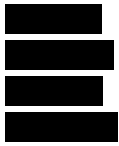


Comments on the Draft Local Plan 2040

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We would like to take the opportunity to comment on the Draft Local Plan 2040 and ask the Council to take note of our concern and alarm at the proposals put forward for yet more development in the beleaguered Parish of Nursling and Rownhams.

In particular the Southern Area Policy SA8 proposed extensive development, on another designated countryside site, at Upton Lane, that of commercial/industrial use on western side and new housing (80 new homes) on the eastern side.

Our Parish and the surrounding area is being gradually obliterated by overdevelopment at the expense of the countryside, green field amenity and Local Gaps.

1. Housing

There have been numerous new housing estates either built or under construction within the southern area of Test Valley over recent years including –

- Kings Chase/Ganger Farm next to Romsey. 275 houses, built on Countryside (farmland).
- Mountbatten Park/Ashfield Estate next to North Baddesley. 300 houses, built on Countryside (farmland).
- Hillyfields in Rownhams. 103 houses, built on Countryside (farmland)
- Luzborough Green, between Romsey and North Baddesley. 56 houses, built on a Greenfield site.
- Broadleaf Park at Rownhams, 300 houses, built on Countryside (farmland)

The Draft Local Plan is now proposing a further development of 80 houses east of Upton Lane on land that is, again, designated Countryside under the current Local Plan. Protected status appears not be of importance to this Council, even though it is your own written policy.

2. Commercial and Industrial

There are warehousing and industrial units currently being built south of the Ordnance Survey site at Adanac Park. Industrial development on Countryside (farmland).

Car parking (multi-storey and ground level), a retail unit and a large retirement complex to the east of the Holiday Inn. All built on Countryside (farmland).

Expansion of Collards site on Lee Lane, Nursling. Despite strong local opposition, the waste site is due to double in size. To be built on Countryside/woodland.

The Draft Local Plan is now proposing a further industrial development between Upton Lane and the M271, also on designated Countryside and protected woodland.

3. Energy infrastructure

There are two existing Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) installations within the Nursling and Rownhams area, at the Enerveo site on Upton Lane, and at the National Grid Nursling Substation.

In addition to these two operational BESS sites, planning permission has been granted for a third one to be established on an illegally destroyed woodland SINC (a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation) to the north-west of SHB in Mill Lane.

There have been two further planning applications for larger BESS installations proposed in the vicinity, one in Butts Field on Mill Lane, and one in the field on the corner of Mill Lane and Weston Lane. Both of these proposed sites are, of course, on Countryside.

4. Contradictions of the Draft Local Plan 2040.

The Draft Local Plan 2040 states –

Our diverse natural, built and cultural resources will be safeguarded for future generations to enjoy including access to our outstanding countryside. The character of our individual settlements will be maintained and their sense of place enhanced.

The proposed developments put forward in the Draft Local Plan are certainly not ‘safeguarding’ the countryside in our Parish. It is proposed that the settlement of Upton will be urbanised and surrounded by an industrial site. This certainly does nothing to maintain the character or sense of place of this particular settlement, or that of the villages of Nursling and Rownhams.

The Draft Local Plan states that we must –

...Conserve and enhance the built, historic and natural environment, including local character, identity, cultural heritage, the variety of local landscapes and the special landscape character of the Borough for everyone to enjoy.

How can the Council spout this ‘Visionary’ statement in the Draft Local Plan whilst proposing to devastate an area containing:

- a site of ancient woodland, adjacent to Upton Lane/Romsey Road
- part of a former ancient orchard to the rear of Grove Lodge - a priority 1 habitat
- a site of a known/recorded home to breeding barn owls and bats (within farm buildings to rear of Grove Lodge).

This proposed development will not enhance or conserve the natural environment and does not take into account the site's ecological importance.

The proposed site at Upton Lane has historic and heritage buildings in close proximity and on the actual site.

- Grove Lodge is a late Victorian former lodge/gate house to Grove Place (a Grade 1 listed building), to the rear are a number of pre-20th Century farm buildings - these are a non-designated heritage asset.
- the land to the rear of Grove Lodge was former parkland to Grove Place. This proposed development is certainly not about “*conserving or enhancing our “historic... environment”*” and it offers no protection to our very special historical environment.

Furthermore -

“Landscape quality and specific landscape features should be maintained and enhanced, including views, historic and other landscape features or topography, watercourses, water meadows, distinctive skylines, trees and hedges”.

Proposed development in Nursling will obliterate our landscape, our skylines will be urbanised and light pollution will destroy the dark skies prevalent in the Upton/Old Nursling area.

“Many smaller, individual landscape features can combine to establish the character and identity of an area. These elements may provide recognisable boundaries to settlements and help establish the identity of an area, contributing to landscape character and value. They should be protected and enhanced, as their loss, either individually or cumulatively, could have a potential impact on the immediate and wider character of the landscape”.

Yet again, the Parish of Nursling and Rownhams does not appear to have been included in the Council’s “vision”. The Draft Local Plan, if allowed to proceed, will obliterate the ‘identity’ of our area, all Local Gaps will be built on, and the individual villages of the southern Test Valley will be absorbed into Southampton and Totton. Our villages are not being ‘protected and enhanced’. The potential cumulative impact of the proposals in the Draft Local Plan will be devastating for Nursling.

These admirable statements are clearly at odds with the continuing erosion of our countryside and the continued development of green field sites in order to satisfy spurious political objectives and/or financial gain. The Draft Local Plan proposals for our Parish are unjustifiable and represent a lack of vision for the future, are unsustainable and show a total lack of consideration for the well-being or amenity of the residents,

As residents of the Parish of Nursling and Rownhams we are extremely concerned and bitterly disappointed by the Draft Local Plan 2040.