

Comment

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| Consultee | Gareth Knass (1260891) |
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| Address | |
| Event Name | Proposed Submission (Reg 19) West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 |
| Comment by | Gareth Knass (1260891) |
| Comment ID | PS56 |
| Response Date | 14/02/23 15:29 |
| Consultation Point | Policy RSA 19 Land west of Spring Meadows, Great Shefford (Site Ref: GS1) (View) |
| Status | Processed |
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| Version | 0.1 |
| Bookmark | Knass, Gareth |

1. Do you consider the Local Plan Review is legally compliant?

Please see the guidance note for an explanation of what 'legally compliant' means

No

Please give reasons for your answer

Policy RSA 19 (Site Ref: GS1): Development of the proposed allocation site would be contrary to the provisions of the Habitat Regulations 2017 (as amended) as it would provide an adverse effect on the integrity of the River Lambourn SAC through the cumulative impact of sewage pollution. The site will require connection to the existing sewage network, which is failing and has been subject to substantial work from Thames Water in the last 15 years and this work has been documented through the Lambourn Valley Flood Forum.

The system cannot cope with existing use during periods of high ground water and is surcharging into the riverine environment. Thames Water has been trying to line the system to stop ingress of ground water, but this is not a sealed system. This proposal would add to the significant adverse impact on the River Lambourn SAC. The proposal to upgrade the East Shefford Sewage Treatment Works and the new flood alleviation scheme will not resolve the specific issue of ground water infiltration, and therefore capacity and pollution in the foul network. The ongoing mitigation works has been considered at recent Lambourn Valley Flood Forum meetings. Continuing impacts of the failing sewage network on the valley and the River Lambourn SAC are likely to be made worse by development here. This applies even with phasing considered in the draft policy. This policy should be thoroughly reviewed by relevant parties and through a Habitat Regulations Assessment of the Local Plan. The mitigation will not be deliverable in a system that has such ground water issues and therefore the plan will fail

the integrity tests of the Habitat Regulations and will have to consider over-riding public interest and alternatives. It should fail both these tests given the parameters of the allocation.

2. Do you consider the Local Plan Review is sound?

Please see the guidance notes for an explanation of what 'soundness' means.

The soundness of the LPR should be assessed against the following criteria from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Please tick all that apply:

Positively Prepared: The plan provides a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed need and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development. . No

Justified: the plan is an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence. . No

Effective: the plan is deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground.

Consistent with national policy: the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies of the NPPF. . No

Please give reasons for your answer

The draft Policy RSA 19 (Site Ref: GS1) has not had regard to significant local concerns. Pollution and flooding are discussed above in relation to the River Lambourn SAC, but also affect the village - people at the lower end of the village have sewage surcharging into their gardens during high infiltration periods. The allocation will add to this for the reasons outlined above with regard to the River Lambourn.

Surface water issues are mentioned and that certain areas of the site should be avoided in relation to development. The village suffered significantly in the flash floods of 2007 (see also the Council's own report from 2007). The proposed allocation site is c2m above the existing dwellings in the village. Altering the landform in this location will exacerbate potential for future flash floods to existing residents. Relying on a developer's surface water strategy is not appropriate given the hydrology and topography of the site, and surrounding sensitive receptors. The Council needs to fully address this at this stage if they are going to forward this allocation. Infiltration or storage in underground containers is not appropriate in areas of high groundwater.

The proposal does not address adequately the potential landscape and visual impacts. It is left to a future LVIA. This needs to be addressed now at this stage as it is likely to have a significant impact on the AONB. The site is 2m higher than elsewhere in the village, can be seen from the surrounds, and unless it can commit to no street lighting will further impact on the dark sky environment.

The site is not sustainable, and wording to the effect of encouraging non-car modes of transport is not appropriate in a village that has very limited public transport, which is being reduced rather than encouraged, and with limited other services. The existing housing estate has insufficient parking, which will be cut down to a number of existing residents, by provision of a new footway at the end of Spring Meadows. Where are existing residents going to park? The Spring Meadows development was also at a time of Council policy to 'encourage non-car transport modes', the result is that the housing has insufficient off-road parking and people struggle to park on the narrow road.

The draft allocation refers to ecology and protection of boundary vegetation. The landowner has removed woody vegetation over the years, with scrub loss around the school boundary. They have recently unilaterally taken to add a new site entrance to Spring Meadows, which was objected to through the Council's enforcement team. This may have had adverse impacts on site ecology, please refer to my comments on this from 2022.

There is no reference to safeguarding of the sensitivities of the school boundary. There is no consideration of construction and additional traffic on a narrow road where the school pick up occurs.

This allocation has many negative impacts on the village, and they are not outweighed by the positive ones, it should therefore be removed.

4. Proposed Changes

Please set out what change(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan Review legally compliant or sound, having regard to the tests you have identified above (Please note that non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination).

You will need to say why this change will make the Local Plan Review legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

Remove Policy RSA 19 (Site Ref: GS1)

5. Independent Examination

If your representation is seeking a change, do you consider it necessary to participate at the examination hearing session(s)? No

6. Notification of Progress of the Local Plan Review

Do you wish to be notified of any of the following?

Please tick all that apply

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| The submission of the Local Plan Review for Independent Examination | . | Yes |
| The publication of the report of the Inspector appointed to carry out the examination | . | Yes |
| The adoption of the Local Plan Review | . | Yes |