

Comment

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Event Name	Proposed Submission (Reg 19) West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039
Comment by	Blaire Palmer (1334794)
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Consultation Point	Policy SP 17 North East Thatcham Strategic Site Allocation (View)
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Bookmark	Palmer, Blaire

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

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

Yes

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. . No

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

This feels like the least creative way of solving the housing shortage. We are facing a climate emergency yet the only solution you can find is to build on green land. Within Newbury and around Thatcham town centre is a huge amount of poorly designed brownfield, former industrial or disused buildings, empty office space and ugly low quality housing. This is the land which needs to be developed. It would mean that people living there could walk to amenities or jump on the train without using a car. It would improve the look and feel of Newbury and Thatcham by bringing new life and fresh design to the area. It would be economical. it would be environmentally friendly and it would require creative, architecturally interesting ideas to build the sorts of housing needed. By contrast your plan simply involves building bland, mass produced houses on land which is currently either AONB, flood plain, farm land or land used by local people for leisure. This land enhances the quality of life of people living here and people who visit. It sustains a wide variety of wildlife. It separates villages from each other and villages from towns. Such development here will destroy the identity of these areas and the very reason people want to live here. And let's talk about the infrastructure. In addition to these houses there will need to be new roads, shops, leisure facilities, all on this lovely, natural greenfield land. People will be drawn away from the town centres in Newbury and Thatcham (which are already fully of empty shops and charity shops, the neglected Kennet centre and shabby sports centre) when we should be encouraging more life and energy, more activity in the centre. And the traffic! The level crossing in Thatcham already causes long tailbacks at peak times. The same is true on the A34 and all roads coming off the Robin Hood roundabout. To cope with this number of new families coming from the outskirts of the area through the centre of town will either massively increase traffic (and pollution) or require the widening of roads and the building of more roads, cutting through acres more beautiful countryside. At some point we have to stop doing this. When you watch the news and see the climate destroying the lifestyles of others around the world do you consider that these decisions are part of that problem? Do you think that, somehow, this is OK as long as we separate our plastic from our cardboard? We need much, much cleverer solutions. We need to have as little impact on the environment as possible at this stage. It's easy to say these projects are carbon neutral but you cannot have an influx of so many new families, build on greenfield land, build new roads and put people in parts of the area that then require them to drive to get to amenities and claim there is no impact on the environment. How can you live with this on your conscience?

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

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