

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Planning Policy](#)  
**Subject:** Comments of Draft Local Plan 2040  
**Date:** 31 March 2024 08:15:09

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Dear Sir / Madam,

Please find below my comments on the Test Valley Draft Local Plan 2040. There are several comments which I wish to be considered:

1. Breach of local Gap – the proposed development is in an area currently designated a local gap which is there to provide open green spaces including less tangible aspects such as views and openness. Gaps are there for a reason and the development will destroy the character of the area and the high ground adjacent to Hut Wood, is pretty much the only place providing any views over the Chandlers Ford area. The proposed new gap (para 4.194) is insufficient for its intended purpose.
2. There seems to be no account of the (potentially) ancient and veteran trees (AVTs), oaks, beech and yews along the path up from Valley Park to the Chilworth Arms to the west of the proposed development. The current Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Inventory is incomplete and misses many AVTs. The northern section of the proposed development will be right on the boundary and within the root protection zone of any AVTs. A proper arboricultural assessment of the site and adjacent areas is needed.
3. Paragraph 4.192 also makes no account of the ancient woodland at Spring Copse which touches the proposed development in the SE. While there is potential for environmental enhancement in this area, this ancient woodland needs to be accounted for.
4. Birds, bats and other animals use the farmland area for foraging from Hut Wood to the North. This includes **Nightjars** (and protected under Annex 1 of the EC Birds Directive) nesting in at least 4 territories in the open area only 200m to the south of the proposed development. Other birds and animals including those in Titlark, Great Covert etc will also use it and also bridge across the land via the green corridors that currently exist. There's at least 1 **Skylark** territory a UK Red List species which has suffered from loss of farmland as is proposed here. (recorded over several years since 2016 and again already this spring). Also other birds use it for hunting (Buzzard, Peregrine) and there will be others, as well as deer etc. The development will remove or disrupt the foraging area and biodiversity of the site does not seem to have been properly accounted for yet. See my records on <https://www.goingbirding.co.uk/hants/birdnews.asp> and others on NBN, HBIC). As much of the site is not currently accessible it is not possible to know the true value from current records and detailed ecological surveys are needed over several years.
5. The likely traffic issues at peak times. These roads are already very busy and when there are issues on the motorways, traffic diverts through Chandlers Ford along Templars Way / Castle Lane. This does not seem to have been considered. The

additional cars will contribute to the traffic. Has an extra 1000+ cars been properly modelled for peak flows?

6. The economic case of location near science / corporate parks does not seem to have been properly stated with any evidence. How many vacant jobs are currently available at these sites and are these sites being used in the same way post Covid?
7. Drainage – surface water will be increased and will compound the issues on School Lane and Templars Way. The land of the proposed development drains in the direction of Valley Park already causing problems at Templars Way, School Lane roundabout at the proposed access point. The access would effectively create an impermeable route directly to that problem area. The Valley Park drainage system in its current form cannot cope with the large increase in surface water that will be generated following tarmacking and compaction of the soils due to the development which will lead to greater surface water run off during rain fall events and further issues.
9. Location within Test Valley. The proposed site is situated right at the edge of Test Valley and most residents will not use certain Test Valley facilities (e.g. waste recycling etc). In addition, the plans do not include some new services that would be needed (GP etc) and these services are already struggling in Valley Park.

There are many potential negative impacts that the proposed development will bring and not all of which currently seem to have been properly accounted for. For the above reasons, I believe the Velmore Farm site is unsuitable for the proposed development within the Draft Local Plan 2040.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Murdock

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