

REF: Local Plan 2040

To whom it may concern,

I write to you regarding the proposed development plans within the Northern Test Valley and specifically the village of Upper Clatford.

Firstly, I am supportive of development in the region. The need for more housing is clear with people unable to get onto the property ladder, the rapidly escalating demand versus availability making home ownership more inaccessible than ever and the benefits that development investment will bring, along with community spending in the area, will help generate a healthy local economy and local businesses to thrive.

However, I believe this development needs to be done sympathetically to the local environment and ensuring that the infrastructure and facilities can cope with the proposed level of development.

Under the proposed Tier System, there have been some broad brush stroke comparisons drawn with the facilities available in Goodworth Clatford, putting Upper Clatford in Tier 3. However, the distance to Goodworth Clatford Primary School, the shop and pubs is too far to walk regularly and the road is too busy and dangerous to cycle with a young family. On top of this, with a greater number of houses, I do not believe the road infrastructure could cope with increased vehicles running through Upper Clatford and between the two villages. It is already an issue at peak times of day. Therefore, I would suggest Upper Clatford sit within Tier 4 given the true accessibility of local facilities.

Upper Clatford is clearly an attractive place to live, not just with regards to the local countryside, but also the sense of village community and the personal identity that comes with it. A Local Gap Policy is very much required to maintain this sense of identity and, on top of this promote continued walkable access to Andover town through the small strip of beautiful countryside which will bring with it benefits to health and the environment. I believe, if this local gap was to be developed, people would revert to using their vehicles much more often, reducing the sense of community as people connect less frequently. It would also create more congestion on key roads, congestion in Andover Town and contribute to climate change and less clean air leading to further health implications.

Whether we live in Andover town or Upper Clatford, we are lucky to have access to a most beautiful part of the country that supports a broad range of wildlife diversity which, with the current impact on our global environment, we need to protect and nurture now more than ever. By not protecting these spaces with a Local Green Space Policy, we not only risk these diverse, rare and historic habitats but also reduce the accessibility of this type of environment for those living in Andover town and the surrounding area. These spaces enable education, health and other broad benefits to our wider community.

Therefore, I would ask that we reconsider placing Upper Clatford in Tier 3 given the facilities and infrastructure clearly do not support it - the village lacks six of the required criteria to be considered Tier 3 and the infrastructure could not support significant development. It would be better placed in Tier 4. I would also ask that the Local Gap and Local Green Space Policies be maintained, not just to protect the identity of the Upper Clatford Village community but also maintain accessible Green Spaces for those living in Andover Town and minimising any impact on the wider environment and wildlife.

Yours faithfully,

Sam & Joanna Bovill

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