

Question 68

I would welcome the Council's observations on the representations objecting to site allocation D-HAD007; 409 Mr & Mrs Richard Hirst, 550 Mr Graham Tyrack of the Haddenham Village Society, 620 Mr Peter Weatherhead of the Rosemary Lane Action Group, 780 Mr Jake Collinge, 965 Mrs Alysoun Glasspool.

AVDC's Response:

There are a variety of issues raised by these representations including:

- Access to the site and the train station
- Assessment of alternative options
- Heritage
- Relationship with the neighbourhood plan
- Light pollution
- Landscape impact
- Agricultural land
- Flooding/water supply
- Area of site excluded from built development

The site is approximately 0.6 miles from Haddenham and Thame parkway train station at the closest point. It is possible for a fairly direct cycle and pedestrian link to be provided to the station via the airfield development, as envisaged by criteria h. of the policy. Nevertheless, because this involves the provision of these links on land outside the allocation. the criteria observe this is 'where possible and appropriate'. If the creation of that link is not possible the train station would still be accessible on foot and cycle through the existing built up area of the village, the route being just over 1 mile, the exact distance being dependent on whether access is via the footpath on to Rosemary Lane or the main access road onto Churchway. Access via car would also have to be via this slightly longer route through the existing built up area, but it is considered to still be within easy access of the site and without an unacceptable impact on the existing road network or conservation area.

To assess all the alternative options the HELAA conducted a full 360 degree assessment of potential sites around Haddenham given that it is a strategic settlement which is regarded as one of the most sustainable locations within the district for new development. After taking account of commitments and further work that was done after the HELAA, which brought up highway issues for some sites, there only remained one suitable site for potential allocation. This information then fed into the assessment of alternative options for the SA. The SA gives specific and detailed consideration of the options at Haddenham at pages 41 – 47 of the technical appendix (CD.SUB.005). This assessment looks at, among other things, heritage, pollution, agricultural land gradings and community views, which were all concerns raised in the representations. The SA concludes that whilst the option of no allocations in Haddenham would perform best against the SA objectives, it recognises the benefits of delivering housing in this location. Both options identified for Haddenham, along with the option of a new settlement located at Haddenham, were taken forward into the district level options considered in appendix 3 with the findings presented at page 58 in the SA.

In relation to heritage it is recognised that HAD007 is a sensitive site that adjoins the conservation area along part of the southern boundary and has three listed buildings with curtilages that abut the site, as well as other listed buildings in close proximity.

Following consultation with heritage officers about the site, both as part of the HELAA process and in more detail for the allocation process, it was considered that the site could still be developed as long as the scheme is sensitively designed to take into account these heritage assets. Hence criteria g. of the policy for HAD007 looks to ensure the impact on heritage assets is acceptable through either being conserved or enhanced. The detailed design of the development will need to address any heritage impacts in accordance with policy BE1 in VALP.

The neighbourhood plan policies are recognised in criteria i. of the policy. Importantly, Haddenham's neighbourhood plan was developed at a time when the district wide level of housing growth needed was not known and it was advised throughout the preparation of the VALP that there was the potential for further development to be required here through the local plan process. As noted above the Council carried out its own assessment of site suitability through the HELAA with the conclusion that the southern part of the HAD007 site was suitable for housing development but the northern area was unsuitable because of landscape/visual impact and intrusion into the open countryside. Reference has been made in the representations to ten other sites which scored more favourably in the neighbourhood plan assessments, these have all been given consideration as part of the preparation the local plan. Four of these sites have now been granted planning permission, two were initially considered suitable in the HELAA but upon further investigation had highway issues identified that were not considered capable of resolution, and the remaining four sites were considered unsuitable in the HELAA due to landscape impact and being poorly related to the existing built up area of the settlement. However, three sites were considered as part of a much larger area that could form a new settlement. It is therefore considered that the most suitable site has been allocated for development.

As set out in paragraph 1.24 of the VALP the plan should be read as a whole in relation to any proposed development and Policy NE7 (Pollution, air quality and contaminated land) addresses potential impacts from development on light pollution wherever they are located within the district.

The quality of agricultural land was part of the assessment of sites through the HELAA which concluded that the southern part of HAD007 was suitable for development. It should be noted that paragraph 112 of the NPPF does not prevent the development of agricultural land but seeks to direct development to the lowest quality where development is demonstrated to be necessary. As referred to above, the allocated site scores as the most suitable site for development adjacent to the strategic settlement of Haddenham to meet the overall need for housing in Aylesbury Vale.

The impact of development on flooding and water supply was evaluated through the preparation of supporting evidence for the VALP in the form of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the Aylesbury Vale Water Cycle Study. Policies I4 and I5 of the VALP will ensure that development proposals will be subject to detailed assessment of flooding risks and ensuring a water supply when planning applications are considered.

As mentioned above, the boundary used for the allocation of HAD007 is taken from the HELAA and has been informed by promotion of the land to the Council. The section of the site to the rear of 14 Townsend however is felt to be particularly sensitive, abutting the conservation area and being in close proximity to three listed buildings. This area shown as 'not built development' was informed by the Strategic Landscape and Visual Capacity Study (CD.ENV.004), which hatched the areas of

this site that were considered to be needed as green infrastructure to mitigate harmful impacts. Reference is given in the assessment for this site, on page 38 of the report, that there should be a green infrastructure buffer along the boundary with the conservation area to minimise impact on its setting.

There is a pending application on the part of the site to the south west of Roundhill View shown as 'not built development' on the Haddenham inset map for 5 dwellings with the application reference number 17/02126/APP. This area is directly adjacent to the Haddenham Conservation Area and was designated as 'not built development' to prevent harm to the Conservation Area. The Council's conservation officers raised objections to the development of this site due to the impact it would have on the Conservation Area and listed buildings and it is therefore not appropriate to allow the development of this area as part of HAD007.