

Response to VALP Consultation Draft – September 2016

Introduction and Summary

Haddenham is proposed for growth both as a strategic settlement and as frontrunner for a new settlement, and as such has been singled out for singular treatment in the draft VALP. Haddenham Parish Council is therefore making a comprehensive response to these proposals, and wish it to be read and treated as a whole. It probably fits best as a response to VALP Chapter 4 “Strategic Delivery”, but also raises issues relevant elsewhere.

In summary, the Parish Council accepts Haddenham’s contribution of 1059 homes to local housing need within the Vale of some 21,000 homes, subject to caveats. The Parish Council objects to the new settlement proposals, which would amount to the destruction of our village and community, in order to provide overspill for and to safeguard neighbouring Districts. Our objections are set out under the following heads:

- The duty to cooperate with neighbouring District Councils
- Optimising density within VALP
- Combined impact of growth in the M40/Chiltern railway corridor by different authorities
- Highway infrastructure around Haddenham
- Harm to heritage and community
- Loss of high grade agricultural land
- Competing with Aylesbury
- Deliverability

VALP Consultation and Response in Haddenham

During the consultation period the Parish Council (PC) has prepared two special editions of Haddenham Village News specifically on VALP and distributed to every home in the village. The first newsletter was issued at the beginning of July. It summarised the proposals and the consultation arrangements, publicised AVDC’s roadshow on 11th July, and a public meeting to be hosted by the Parish Council in the Village Hall on 28th July.

The 11th July event was extremely well attended throughout the day by residents from both Haddenham and surrounding villages. The PC conducted an exit poll to gauge public response to the proposals. The overwhelming response was dismay, and frequently anger, mainly in relation to the new settlement proposals. There was also anger at the apparent pointlessness of all the work entailed in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.

On 28th July two hundred residents packed the Village Hall for a public meeting organised by the Parish Council and the Village Society to ask questions of our 3 District Councillors and AVDC Planning officers. The PC’s second newsletter was distributed shortly after the public meeting in order to: brief residents who may have been on holiday and unable to attend the events; provide more information about the new settlement proposal which had not been available at the time of the first newsletter; record the key issues discussed on the 28th July public meeting; and remind residents about the consultation arrangements.

Both newsletters are appended.

Summary of VALP Proposals

The VALP essentially has two sets of proposals affecting Haddenham:

1. Firstly, it proposes that Haddenham be designated a “strategic settlement” with 50% growth by 1,059 homes as its contribution to housing assessed needs arising within the Vale of some 21,000 homes.
2. Secondly, it proposes that Haddenham should be the frontrunner (along with Winslow) for a “new settlement” of 4,500 homes by the year 2033, with more likely to follow in later years. This proposal is essentially to address housing need of around 12,000 homes from outside the District under the duty to cooperate. Particularly relevant to Haddenham are the requirements of Wycombe, Chiltern & South Bucks District Councils.

Potentially that’s 5,500 new homes for Haddenham in the plan period 2013-2033, compared with a current population of about 4,500 people in about 2,000 homes.

Response to the “Strategic Settlement” proposal

VALP shows sites for 1,059 homes. Of these, about 850 are on sites which already have planning permission, or are in the process of applying. All but one of these sites (Aston Road – approved on appeal) were included in the Neighbourhood Plan. One large site is shown to the north of Rosemary Lane, with a capacity of about 210 homes; this site has no current proposals, and was not considered in the Neighbourhood Plan because the site was not available at the time.

The PC accepts these proposals subject to our comments below about density calculations within VALP. We also make the observation that public trust between AVDC and residents could have been greatly enhanced had AVDC been prepared to share its thinking with the PC at an earlier stage, thereby giving the Neighbourhood Plan a positive role to achieve AVDC’s growth needs. The PC has repeatedly (over 20 years) advised AVDC that Haddenham does not fit happily into its desk-top settlement hierarchy. Although a large village, it lacks the functions and built form of a typical market town; there is no high street or market square, modest retail provision, no secondary school, and significant dependency on its near neighbour, Thame, for higher level services. The reasons for this are historical, as set out in the joint publication by AVDC, BCC and English Heritage in the chapter on Haddenham in the Buckinghamshire Historic Towns Assessment Report (2008).

This context means that Haddenham is very susceptible to the problems arising from sequential development around settlements by housebuilders, which does not properly fund social and physical infrastructure. A fully briefed Neighbourhood Plan could have helped address this. It could also have saved considerable public expenditure on the Aston Road inquiry. VALP could also have asked an updated Neighbourhood Plan to identify the balance of housing numbers needed rather than allocating directly. As things stand, confidence in the whole process has been shattered. Moreover the 1059 homes will be developed without any changes to the highway infrastructure, whether to improve access, protect heritage assets, or deal with the station parking problem (below).

Response to the “New Settlement” Proposal

VALP proposes 3 locations for possible growth options in the new settlement scoping study:

- 1,250 homes by yet further expansion around Haddenham
- 7,000 + homes by a new settlement to the south east near Aston Sandford
- 6,000 + homes immediately to the west towards Thame

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It is clear from the strength of feeling expressed by residents to the PC that this community is not prepared for this village to be changed beyond all recognition in order to accommodate overspill from neighbouring Districts and to protect them from development. We **object** to the new settlement proposal in principle. Our objections and challenges are set out below.

1. The “Duty to Co-operate” with neighbouring District Councils

The PC appreciates the duty to co-operate, but AVDC needs to impose boundaries in response to demands, expected to amount to some 12,000 homes, from neighbouring councils. Particularly relevant for Haddenham are the requirements of Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils. At present we only have Wycombe DC’s proposals. These give rise to considerable concern, with AVDC’s compliance seemingly taken as given. The PC is pleased to learn that AVDC have appointed consultants to scrutinise its neighbours’ demands. The PC has responded to WDC’s recent consultation on its draft Local Plan as follows:

- 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 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 destroying Haddenham.
- 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 recognise that the level of housing need requires exceptional response. 60 hectares are identified for release and will contribute 900 homes, representing a density of under 15 dph. This is not acceptable.

It surely cannot be right that Haddenham should be sacrificed in order that Wycombe can protect its own environment from development, and calls into question whether a new settlement is needed at all (see also below).

2. Optimising Density within VALP

The PC has conducted a detailed audit of the HELAA of AVDC and, where available, of neighbouring Districts. We noticed that the level of rigour and disclosure in AVDC’s work is of a higher standard than in neighbouring Districts.

The HELAA v3 (May 2016) identifies a total capacity of 27,133 dwellings. This includes an allowance for Windfall of 876, commitments from sites below 5 units of 353, and 22 dwellings from sites outside the HELAA settlements, leaving 25,822 dwellings allocated to sites identified in and assessed for the HELAA.

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These dwellings are allocated on sites that in aggregate cover 2,259 hectares of which 1,368 hectares are deemed suitable for residential development. This is an average density across the plan of 18.92dph.

However in Para 4.14 of the Draft HELAA v3 it is stated that:

“To establish a development yield, as set out in Table 2 of the aligned methodology, unless any other assumptions have been set out in an approved planning application, allowed appeal or made neighbourhood plan a standard density of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) on the suitable site area is applied at all locations except a minimum of 50dph at Aylesbury, Buckingham, Winslow and Wendover town centres as defined on the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan 2004 Proposals Maps (other than Aylesbury where the town centre boundary has been suggested by GL Hearn in the 2015 Retail Study).”

Consequently the Draft VALP delivers a plan with densities significantly lower than its stated ambition. At an average density of 30dph the areas deemed suitable of allocated sites would allow for 41,042 dwellings, which is 15,160 more than currently in the plan.

The PC also notes that the 1,368 hectares deemed suitable for development is 61% of the total area of sites put forward in the HELAA. The 890 hectares deemed unsuitable would, at 30dph, provide for a further 26,715 dwellings.

The PC welcomes the District’s desire to exercise sensitivity to existing settlements’ heritage and amenities in choosing to not always allocate 30dph to every site. It also recognises that a good number of the sites have planning permission and/or are already under-construction. And it recognises that in considering what part of a site is suitable or unsuitable for development that often there are considerations such as flood risk which mean that suitability is not a matter of discretion but one of fact.

That said, if all the suitable areas were developed at 30dph and if all the sites put forward were deemed suitable for their whole area the HELAA would have an **additional** capacity of (15,160+26715 =) 41,875 dwellings.

The PC’s observation therefore is that with only very modest increases in achieved densities or in site utilisation - together to the tune of a 10.7% increase in density and/or site utilisation – this would deliver an additional 4,500 dwellings on already-identified sites without the need for, and attendant on-cost of, a new settlement.

We further note that if neighbouring Districts utilise their land at appropriate densities (which they currently propose not to do) then the need for AVDC to make these increases on their own sites would be significantly reduced if not removed entirely.

More generally the numbers indicate that AVDC and the surrounding Districts with whom AVDC has a Duty to Co-Operate can deliver the housing needs they have collectively identified at average densities which, while higher than currently in their plans, would be significantly lower than the 30dph that is the benchmark. Consequently there is no shortfall of availability that entails a need to consider a new settlement to meet housing needs in the SHMA/FEMA.

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Completions under-count

In our work on the HELAA the PC noticed a number of sites where planning permission has been given for a site but the site was under-construction at 31/3/15 with some dwellings built and other dwellings still to be completed. In all cases only the number still to be completed at that date is included in the HELAA, as one would expect.

These completed dwellings should be included in the VALP at Para 4.11 (Aylesbury 2,205 dwellings since 2013), and in the tables on pages 74/5, 85-88, and 92-94. (We could not find a completions number in the VALP for the areas adjacent to Milton Keynes however. We have inferred it, for the table below, from the other publicly-available data published by AVDC.)

The completions numbers in the VALP are for 2013-2016, whereas the cut-off point in the latest draft HELAA is 31/3/15 (which will be updated to 31/3/16 when v4 is published). This difference in cut-off date makes it more difficult to make a comparison to check whether or not the completions of partially built sites have been correctly included in the total count. However AVDC's public statistics have enabled us to conduct a detailed analysis.

We believe those completions may have been omitted from the count and if so, AVDC's HELAA capacity will be higher than stated by 2,111 dwellings.

As set out below, so far as we can see, it is impossible for the completions on partially-built sites excluded from the HELAA to have been correctly re-included in the VALP tables on the pages listed above. This is because in three settlements (Aylesbury, Oving & Winslow) the total completions for 2013-2015 included in the VALP tables are lower than the completions for that period on just the partially-completed sites (see "difference" column on far right of the table below). We are of course available to go through these figures to assist you in speedily evaluating this situation.

	2013/4 per AVDC completions statistics	2014/5 per AVDC completions statistics	2015/6 (balancing figure)	2013-16 completions per Draft VALP	Total Completions 2013/4 & 2014/5 in the VALP	Completions 2013/4 & 2014/5 re partially built sites in the HELAA	Difference
Aylesbury	453	888	864	2,205	1,341	1,370	(29)
Buckingham	264	278	79	621	542	441	101
Haddenham	40	50	5	95	90	71	19
Milton Keynes /Bletchley	31	53	51	135	84	82	2
Oving		1	6	7	1	4	(3)
Soulbury	3		3	6	3	3	-
Steeple Claydon	10	5	15	30	15	4	11
Wing	1	11	3	15	12	4	8
Winslow	18	24	42	84	42	132	(90)

On a smaller scale, we also noticed in the course of our work that completions disclosed in AVDC's annual completions statistics for 2013/4 and 2014/5 were not included in the completions tables in the draft VALP to the tune of 23 dwellings in total; the omissions being shown in the following table as a negative completions "balancing figure" for 2015/6.

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	2013/4 per AVDC completions statistics	2014/5 per AVDC completions statistics	2015/6 (balancing figure)	2013-16 completions per Draft VALP
Biddlesden	2	-	(2)	-
Boarstall		2	(2)	-
Brill	1	1	(1)	1
Chilton	2	1	(1)	2
Dorton		1	(1)	-
Dunton	1		(1)	-
Foscott	1		(1)	-
Hillesden	1	-	(1)	-
Kingsey		1	(1)	-
Kingswood	1	2	(3)	-
Middle Claydon		1	(1)	-
Poundon		3	(3)	-
Shabbington	2		(2)	-
Whaddon			(1)	(1)
Wotton Underwood		2	(2)	-

We note that it was only possible to identify these omissions due to the settlements having such a low absolute number of completions that it creates the illogical consequence of a negative number in 2015/6 to make the figures add up. In other words, were the absolute number of completions to be, say, 10 higher the error would still be there but it would not be evident. Consequently we humbly suggest that the process that led to these omissions is identified in order that it can be followed up to ascertain whether the same error or omission has occurred in the counts for larger settlements.

Commitments undercount

Finally, we noticed that for Wingrave the allocations in the VALP for three sites were significantly lower than allocated in their Neighbourhood Plan which will be put to a referendum on 26/9/16. The sites, WGR003, WGR011 and WGR014 would deliver 64 additional dwellings if the HELAA adopted the proposals of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3. The combined impact of growth proposals in the M40/Chiltern Railway corridor by different authorities

Haddenham is in the broad corridor served by the M40 and the Chiltern railway line. The presence of these communication links means that every local authority in the area is selecting this corridor as a preferred location for major “sustainable” growth:

- Cherwell District Council is proposing 10,000 homes at Bicester, and 7,300 at Banbury (the two stations to the north of Haddenham)
- Aylesbury Vale DC is proposing a new settlement of 4,500–7,000+ at Haddenham
- Wycombe DC is proposing 2,600 at Princes Risborough and 5,250 at High Wycombe (the two stations to the south of Haddenham)

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- South Oxfordshire District Council is proposing a further 600 homes at Thame in addition to 775 already allocated in the Thame Neighbourhood Plan (station shared with Haddenham).
- SODC is also proposing a new settlement. Its top priorities are Chalgrove or Harrington (adjacent to junction 7 on the M40). The justification for Chalgrove includes being just 19 minutes by car to Haddenham station; while Harrington is stated as being only 12 minutes to Haddenham.
- Chiltern Railway will shortly be extending its service from Marylebone to Oxford Parkway into the centre of Oxford.

This same corridor is also covered by two different County Councils. This fragmentation of authorities means that *no-one* is considering strategically the combined impact of these proposals. Of greatest concern is the ability of the rail and highway network to accommodate all this growth. Many peoples' daily travel experience is that much of this railway and highway network is *already* operating at capacity. Many Chiltern trains are standing room only, and not only at peak commuting times. Marylebone is a relatively small terminus with only 6 platforms and limited tracks. The M40 is frequently clogged whether travelling towards London or north-bound. It is unclear how all this growth is realistically going to be accommodated, or where the limits to "sustainability" lie.

4. Highway Infrastructure around Haddenham

The authors of the Hearn report clearly have no experience of the daily reality of the already overstretched capacity of the local highway network. Hearn refer to the A418 as a truck road (which it is); presumably the report means trunk road, which it isn't (unlike, say, the A41). The A418 is in fact a narrow, winding, old-style single carriageway A road which at peak times becomes quickly congested on the approaches in both directions from Haddenham towards Thame and Aylesbury. Congestion has increased notably since the completion of Fairford Leys and new housing at Stone, suggesting that there is no way the A418 will cope with the combined impact of the various growth proposals.

Haddenham is not actually on the A418, and being a village, is reliant on what is essentially a network of lanes for access in all directions. The junction "improvements" outlined by Hearn will do nothing to increase vehicle capacity. Their proposal for a roundabout at the junction of Aston Road and Stanbridge Road is entirely unacceptable because its effect would invite traffic through the heart of the Conservation Area at Church End; it would be more appropriate to be limiting such traffic in order to prevent harm to a sensitive area. Hearn seem to admit that they cannot offer a solution to the already congested A418/A4129/B4011 junction on the northern edge of Thame: but of course this is in a different District Council and different County Council, and raises again the issue about responsibility for the combined impact of growth proposals.

Conditions on the A418 will be made worse for several years during the plan period by HS2 construction and by associated construction traffic, some of which will no doubt use the A418 itself, particularly when approaching from the M40 and the west.

One of the PC's single biggest issues in recent years has been widespread daily car parking in residential streets by commuters using the railway station in order to avoid parking charges. This causes the blocking of drives, carriageways and sight lines, and is the source of a great deal of anger and frustration. Growth will inevitably only make matters worse.

5. Harm to Heritage and Community

The feedback from one resident attending AVDC's 11th July exhibition was that a member of AVDC staff had commented to the effect: "what's so special about Haddenham? - it's just a couple of roads with modern development". Hearn recognises heritage in their list of development constraints, but the consultants' knowledge of Haddenham appears just as limited.

Yet AVDC has been proud to promote Haddenham because of its heritage. A couple of years ago AVDC was pleased to host a presentation on its joint report with BCC and English Heritage on Haddenham as part of the Buckinghamshire Historic Towns Assessment Report (2008). The section on Haddenham is 77 pages, and covers over 1000 years of history of the settlement.

Haddenham was one of the first Conservation Areas declared by AVDC in 1971. It was one of just two settlements selected for comprehensive review in 2008. The Conservation Area (actually two Conservation Areas since the 2008 review) stretches from north to south of the village, and incorporates more than a third of the village. It needs to be explored on foot rather than by car to be appreciated. It is characterised by narrow walled lanes and footpaths which snake through the village, and the unique use of witchert as a traditional building material. It contains some 120 listed buildings, including grade 1 and grade 2 star.

The influence of the former agricultural and rural economy remains a key element in its present character, and in the reasons for AVDC's designation as a Conservation Area. This character is celebrated in a local museum, regular local history periodicals, and as a venue for walkers and cyclists from a wide area. Haddenham is visited by tourists, not least because it is regularly used by several film production companies (twelve times by *Midsomer Murders*). AVDC itself has frequently used Haddenham in its own publicity, with *Aylesbury Advantage* using images of Haddenham to attract people to live in a traditional village environment. Indeed Haddenham has scored highly in various best place to live surveys, not only because of its environmental heritage, but because of its wealth of cultural and social activity, most of it organised by voluntary sector action.

Feedback from another resident at the 11th July exhibition expressed surprise that AVDC staff appeared to be unaware that the airfield, described by Hearn as a former airfield, is still in use by the Upward Bound Trust, a charity which organises a gliding school for young people.

The Hearn report describes the land to the west of Haddenham as "relatively unconstrained". The PC challenges the consultants to walk across this land on the permissive footpath used daily by walkers. Much of the land is on a rise and higher than the surrounding country. The site has stunning views east and south towards the Chiltern escarpment which is very prominent all the way from Halton to the Thames Valley. Development on the scale envisaged would be equally as prominent when viewed from the escarpment, and which no amount of "landscape mitigation" could disguise in a 6000+ housing scheme. This land is also a nesting area for skylarks, which are a RSPB "Red List" species because of dramatic population decline.

Taken as a whole, it is impossible to see how AVDC's new settlement proposals could not but cause demonstrable and significant harm to the character and vitality of Haddenham. These proposals are not sustainable development.

6. Loss of High Grade Agricultural Land

The Hearn report acknowledges that good quality agricultural land is a development constraint, but fails to recognise as significant that the fields proposed for development around Haddenham are all in the “best and most versatile” category. The PC seriously questions whether it is sensible to build on such land rather than lower grade fields elsewhere, especially given post-Brexit uncertainties about future trading relationships and tariffs, and the potential need for greater national self-sufficiency in food production.

7. Competing with Aylesbury

The PC notes that Hearn rejects Waddesdon as a new settlement option because its proximity to Aylesbury (said to be 5.5 miles away) means that it would potentially compete with Aylesbury. If Haddenham (said to be 6 miles away) is as sustainable as Hearn says, it is surely even more likely to compete with Aylesbury in attracting housing and enterprise, and so by the same logic should be rejected as a new settlement location. A more equitable distribution of growth and investment across the Vale should be sought.

8. Deliverability

Hearn’s new settlement study casts doubt on the capacity of the housebuilding industry to deliver such major growth within the required timescale (completion by 2033). It suggests that a new-style development corporation (used for the post-war new towns) would be required to deliver such growth. This would capture the increase in value created for re-investment in the community as happened in the new towns model; by contrast development by housebuilders sees about half the increased value retained by those builders. As discussed above, Haddenham has not fared well through sequential growth by housebuilders, and the PC rejects this approach. However the PC strongly doubts whether the present Government has the appetite to legislate for an appropriate delivery mechanism, or whether in the current climate of expenditure constraint, AVDC has the resources to set up its own purpose-made vehicle.

Haddenham Village News



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DRAFT LOCAL PLAN PROPOSES MAJOR GROWTH AND A NEW TOWN AT HADDENHAM

Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) has published its draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) for public consultation. In brief it proposes 50% growth of Haddenham by 1,059 homes in the near future. It also proposes that Haddenham should be the location for a new settlement of 4,500 homes by the year 2033.

What's the background?

In the VALP Haddenham is designated a "strategic settlement" along with Aylesbury, Buckingham, Winslow and Wendover. All except Wendover are set to grow by 50% in the period 2013-2033. For Haddenham this means 1,059 new homes. About 850 of these homes are on sites which either already have planning permission, or are in the process of applying. They include the two largest developments at the airfield and Aston Road, plus smaller schemes at Dollicott and Stanbridge Road (north of the Garden Centre). It is likely that all these schemes will be built within the next 5 years. But the story doesn't stop there.

How can I find out more and express my views?

- **READ THE VALP**, particularly Chapters 1 to 4. The section on new settlement is in Chapter 4 at pages 65-68. AVDC is only making VALP available via its web-site at <http://tinyurl.com/draft-VALP>
If you don't have a computer, you can access AVDC's web-site at the Library, where a paper copy will also be available.
- **ATTEND AVDC's ROADSHOW** which takes place in Haddenham Village Hall on **Monday 11th July from 11am to 8pm**. AVDC staff will be on hand to answer your questions.
- **ATTEND THE PUBLIC MEETING HOSTED BY THE PARISH COUNCIL AND THE VILLAGE SOCIETY** on **Thursday 28th July in the Village Hall at 7.30pm**. We have invited AVDC Councillors to attend. This is your opportunity to say what you think.
- **SEND YOUR OWN RESPONSE DIRECT TO AVDC** the consultation period runs from **7th July to 5th September**.

By the year 2033 VALP is looking to build at least 33,000 homes across the Vale. Of these, about 21,000 will accommodate locally generated growth in the District; but a further 12,000 homes will accommodate demand from neighbouring Councils, particularly Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils. These Councils have problems meeting their own growth needs because much of their areas lie either in the Green Belt, or in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. AVDC is looking to help them out because it has a duty to co-operate. But AVDC itself has limited capacity. Following a call for sites across all towns and villages in the Vale, it has only been able to find development sites sufficient for about 26,000 homes – so there's a shortfall in meeting demand.

AVDC is therefore proposing to build a new settlement of 4,500 homes (and possibly up to 6000). After assessing various locations, the VALP proposes to locate this new settlement at either Haddenham or Winslow. It goes on to say that Haddenham is the front runner because it has a Parkway railway station. This would be in addition to the 1,059 homes described above, making 5,559 new homes all told. At the time of writing, no further details about the new settlement have been published, although more are promised.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Haddenham, essentially still a village (current population about 4,500 people in about 2,000 homes), itself with an acclaimed conservation area, over 100 listed buildings, and featured in various "best place to live" surveys, will more than double in size, mainly for the benefit of preserving neighbouring District Councils.

4. **Loss of high grade agricultural land**

The fields proposed for development around Haddenham are all in the top "best and most versatile" category of agricultural land. It is sensible to build on such land rather than lower grade fields elsewhere, given post-Brexit uncertainties about future trading relationships and tariffs, and likely resultant need for more self-sufficiency?

5. **Deliverability of a new settlement**

The consultants' new settlement study itself casts doubt on the capacity of the housebuilding industry to deliver such major growth within the required timescale (*completion by 2033*). It suggests that a new-style development corporation (used for the post-war new towns) would be required to deliver such growth. This would capture the increase in value created for re-investment in the community as happened in the new towns model; by contrast development by housebuilders sees about half the increased value retained by those builders. However it remains to be seen whether the present Government has the appetite to legislate for an appropriate delivery mechanism.

How can I find out more and express my views?

READ THE VALP, particularly Chapters 1 to 4.

The section on new settlement is in Chapter 4 at pages 65-68.

AVDC is only making VALP available via its web-site at <http://tinyurl.com/draft-VALP>

If you don't have a computer, you can access AVDC's web-site at the Library, where a paper copy will also be available.

SEND YOUR OWN RESPONSE DIRECT TO AVDC during the consultation period which opens on 7th July and closes on 5th September.

Via the AVDC Website:
www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/vaip-draft-plan-consultation-form

By email to:
Localplanconsult@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

In writing to:

Forward Plans, AVDC, The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF

HADDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Email: haddenhampc@bitconnect.com
Telephone: 01844 292411
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Haddenham

Village News

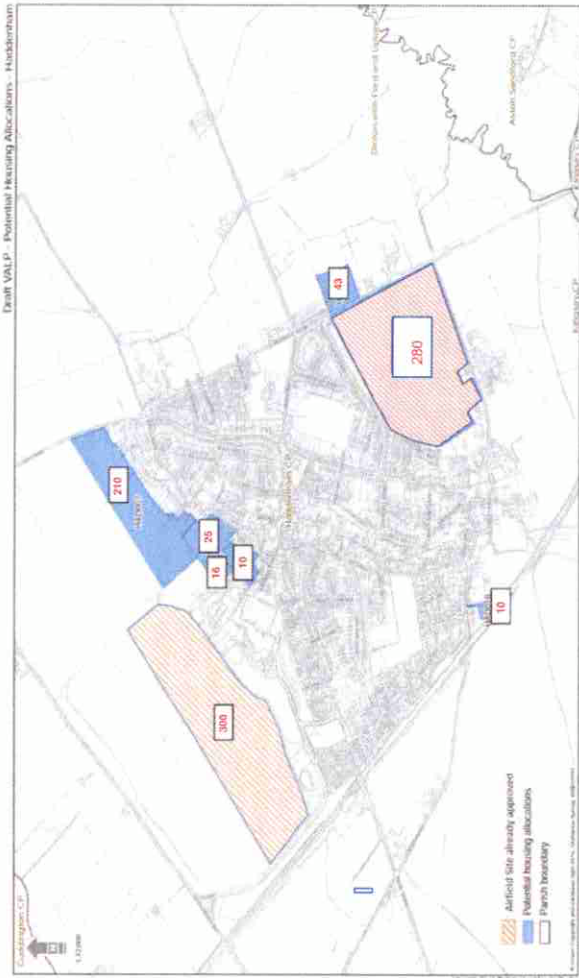
September 2016
Special Issue No.87

Special Edition published by the Parish Council and delivered to every house in the village

SHOCK AND ANGER AS MORE DETAILS EMERGE ABOUT GROWTH PROPOSALS

Villagers have expressed shock and anger as more details have emerged about the 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 and the Village Society to ask questions of our 3 District Councillors and AVDC Planning officers.

The public consultation period closes on 5th September and is taking place during the summer holidays when many people are away. This newsletter summarises the proposals, shows where the sites are, and sets out some key issues raised in the public meeting. This is intended to promote discussion, and readers may well have other comments. The Parish Council urges as many villagers as possible to respond in your own style by the deadline.



Reference: Draft VALP Appendix A: VALP Policy Map Insets (adapted by HPC)

What's proposed in summary?

Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) has published its draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) for public consultation covering the period 2013 to 2033. Haddenham is designated a 'strategic settlement' with 50% growth by 1,050 homes in the near future. It further proposes that Haddenham should be the frontrunner (along with Winslow) for a new settlement of 4,500 homes by the year 2033 (with more likely to follow in later years). That's 5,500 new homes all told.

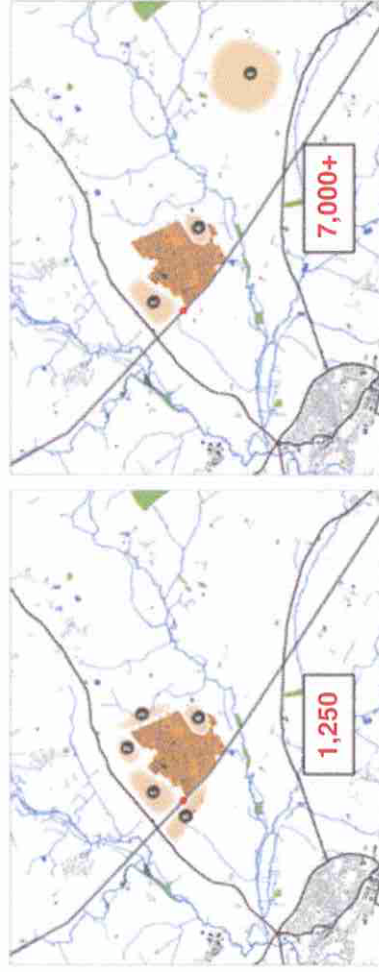
Where will these proposals go?

The first plan below shows sites for the 1,059 homes. Of these, about 850 already have planning permission, or are in the process of applying. One large site to the north of Rosemary Lane, with a capacity of about 210 homes, has no current proposals, and was not in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Also below are the locations for 3 possible growth options in the new settlement scoping study:

- 1,250 homes by further expansion around Haddenham
- 7,000 + homes by a new settlement to the south east near Aston Sandford
- 6,000 + homes to the west towards Thame

HADDENHAM - POTENTIAL OPTIONS



What are the key issues?

1. **The "Duty to Co-operate" with neighbouring District Councils**
AVDC is obliged to co-operate with demands, expected to amount to some 12,000 homes, from neighbouring councils. Particularly relevant for Haddenham are the requirements of Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils. These Councils have problems meeting their own growth needs because much of their area lies in the Green Belt, or in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. AVDC itself has limited capacity. On the demand side, its assessed need is for 33,000 homes (21,000 locally generated need within the Vale plus the 12,000 from outside the Vale). But on the supply side it has only been able to find development sites sufficient for about 26,000 homes. So AVDC can meet its own needs (21,000), but can only offer about 5000 homes to help neighbouring Districts unless it builds a new settlement.

We learned at the public meeting that AVDC have appointed consultants to scrutinise its neighbours' demands. This is good news. This Parish Council has reviewed Wycombe District Council's situation and concludes that Wycombe is not maximising its sites; is not growing its principal settlement, Wycombe, in the way Aylesbury is being expanded; appears not to be seriously reviewing the release of green belt sites; and most of all is applying very low densities, including a 25% allowance for tree cover. This is all at the expense of Haddenham (and Winslow), is not acceptable, and could call into question whether a new settlement is needed at all.

2. **The combined impact of growth proposals in our area by different authorities**
The Chiltern rail line and M40 corridor includes the following growth proposals beyond AVDC's:
 - Cherwell District Council: 10,000 homes at Bicester and 7,300 at Banbury (the next stations north)
 - Wycombe DC: 2,600 at Princes Risborough (the next station south)
 - South Oxfordshire DC: a further 600 at Thame (in addition to 775 in Thame's Neighbourhood Plan); plus a new settlement proposal. The frontrunner is 3,500 at Chalgrove airfield (said to be just 19 minutes by car to Haddenham station); the 2nd choice is land between Great Haseley and junction 7 of the M40 (shown as 12 minutes to Haddenham)
 - Thames Water: site for major new reservoir north of Chinnor
 - Chiltern Railways: shortly to extend through to central Oxford
 - HS2: construction impact on the A418 to Aylesbury

This corridor is also covered by two County Councils. This fragmentation of authorities means that no-one is considering the combined impact of these proposals. Of greatest concern is the ability of the rail and highway network to accommodate all this growth; indeed many peoples' daily travel experience may well be that much of this network is already operating at capacity. In particular it is hard to see how the simplistic junction "improvements" in the Haddenham new settlement study will do anything to increase highway capacity. The study is also silent on the huge potential impact of Haddenham's growth proposals on Thame.

3. **Impact on heritage and community**
Despite its strategic settlement designation, Haddenham is essentially still a village (Current population about 4,500 people in about 2,000 homes) in its built form and function. It lacks the central focus and service core traditionally found in a high street. This is not a good basis for major extension. Haddenham does have an acclaimed conservation area, with 120 listed buildings, its unique form of traditional building, features in countless film and TV productions, and is a tourist destination. It has featured in various "best place to live" surveys, has won accolades for its diverse range of community and volunteer activities, and dominates the annual Bucks Open Studios festival entries. This is surely all too valuable to lose.