

23/04009/AOP

Outline planning application with all matters reserved except access for the erection of up to 86 dwellings (Use Class C3) including affordable housing, together with creation of new areas of open space and a LAP, a new access off Lower Road and through Fairfield Close, landscaping and all enabling and ancillary works.

Land South Of Lower Road And East Of Fairfield Close, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire

Objections from Haddenham Parish Council - Draft Document

Objections or holding objections pending more info have been lodged by: NHS; BC Travel Plan; BC Highways; Exolum Pipeline; BC Ecology; Thames Water ("inability of the existing water network infrastructure to accommodate this development"); BC leisure & recreation; and over 20 residents. I suggest:

The Parish Council OPPOSES this application for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development is contrary to VALP policies S1 (Sustainable development for Aylesbury Vale), S2 (spatial strategy for growth) and S3 (development in the countryside) of the VALP and the NPPF (December 2023). Although VALP policy S3 designates Haddenham as a strategic settlement for growth, the application site is **not** an allocated housing site in VALP, nor can it be considered as infill.
2. The proposed development is contrary to VALP policy D3 (policies for non-allocated sites at strategic settlements). The VALP allocated 1082 homes to Haddenham over the period 2012-2033. Since the start of that period, 1162 homes have been approved, nearly all of which have already been built or under construction, including the three major sites. Haddenham has taken its share of allocated development. [APPEND EVIDENCE]
3. The applicant's challenge on the 5 Year Housing Land Supply has been superseded by December's NPPF, which dropped this requirement for a 5 year period following adoption of a Local Plan; VALP was adopted in September 2021. Therefore the "tilted balance" does not apply to this application and the exceptional circumstances in VALP policy D3 are not triggered. As the new NPPF was introduced with immediate effect and prior to registration of this application, the transitional arrangements do not apply (unlike application 23/0031/APP on land east of Churchway).
4. The proposal is outside the accepted village footprint and is contrary to the assessment of the wider site shown as HAD009 (5.6 Ha at Fairfield's Farm) in the 2017 HELAA (Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment) for the VALP. The HELAA concluded that the majority of HAD009 (4.17 Ha) located behind Stanbridge Road, including the proposal site, was **unsuitable** for development due to its poor relationship with the north and south of the village and the impact on views from the Chilterns. Only one section of the site, 1.43 Ha

fronting onto Stanbridge Road, was allocated for 40 houses; in fact 73 have been built or are under construction by the same applicant as the present application, but made under 3 separate planning applications (16/0412/AOP 17/01692/APP, 18/01037/AOP).

5. The proposal is contrary to the Inspector's findings under appeal APP/J0405/W/20/3257840 by Rectory Homes for non-determination of their planning application 19/02145/APP for 43 homes essentially in the same location. In the planning balance the Inspector found that the development would harm the rural character and appearance of the area in conflict with the then Policies GP 35 and GP 38 of the AVDLP (now within VALP) and dismissed the appeal. The Inspector's objections as expressed in paras 19-27 are material to the present application: "unacceptable encroachment into open countryside"; harm to the rural character of the surrounding countryside; introducing a suburban appearance when approaching the village from the Aylesbury direction; and "leap frogging" resulting in greater depth of build form both visually and physically.
6. The proposal entails the loss of BMV (Best & Most Versatile) agricultural land is contrary to VALP policy NE7 and NPPF. In particular, the latest December 2023 NPPF strengthens the presumption against loss of food production on better quality land.
7. Approval would undermine and be contrary to the decision by BC's Central Area Committee in January 2024 to refuse application 23/0031/AOP by Richborough for 89 properties on land east of Churchway, where the material issues are very similar to the present application, including unallocated site in open countryside beyond the natural village boundary, BMV etc.
8. The proposal is **not** sustainable development. In its representations on the above application 23/0031/APP the Parish Council briefed the Area Committee about the impact of being a strategic settlement with 50% growth by over 1000 homes, around 2,500 people on a village of just 4,500. Sustainability is frequently seen in transport terms but is not only about having a railway station. It also means having the social and community infrastructure to support development and its new residents. Public services are already overstretched in Haddenham, and that's before any completions on Redrow's large development of 273 homes. This is evidenced by:
 - The Parish Council has met with the Headteachers of both the Junior school and the larger of the two Infants schools (the application incorrectly states that Haddenham has 2 Junior schools). The impact of growth has been described to us as "profound". All three Haddenham schools are now at capacity, with class sizes increased to the maximum allowed, higher levels of special needs to be addressed, raised staffing needs, and internal alterations. This all must be managed within existing budgets. S106 does not provide more teachers or classroom assistants. There is a real possibility that the children of new residents will not find places in Haddenham schools and end up being driven to schools elsewhere.
 - The Health Centre is overstretched as evidenced by the patients' liaison group and the Lead Primary Care Manager's response to the current application. S106 may provide a building extension, but it does not pay for more health staff. Current residents are struggling to get appointments, so again new residents may have to travel outside Haddenham.

- Haddenham Community Library is referenced as a facility but in fact is facing a £10,000 reduction in its grant from Buckinghamshire Council from April 2024, which potentially puts it on a path to closure.
- Pubs are similarly referenced as important amenities, but of the 5 pubs in the VALP's assessment of community assets, 3 have closed and only 2 survive to serve the expanding population, contrary to NPPF expectations to safeguard such assets.
- Growth has impacted the work of the Parish Council necessitating recruiting more staff, relocating to larger premises and wholesale changes to our agenda.

There is a strong feeling in this community that it has exhausted its capacity to absorb the cumulative impact of growth.

9. The applicant states that there is no impact on heritage assets. But the additional traffic generated by new development is impacting the historic environment through damage to verges, witchert walls and even a thatched roof. In particular the new developments at Aston Road and Stanbridge Road have increased traffic through Church End and along Station Road westwards towards Thame, adding to congestion and safety concerns caused by St Mary's School parking and eroding Church End's registered village green. Creating a vehicle access from this development through Fairfield Close will exacerbate these problems: we therefore do not agree with Highways' acceptance of this access. It also undermines the not unreasonable expectation of Fairfield's Close residents that their new homes were bought on the understanding of being in a small cul-de-sac.
10. The junction of Stanbridge Road, Woodways and Lower Road is a local accident black-spot being located on the principal east-west and north-south routes through the village. Our Speedwatch monitoring on Stanbridge Road shows frequent breaches of the 30mph limit, with some vehicles failing to slow down, overshooting the junction, and on occasions ending up in the gardens of adjoining properties. The proximity of the proposed development to this junction is likely to add to this hazard. If the Council were minded to approve this application, the Parish Council asks that the Section 106 agreement includes funding of the traffic calming measures set out in our "Streetscape" project undertaken with consultants Philip Jones Associates. This work results from a Neighbourhood Plan obligation on Buckinghamshire Council to carry out a traffic impact assessment and is part-funded by the Community Board. The project identifies village problem locations, and includes the feasibility of a village-wide 20mph zone which the Parish Council is discussing with BC colleagues: details are on the Parish Council's website.

David Truesdale

Chair, Haddenham Parish Council