

Vale Trends



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The Planning Information Newsletter for Aylesbury Vale District



Produced by the
Implementation and Monitoring Team,
Forward Plans, AVDC

Issue 6: March 2009



1 Introduction

- 1.1 This is the latest issue in our series of newsletters, publicising various facts, figures, and updates compiled by the Forward Plans group. We would be interested to receive your feedback, particularly your comments on information you would like to see or would find useful. The newsletter is intended to supplement the more comprehensive monitoring information which we publish on an annual basis in our Annual Monitoring Report.



2 Recent and current developments

- 2.1 In this section, information is provided about completions that have occurred in the three months from 1st October 2008 to 31st December 2008, and outstanding permissions at the end of December 2008. For a complete list of all sites (showing the status as at October 2008) that are allocated in the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan for housing, employment, and other uses, see the Annual Monitoring Report 2008¹.
- 2.2 Dwelling completions (net of demolitions and losses through conversion) in the quarter from 1st October to 31st December 2008 were as follows:

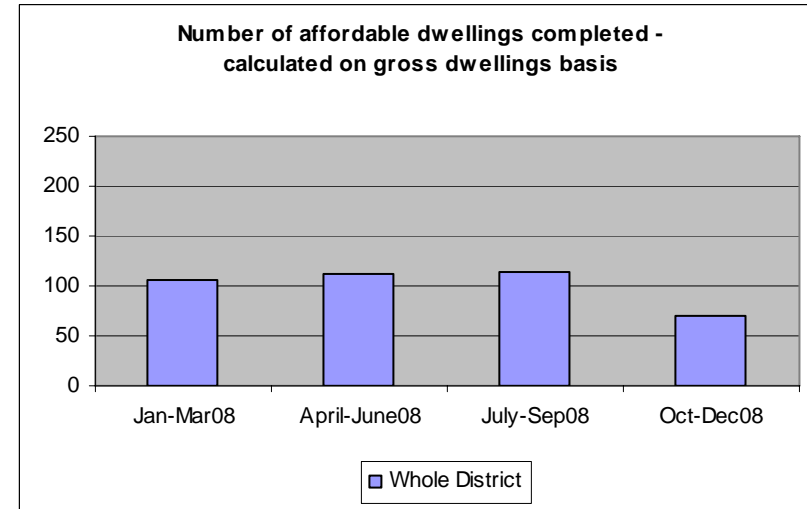
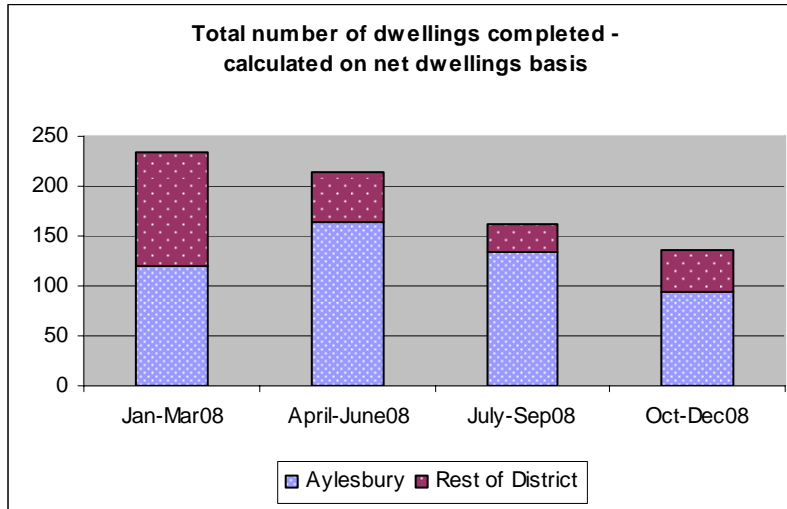
Total dwelling completions (whole District)	137
Dwellings completions in Aylesbury	94
Dwelling completions in rest of District	43
% of dwelling completions on previously developed land (whole District)	68%
Number of completions (gross) of new build affordable dwellings (included in total above)	71
Number of flats as % of total dwelling completions	33%

¹ Available from <http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/planning-building/planning-policy/monitoring-info/annual-monitoring-report/>, or contact us to purchase a printed copy.

2.3 The main contributors to the housing completions in this last quarter were:

- Weedon Hill, Aylesbury (Buckingham Park) - 60 completions.
- 117-119 Bicester Road, Aylesbury - 21 completions.

2.4 The graphs below show the trends in the number of dwelling completions over the last four quarters:



There has been a noticeable decrease in the total number of dwelling completions over the last four quarters. This mirrors the nationwide decline in housebuilding which is occurring as a result of the “credit crunch” and economic downturn. However, the number of affordable dwelling completions has remained fairly constant. The percentage of flats has decreased from a high of 68% seen in the April to June quarter.

2.5 At the end of December 2008, there were valid planning permissions for a total of 7,086 dwellings (net increase) across the District (including 3,000 at Berryfields). Of these, 758 were under construction at the end of December. Compared to the end of September 2008, the number of dwellings with planning permission has increased by 117, and there has been a slight decrease (3%) in the number of dwellings under construction. The sites with the most number of dwellings under construction at the end of December were as follows:

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- Weedon Hill, Aylesbury (Buckingham Park) - 168 dwellings under construction.
- Former Schwarzkopf site, Penn Road, Aylesbury (Grand Central) - 111 dwellings under construction.
- Former Stoke Mandeville Hospital site (south), Aylesbury (The Avenue) - 65 dwellings under construction.
- Single persons unit at former Bearbrook House site, Oxford Road, Aylesbury - 28 dwellings under construction.
- Former Stoke Mandeville Hospital site (north), Aylesbury (The Green) - 26 dwellings under construction.
- Former Princess Marys Hospital site, Wendover (Princess Mary Gate) - 25 dwellings under construction

2.6 As well as housing permissions and completions, we also monitor industrial, commercial, retail and other non-residential development². The floorspace completed in the quarter from 1st October to 31st December 2008 comprised the following:

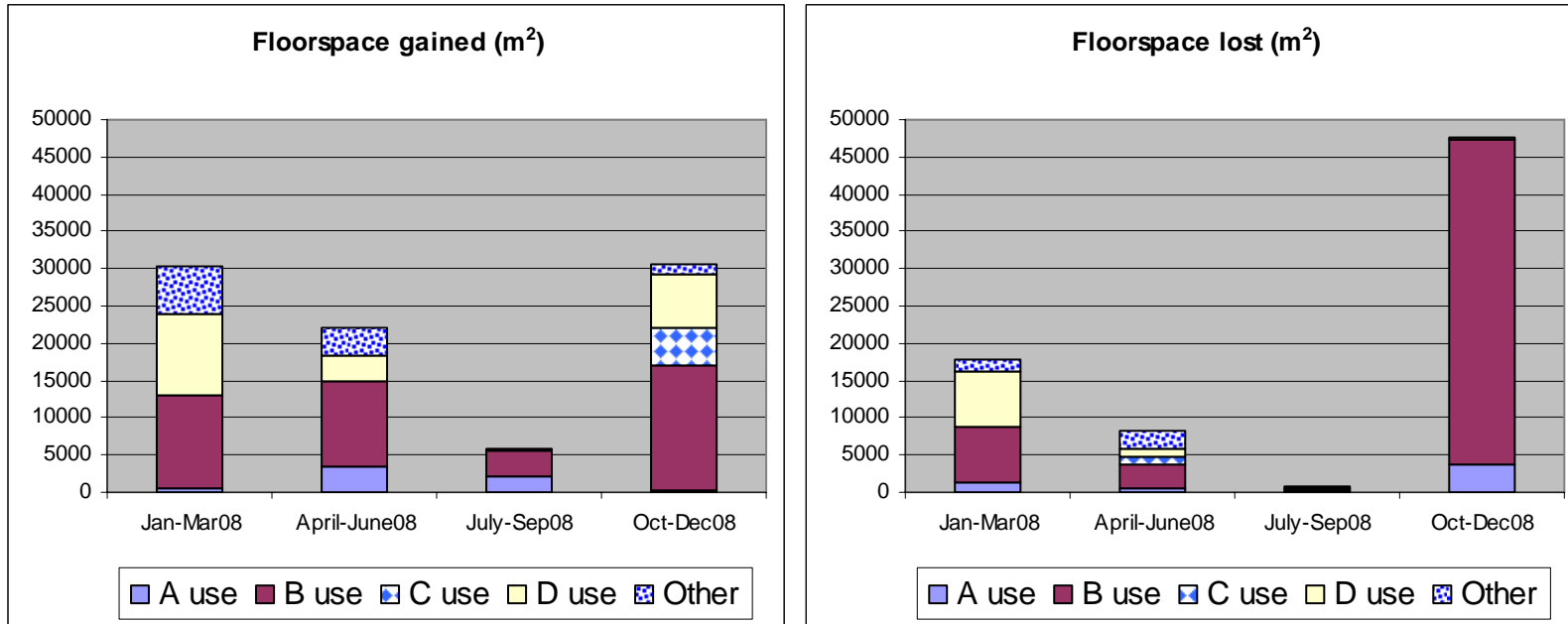
	Floorspace gained (m ²)	Floorspace lost (m ²)
A use classes (shops, financial & professional services, restaurants & cafes, drinking establishments, hot food take-away)	175	3,656
B use classes (business, general industrial and storage & distribution)	16,766	43,561
C1 use class (Hotels)	4 (rooms)	0 (rooms)
C2 use class (residential institutions)	5,140	0
D use classes (non-residential institutions and assembly & leisure)	7,271	270
Other uses	1,212	105
Total (excluding C1 use)	30,564	47,592

² "Use Classes" are set out in legislation (The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, and subsequent amendments). Similar types of building/land use are grouped together into various classes. Our monitoring covers development in use classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, B2, B8, C2, D1, and D2; we record other employment-generating use classes (sui-generis) as "other"; C1 (hotels) is monitored in terms of number of rooms rather than floorspace.

- 2.7 It can be seen that overall there was a large net loss in floorspace recorded in the last quarter. This was largely attributable to a change in the way we record losses on sites³. Large contributors to gains and losses (over 3,000m² net) in industrial, commercial, retail and other floorspace were:
- Demolition of existing industrial units at Southern Road, Aylesbury (loss of 6,321m² B2 floorspace). This site has permission for the erection of replacement industrial/warehouse units, but construction of these has not yet commenced.
 - Demolition of existing retail/business/industrial/warehousing units at Gatehouse Quarter, Aylesbury (loss of 32,000m² floorspace). This site also has permission for redevelopment (see paragraph 2.10 below), but construction has not yet commenced.
 - Demolition of factory at DT industries, Buckingham Road, Gawcott (loss of 3,700m² B2 floorspace). This site is being redeveloped for housing and office units.
 - Erection of industrial units at Long Crendon industrial estate (net gain of 6,403m² B1/B2/B8 floorspace).
 - Erection of 120 bed care home at Hampden Hall, Wendover Road, Weston Turville (gain of 5,140m² C2 floorspace).
 - Extensions to facilities at Halton Village Lawn Tennis Club (gain of 3,650m² D2 floorspace).

³ We have previously recorded lost floorspace on redevelopment sites at the time of completion of the new floorspace. This can cause anomalies, particularly on large sites, where the demolition can occur some considerable time before the new floorspace is completed. We have now adjusted our monitoring so that we record the lost floorspace separately from the new floorspace on such sites. This means that in this last quarter (September to December 2008), we have included the lost floorspace on some sites in the completions for this quarter. It may well be the case that these demolitions actually occurred prior to this quarter.

2.8 The graphs below show the trends in gained and lost completed floorspace over the last four quarters:



2.9 At the end of December 2008, sites with valid outstanding permission (for non-housing development) comprised:

- 23,400m² gain and 9,308m² loss for A use floorspace;
- 169,051m² gain and 45,596m² loss for B use floorspace;
- Gain of 388 rooms and loss of 17 rooms for C1 use (hotels);
- 12,395m² gain and 2,765m² loss for C2 use floorspace
- 46,229m² gain and 7,094m² loss for D use floorspace; and
- 24,225m² gain and 10,513m² loss for other employment-generating uses.

Overall there is an increase (29,403m², or around 17%) in the net amount of floorspace with planning permission when compared to the end of September 2008. Note however that this is attributable largely to

the fact that the demolition of existing buildings at the Gatehouse Quarter has been recorded as complete (so this lost floorspace is no longer included in the total figure for sites with outstanding permission).

- 2.10 The most significant sites with permission in terms of floorspace size (net gain or loss over 10,000m²) are:
- Erection of seven industrial/warehouse units at Coldharbour Way, Aylesbury (gain of 11,303m² B2/B8 floorspace).
 - Expansion of Haddenham business park (gain of 26,822m² B1/B2/B8 floorspace).
 - Erection of data processing centre at Pitstone Green business park (gain of 23,505m² B1 floorspace).
 - Development of land for employment purposes at Buckingham Road/Furze Lane, Winslow (gain of 15,000m² B1/B2/B8 floorspace).
 - Erection of buildings for office use (B1), retail, hotel, care home and nursery purposes at Gatehouse Quarter, Aylesbury (gain of 15,084m² A1/B1/C2/D1 floorspace and 102 hotel rooms).



3 Progress on key development sites

- 3.1 This section highlights key recent events related to the main development sites in the District. For a complete list of all sites (showing the status as at October 2008) that are allocated in the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan for housing, employment, and other uses, see the Annual Monitoring Report 2008⁴. Further details about planning applications can be obtained from our website (see Further Information section below).
- 3.2 Berryfields major development area: The outline application for 235 dwellings at Berryfields House (in addition to the 3000 dwellings already approved) awaits the completion of planning obligation agreements. The application for approval of reserved matters relating to principal infrastructure and earthworks was approved in October 2008.

⁴ Available from <http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/planning-building/planning-policy/monitoring-info/annual-monitoring-report/>, or contact us to purchase a printed copy.

- 3.3 Weedon Hill major development area: The first phases of this development (comprising a total of 850 dwellings) have detailed planning permission, construction is well underway, and a number of houses are occupied. At the end of January 2009, 263 dwellings had been completed, and 170 were under construction. The planning application for the remainder of the site (including the neighbourhood centre, primary school, care home, community centre and sports and recreational facilities, plus further dwellings taking the overall total number of dwellings to 1,035) awaits the completion of planning obligation agreements.
- 3.4 Aylesbury town centre: Various developments are progressing in Aylesbury town: -
- Construction of 24 affordable homes for rent has commenced at former Big Hand Mo's, Oxford Road;
 - The new pedestrian and cycle bridge linking Southcourt and the town centre (The Bourg Walk) was opened to the public in early March;
 - Work is progressing on the Aylesbury Waterside Theatre, which is due to open in 2010.
 - Construction of flats in Walton Street (Viridian Square) is continuing.



The Bourg Walk



Aylesbury Waterside Theatre



Viridian Square

- 3.5 Silverstone motor racing circuit: A development brief for the Silverstone site has been prepared jointly by AVDC and South Northants District Council and was approved in December 2008. This proposes a new employment park adjoining the circuit and a significant upgrade of circuit facilities. The brief is due to be published in April 2009.

- 3.6 Westcott Venture Park, Westcott: An application for nearly 28,000m² of B1, B2 and B8 uses and 4 hectares of open storage was received in January 2009.
- 3.7 Pitstone Green Business Park, Pitstone: An application for a data processing centre (amendment to the existing permission) was received in January 2009.
- 3.8 Former cement works, Pitstone: The full application for 164 dwellings was approved in November 2008.
- 3.9 Land at Thame Road, Haddenham: The application for approval of details for 31 dwellings was approved in February 2009.
- 3.10 The following two major planning applications relating to other sites in the District are currently under consideration:
- Former Little Horwood airfield and adjacent land, Winslow Road, Great Horwood: Outline application for a mixed use development including 3300 new dwellings, open space and recreation facilities, employment land, retail floorspace, hotel, education facilities, community facilities, cemetery, railway station and bus interchange, and relief road.
 - Land to the south of the A421 and east of the A413, Buckingham: Outline application for comprehensive development comprising 700 new dwellings (including affordable housing, primary school, employment land, healthcare, outdoor playspace, changing pavilion, landscaping and creation of drainage detention basin and highway, cycle and pedestrian provision).



4 Local Development Framework

- 4.1 The Local Development Framework, or LDF, will form the new development plan for the district, and is currently in preparation. The first planning policy document will be the Core Strategy. This is the central document in the LDF, and will set the overall strategy for the whole of the district to 2026. The Core Strategy will include the allocation of strategic sites. Other sites will be included in an allocated sites document which

is due to commence preparation in 2010. Our latest Local Development Scheme (which sets out the timetable for the preparation of LDF documents) was published in August 2008.

- 4.2 From late October to mid December 2008 we carried out a public consultation on options for the direction of housing growth at Aylesbury. Following consideration of all pertinent issues (land use technical evidence, public and stakeholder opinion, infrastructure and viability, and deliverability), the eastern arc was recommended to the Council's Cabinet as the best option for the future direction of housing growth at Aylesbury. This recommendation was agreed at the Cabinet meeting on 10th March 2009.
- 4.3 Meetings of the Environment Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and full Council are scheduled in late March and April. These meetings will consider the Core Strategy (including the direction of growth at Aylesbury). Assuming that Council approval is obtained, the Core Strategy will be published this summer for further comments and submitted to Government. The document will then be considered by an independent Inspector early in 2010.
- 4.4 For further information on the Local Development Framework contact our Plans Team:
avldf@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk or telephone 01296 585435, or visit www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/LDF



5 Appeals monitoring

- 5.1 In the quarter ending 31st December 2008 we received 29 decisions on appeals against refusal of planning permission. Of these, 8 were allowed. In this quarter, there was one enforcement appeal allowed, and 3 enforcement appeals dismissed. The comments made by Inspectors in appeal decision letters are monitored on an ongoing basis in order to analyse any implications for the implementation of local plan policies or the drafting of future Local Development Framework policies. The allowed appeals against refusal of planning

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permission are listed in the table below. Further information on policy monitoring is contained in the Annual Monitoring Report⁵.

Appeals against refusal of planning permission allowed in the quarter ending 31 st December 2008		
Address	Proposed development	Application reference number
Old Manor Farm, Reads Lane, Cublington	Conversion and refurbishment of barns to create 6 dwellings	07/01193/APP
32 Station Road, Winslow	Erection of 2 storey dwelling	08/00725/APP
The Haven, Buckland Wharf, Buckland	Detached garage	08/00509/APP
Land to rear of 8 Stockwell Furlong, Haddenham	New cottage	07/03060/APP
4 Newton Road, Drayton Parslow	First floor side and two storey rear extension	08/00153/APP
Land adjacent to Verdun, Western Avenue, Buckingham	Erection of three dwellings	07/02991/APP
57 Camborne Avenue, Aylesbury	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of two detached dwellings, alterations to existing access and formation of new access off Caldicot Close	08/00886/APP
48 Hale Road, Wendover	Residential extensions and alterations	07/03002/APP

5.2 An analysis of the Inspectors' comments that relate to our Local Plan policies did not identify any problems with the policies themselves. As has been the case in previous analyses of appeal decisions, there are certain policies that are quoted more frequently than others. These are:

⁵ Available from <http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/planning-building/planning-policy/monitoring-info/annual-monitoring-report/>, or contact us to purchase a printed copy.

- GP.9 Extensions of dwellings
- GP.35 Design of new development proposals
- GP.53 New development in and adjacent to conservation areas
- RA.13 Development within settlements listed in Appendix 4⁶

Whether or not a proposal complies with these policies is very often a matter of a finely balanced judgement. In the above appeal decisions, the Inspector's judgement differed from the Council's.

- 5.3 One particular issue was common to several of the above decisions. A number of the applications were refused because the proposals were considered to be overdevelopment, but the Inspector did not share that view. The decisions highlight the need to demonstrate clear harm that would arise if the development were permitted.



For feedback and further information

We can supply further information related to any of the topics covered in this newsletter. We can also include your name on our mailing list so that you automatically receive future editions of Vale Trends. Contact the Implementation and Monitoring Team in Forward Plans, 01296 585481 or email avldf@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk. Our postal address is AVDC, 66 High Street, Aylesbury, HP20 1SD. Planning information is also available on our website:

- For information about planning policy, the LDF, our publications list, and monitoring information, go to www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk (follow the links to Planning and building; Planning policy);
- For details of all planning applications, go to www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk then follow the links to Planning and building; Planning applications.

⁶ Appendix 4 of the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan, which contains a list of the settlements to which policy RA.13 applies