

Dear Sir,

We have been residents of Upper Clatford since 1985. Charles has had many voluntary positions within the community over the years and have been a member of the Parish Council for 5 years and was Chair of the Upper Clatford NDP Committee. Nicki has been a member of the All Saints' PCC for 8 years.

While we support and commend many of the aspirations and proposals set out in the Draft Local Plan 2040, there are a few issues that we would like to raise. In all cases, our overriding objective is to protect the special sense of community that this parish has across all three villages of Anna Valley, Red Rice and Upper Clatford. This was exemplified by the level of active participation and engagement in the NDP process where 57% of all residents, across all villages and age groups, participated in the evidence gathering process, and then subsequently, in the Covid 19 Community Response where some 150 residents volunteered to support the vulnerable in the community.

1. The Local Gap

- a. The Local Plan (E3) defines and justifies a Local Gap between Andover and Upper Clatford/Anna Valley in order to maintain the distinct character and sense of place of these communities. In para. 4.41 of the present Local Plan consultation document, it states that if local gaps are to be included, they will need robust justification in terms of principle and location. In the evidence gathering process for the Upper Clatford NDP, 88% rated the Local Gap as important (77% rated it very important) to maintaining its rural character and preventing coalescence with Andover. The NDP reviewed the landscape, environmental, social constituents of the Local Gap to support its continuation.
- b. The Local Gap has been critical to the planning process, and has prevented coalescence with Andover. As stated above, the existence and maintenance of the Local Gap, an area largely made up of green space is the key contributor to the vitality and sense of community across the Parish. The social and environmental objectives of our parish should be taken into account as the Local Gap enhances the special sense of place, protecting the water meadows which are so important to the character of the settlement, the landscape, natural and local environment. Our community and many Andover residents walk and enjoy the beauty of the countryside across our parish and the Local Gap in particular. This was especially true during the Covid Lockdowns, when hundreds of residents of Andover and the parish walked through the Local Gap, supporting their wellbeing. I am certain, all would argue for the continuation of the Local Gap as part of Planning Policy providing access to green spaces and recreational benefits.
- c. Areas within the Local Gap also overlap Local Green Spaces and thereby support environmental and Climate Change agenda through supporting biodiversity and catchment flood control for urban areas downstream (e.g. Romsey).

2. Tier 3 or Tier 4 Settlement

- a. Upper Clatford and Anna Valley have been grouped together with Goodworth Clatford and categorised as a tier 3 settlement within the proposed hierarchy, justified by the argument that the two settlements benefit from and have access to shared services and facilities.
- b. Grouping us with Goodworth Clatford because we share facilities is not justified. Upper Clatford should be included as a Tier 4 settlement because:

- i. It has no “centre” – the pub and the village hall are at the southern end of what is a typical linear settlement. The other community facilities and assets are spread across the community.
- ii. It has no school. The Clatford CofE Primary School is over 2 miles from Anna Valley, much of it along a narrow 40mph road with high hedgerows, making walking or cycling dangerous. In fact, Anna Valley residents are closer to Abbotts Ann CofE Primary school than Clatford and Upper Clatford residents are closer to Anton Primary School.
- iii. It has no have a food shop selling everyday branded food items. The Clatford Community Store is over 2 miles from Anna Valley along a narrow 40mph road with high hedgerows, making walking or cycling dangerous. Anna Valley and Red Rice residents are far more likely to use the Hexagon or Co-op than drive to Goodworth Clatford to shop.
- iv. It has no regular or well used bus service. There are 2 buses (#17) a day in each direction which means they are under used and often travel empty.
- v. It has no post office. The nearest are Clatford Stores (used primarily by Upper Clatford residents) and the Hexagon (used by Anna Valley and Red Rice residents).
- vi. All Saints’, the parish church, is outside the settlement and usually reached by car, especially for Anna Valley and Red Rice residents.
- vii. It has a sports field which is well outside the settlement area, with access practically always by road.
- viii. It has no bike or path to Goodworth Clatford. While there is a path, it is via Norman Court Lane, is longer and dangerous, particularly the narrow stretch above Norman Court farm. The only other way to walk or cycle between the Villages, is along the narrow link road which is not suitable for children due to speeds and visibility.
- ix. It has no allotments
- x. It has no doctors surgery, dentist or chemist
- c. Upper Clatford should be Group 4, as TVBC propose for similar communities like Monxton/Ampport and Longstock.

3. Local Green Spaces

- a. National planning policy allows NDPs to designate land as Local Green Space in order to protect green areas of particular importance to local communities. Quite rightly, the Draft Local Plan sets out that Local Green Spaces are areas that can only be designated in certain circumstances, one of these being that they hold a particular local significance.
- b. In the evidence base of NDP, the village’s open and green spaces were very or fairly important to 97% of residents (of which 85% rated these as very important); the surrounding countryside, was very or fairly important to 98% (84% very important); and the Pillhill Brook and the River Anton, were very or fairly important to 94% (75% very important).
- c. Included in the NDP, 4 Local Green Spaces were proposed with supporting evidence. All were accepted by the Examiner as justified and compliant with local and national planning policy. Associated with one of the LGS’s along the Pillhill Brook, is an approved SINC. In addition to the benefits described in 1 above, the 4 designated Local Green Spaces and the SINC are important in protecting and maintaining the green corridor of the Pillhill and associated biodiversity, as well as those areas of land owned or maintained by the Parish Council as recreational open space within Anna Valley and Upper Clatford.

d. The designation reflects and supports the Green Infrastructure strategy of TVBC.

4. Infrastructure – Housing development and water treatment capacity

- a. The Test Valley is blessed with beautiful and rare chalk streams with associated unique aquatic environments. These glorious chalk streams are also being used by Southern Water (SW), on occasions, to overflow raw or semi treated sewage.
- a. SW face challenges in expansion of housing without plans for associated sewage management facilities. This combined with reduction in groundwater infiltration into sewerage networks and pump stations, means the current capacity is insufficient to cope with current demand and has led to the use of tankers to overflow semi-treated sewage into the Pillhill brook. SW place warnings on the Pillhill Brook, which actually runs through the Balksbury Playing Fields.
- b. There is an urgent and important need in the next Local Plan, that sewage pumping, management and treatment capacity is linked to development planning resulting in better protection of residents and their children as well as the unique habitats and biodiversity associated with chalk streams.

We trust that the above is seen as a constructive set of observations and recommendations.

Yours faithfully

Charles and Nicki Crosthwaite Eyre