
Sent: 30 July 2020 13:54
To: Planning Policy
Subject: Next Plan 2020 Consultation

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Sir/madam,

I have recently received a leaflet highlighting the up and coming Local Plan and its aims. As part of that process the public are invited to send in their comments on the plans content. As I live within the boundary of the Test Valley Council I am submitting my comments on areas that I either have experience on or would affect me.

I currently live within the Valley Park area of Chandlers Ford and would agree with the Parish Councils views on several plan issues. First their desire to maintain the Local Gap for the reasons stated and second their support for further "Greening" of the Valley Park with further tree planting. I would also agree with their view on the level of Policing within Valley Park. While crime/anti-social activity is low it is at this point that a visible Police presence could prevent it from increasing. This would also provide residences with a goto point when events of a more serious nature occur, which in turn would send a message to those intent on causing trouble.

The main areas I would like to comment on is a combination of the Housing Distribution, Infrastructures and Community Facilities and Transport topics as I believe they are all interlinked at some level.

Within the Next Plan Document there is mention that some areas still have an outstanding "allocation" of housing to be deployed. We in Valley Park have seen what happens when new housing comes to your neighbourhood. I am aware that many studies are undertaken during the planning process to assess the impact a proposed development would have, both at a local level and further afield. However the one area that seems to be overlooked, or not given sufficient consideration, is Education. Although provision is often made at the Primary school Level little appears to be done at the Secondary Level. Children of those living within Valley Park can be sent to one of two maybe three Secondary schools, dependant on ones location. At no point have any further schools of this type being built, within the last 23 years to my knowledge, to take any increases in the population moving in to any new developments who's children will at some point require places at Secondary level.

Having built the new houses one then has to consider the transport implication of both new and old. There has been over the last few years a major drive to reduce the use of private vehicles. This has been mainly led by Climate Change concerns and an attempt to move away from petro-chemical based fuels. Unfortunately the Genie of the Car is out of the bottle and it will be difficult, if not impossible, to put it back. The idea that Public Transport can be used as one of the measures by which car use can be reduced is at best wishful thinking. I speak as someone who was reliant on the train or bus for many years. My family did not own a car and living in rural Warwickshire and used the train of all our journeys. Later in the late 1970's I moved into a town and could use a bus service to get to and from work, and did so into the mid 1980's. This sounds like a success story but it was only achieved by living in an urban area close to a large city, Coventry, with its own "Corporation" buses. In Hampshire this level of uptake would be very difficult to obtain, in fact the retention of the local services in my locality is under threat. Unfortunately in our new world of employment, covid-19 not withstand, the bus to and from work is

a thing of the past. Places of employment are now scattered to such an extent which means people now have wide and varied travel needs that no public service could hope to satisfy, unless a no-profit / lose make venture were to be considered. This would require funding and that would fall to council tax payers who may not wish to shoulder that burden. One should never look at more draconian measure reducing car usage as that will never be tolerated by the electorate. Houses with no parking spaces would only work within the confines of a town where the level and opportunity of employment is high. How would such residence fair should they need to travel further a field, reliant on, here today gone tomorrow, public transport.

One area I have not mentioned is cycling. To consider this to be any form of solution in reducing car usage is folly. Those who would use bikes to get to and from work etc will do so already, I know as I have worked with such people. The current increased interest in cycling will last with the new converts until the first rainy day, cold of winter or, heaven forbid, a close encounter with a more sizeable road user. The rush to provide bike lanes on busy town roads will never see the hoped for traffic and will only increase the very pollution they were added to roads to reduce. Cycling for the majority is a leisure activity done on weekends in fine weather. It should also be noted that this restriction on car usage could lead a reduction of trade in such areas that implement such schemes. People will look for other places to spend their money thus leading to the decline in shops, a reduction in employment etc. This sound far fetched but I have spoken to traders who consider this, and the conversion of main town roads to pedestrian use only, as major factors in the lose of business.

I would also like to add that none of the proposed ideas would stop me or my wife from using our cars and tempting us into using Public Transport, we are both disabled. We could never utilise such services, if only we could. Perhaps some consideration for people such as ourselves needs to be added to the Next Plan.

I do apologise for what seems to be a set of negative comments, without proposing any form of solution. However I do feel that when plans such as this are being formulated issue/concerns/warnings tend to be overlooked in the head long rush to implement solutions that address the latest hot issues. Two things should always be in the mind of any planner. First are there any "Unintended Consequences" in our proposed plan, bike lanes/increased pollution/trade implications comes to mind there. My second is more humorous and that is "Beware of the Kings Magic Suit of Clothes". In this I stress that one must be very careful before committing to any policy that has little actual substance or later turns out to have been a lot of fuss about nothing. One can easily get caught up in this which can lead to my first point.

Regards.