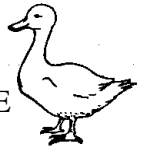


HADDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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8th August 2016

DRAFT WYCOMBE DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN RESPONSE FROM HADDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

The draft Wycombe District Plan requires AVDC to accommodate 5,000 overspill homes. AVDC can only do this by building a new settlement. Following a feasibility study Haddenham and Winslow have been selected as the most suitable locations, and Haddenham is the front runner in the draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan.

On 11th July hundreds of residents from Haddenham and surrounding villages attended AVDC's roadshow. On 28th July two hundred residents packed the Village Hall for a public meeting organised by the Parish Council to ask questions of our 3 District Councillors and AVDC Planning officers. Haddenham, a village of 4,500 people in about 2,000 homes, is required to grow by 50% in order to meet local housing needs within the Vale. We do understand the need for housing, and are prepared to accommodate this growth. But in addition, an entire new settlement of at least 4,500 homes (and potentially over 6,000) is to be grafted onto Haddenham by the year 2033 to meet WDC's needs. Villagers have expressed shock and anger, and we serve notice that this community is not prepared to take Wycombe's overspill.

Haddenham is an historic settlement with a 1000 year history, has a large and much acclaimed conservation area, with 120 listed buildings, a unique form of traditional building in wychert, features in countless film and TV productions, and is a tourist destination. It has scores highly in various "best place to live" surveys, and has won accolades for its diverse range of community and volunteer activities. It is simply not reasonable that this heritage and community should be jeopardised to save WDC's own environment.

We have major concerns with the draft WDC Plan. We have reviewed the area and indicative dwelling numbers for sites in the Plan. On site after site, densities are extremely low, with larger sites in High Wycombe itself in the range 5.5 to, at most, 21 dwellings per hectare. Indeed the average density across all sites for which there is information is in the range of 10 to 15 dph. By contrast, the draft VALP is showing densities of 30 plus dph, and for Haddenham of 35 dph. If WDC adopted a more realistic approach to density, WDC could meet its own need within its borders.

The draft Wycombe District Plan proposes a 25% tree cover for new developments in addition to other green space. Desirable though this may be, this is a luxury that cannot be afforded, and certainly should not be at the expense of building on fields of Haddenham which are all in the "best and most versatile" agricultural land category.

High Wycombe itself is a settlement larger than Aylesbury, yet is set to grow by under 10% compared with 50% growth in Aylesbury. High Wycombe should be making a considerably larger contribution to its District's needs.

The review of green belt appears to be conservative compared with the approach of other Districts with green belt constraints but which are recognising that the level of housing need requires exceptional response. Meanwhile it is proposed that the 60 hectares identified for release will contribute 900 homes. This represents a density of under 15 dph. This is not acceptable.

AVDC proposals for a new settlement at Haddenham would impact on WDC's own proposals for Princes Risborough because of proximity. Both proposals would share the same rail line and much of the local highway network. Peoples' daily travel experience is that both the railway and many local and trunk roads, including the M40, are already operating at capacity. Meanwhile both South Oxfordshire and Cherwell District Councils have growth proposals impacting on those same networks. This fragmentation of authorities means that no-one is considering the combined impact on the transport infrastructure in this area.

WDC needs to make more effort to accommodate its own housing requirements, as indeed AVDC has done.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Sue Gilbert
Clerk to Haddenham Parish Council

CC: Forward Plans, Aylesbury Vale District Council.
Princes Risborough Town Council
Planning Policy, South Oxfordshire District Council
Thame Town Council