

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to respond to the request for comments on the Draft Local Plan ("DLP").

Having reviewed the DLP, I support the suggestion that community led spacial planning is to be strengthened. In our local community of Goodworth Clatford, there was tremendous benefit derived from the ability to develop the existing Neighbourhood Plan ("NP") and Village Design Statement ("VDS").

Community engagement in the process of developing the last NP was very strong. Any updated version needs to engender this support and importantly, provide the community with the necessary funding to do so. Will funds be allocated to communities, specifically Goodworth Clatford to update their NP and VDS? If so, this should be made clear in the DLP. The issues and options consultation paper purports that there is support for more housing allocation to rural areas/villages. In my view, this seems in large part to be supported by those with a financial interest in this happening, either developers or those landowners with ownership of potential sites, and is clearly not settled or supported consensus amongst residents. The draft plan housing allocation would appear to strongly indicate development outside settlements boundaries and on green field sites will be TVBC policy in the future . This is not a positive policy as it is contradictory to responses published in the issues and options consultations paper with regard to settlement boundaries (upon which the draft plan is now specifically silent) and does not allow for a democratic process in local decision making. A more positive policy would be to propose a democratic system whereby residents of rural settlements would have an irrevocable final say on development proposals and allocation of sites;

The "Vision" specified in 2.21 is fully supported, including a strong sense of identity for communities and development in sustainable locations with appropriate supporting infrastructure and consideration for the natural environment.

I would suggest the following areas need further consideration and/or revision.

1) The Settlement Hierarchy allocation needs review in relation to the classification of Anna Valley, Upper Clatford and Goodworth Clatford as Tier 3. These villages individually do not have the 6 key features together with the "good level of public transport". The bus service is too infrequent to be relied upon for anyone travelling for work. There is no link to the rail station. There is no direct footpath from Goodworth Clatford to Andover. The places of worship in these villages operate on rotation meaning it is necessary to travel between these villages and no public transport is available for this. Whilst Goodworth Clatford and Anna Valley each have shops, these are both under threat and it cannot be assumed that they will be operating by the proposed implementation date for the DLP. Anna Valley does not have a pub, school or sports facility. Upper Clatford does not have a school or food store. There is no real basis for grouping these settlements together as they are too far apart and there is no safe footpath between them.

2) In relation to DLP Chapter 5 and the housing need, it should be clear what level of additional housing each Settlement is expected to provide. Whilst figures have been given for Test Valley, Southern and Northern, its is ambiguous how this actually relates to individual communities. This information is only contained SHELAA Parish Summaries, which did not appear to be available online. This information is of critical importance and should not be concealed. It should be either in DLP or clearly annexed to it. Furthermore, the maps in the SHELAA are of very poor resolution such that it is not possible to clearly identify which land is being allocated. The lack of clarity around the allocation of land generally and supporting evidence for conclusions in the SHELAA does not engender

positive engagement from communities. TVBC would be advised to be more transparent in its approach to the real impact of the DLP on communities.

3) Addressing page 20 of the SHELAA, development which involves closing the gap between villages would be very strongly resisted (extending the development area beyond the settlement boundary). There is insufficient detail regarding how the site capacity has been arrived at. Site identification should be more closely aligned with actual housing need as opposed to “blanket earmarking” of sites. Several sites referenced have very severe challenges which do not appear to have been taken into consideration when compiling the SHELAA. Access to all the sites identified will be difficult to accommodate from the existing rural road network. Two of the sites are also only accessible from the B3057, junctions from the Wherwell Road and Church Lane already having poor traffic accident history. These are only some of the problems posed by the sites in question.

4) Development is necessary on some level but should be managed within the existing settlement boundary and at a scale which can be accommodated within existing infrastructure.

5) Identification of proposed sites for development as a matter of principle is premature without allowing communities to first update their own NP and VDS.

6) The DLP highlights the importance of the natural environment but there is no firm commitment to how local green spaces and local gaps will be preserved. Communities will support development where strong consideration and policy takes into account the natural environment as a key priority.

I hope the above assists in development of the DLP and my comments will be taken into consideration.

Kind regards

Michael Elwell

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