chilton Field demonstrate the inadequacy of the OCC's current recommendation for parking provision. For example, there are numerous cars parked on the roads which would make it difficult for any emergency vehicle (e.g. ambulance or fire engine) to access the estate.