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Q1

Title Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/Other(please state)*

Mrs

Q2

First Name*

Katie

Q3

Surname*

Betteridge

Q4

Organisation*(If responding on behalf of an organisation)

N/A

Q5

Email address *

[REDACTED]

Q6

Postal address*

[REDACTED]

Q7

Insert any general comments that do not relate to a specific paragraph number or policy in the general comments box below.*If you are suggesting a change is needed to the draft Local Plan or supporting document, it would be helpful if you could include suggested revised wording. If you are commenting on a document supporting the draft Local Plan (such as a topic paper, or the Sustainability Appraisal), please indicate so.

I oppose the development:

HOUSING:

I completely understand the need for new housing, but infrastructure is very important. There have been 669 new houses built in the past 10 years, and then to add another 80 that'll be 749 new homes (that's not including the Rownhams house, Hillyfields, Fernyhurst and Rownhams Mount developments).

The 2021 'Parish Profile' states that the parish's population density is 4.72 people per hectare, which is higher than the borough's average population density of 2.10 people per hectare. Chilbolton, Romsey Extra and Braishfield (to name a few) are all below the borough's average population density. Based on the latest 2021 census data, our parish currently has a population of 6,113 and a mean population density of 5.22/ha. Between 1951 and 1971, there were less than 700 people resident in the parish. And so in the last 50 years the population has grown by 873%.

All of these houses have been built without any concern for infrastructure. The Abbotswood development in Romsey was mentioned today at the hall as a comparison - they're building 800 homes but they have taken into consideration the development needs of those 800 houses... they have a community centre, shop, cafe, fish and chip shop, nursery, sports ground and so on. There are clear wider issues with lack of GPs and cuts to health and social care etc but also some considerations should be included when we are looking to build more housing in the area.

Rownhams lost its Post Office in 2003. The village also had a hair dresser and shop, which also shut, leaving Rownhams without any local amenities. Nursling has one shop, which is very small and the local schools are full. There are no healthcare facilities in the parish.

I oppose the housing aspect of this development because there are other areas of Test Valley that have more infrastructure and less population density. These would be more suitable sites for development.

INDUSTRIAL ESTATE:

Test Valley say that they will 'conserve and enhance the built, historic and natural environment, including local character, identity, cultural heritage, the variety of local landscapes and the special landscape character of the Borough for everyone to enjoy' however this development will destroy areas of woodland that are an important part of village life. As mentioned above, there has been significant loss in green space in the parish, and with a higher population density, green space is important for the health and wellbeing of the people.

As of 2018, the Parish had an overall deficit in open space of 6.68ha with actual open space totalling 8.76ha against a requirement of 15.44ha. In other words there was a deficit of 43%. Since 2018, the parish population has grown to 6,113 from a 2018 population estimated at 5,147. Therefore the shortfall in open space provision has increased significantly.

There are protected species of plant within the proposed area, including English bluebells (What three Words: 'radio.shops.nearly' 'bright.hedge.dices' 'rods.pirate.marble' to name a few - there are many English bluebells in this land)

The local plan fails to deliver sustainable development.

Q8

Insert any specific comments in the general comments box below, indicating which paragraph, policy or matter your comments relate to where possible.*If you are suggesting a change is needed to the draft Local Plan or supporting document, it would be helpful if you could include suggested revised wording.

HOUSING:

Paragraph 3.14 says that the focus is to support an appropriate level of development at the largest range of sustainable settlements where there are key facilities. However, there are two corollaries of this approach. First, without any new services such as health and facilities such as shops and schools and infrastructure such as transport, more pressure is placed on already stressed services and infrastructure in the key settlements. Second, focussing most new development in key settlements will result in services and facilities in other settlements decline (if they haven't done so already).

However, this strategic approach doesn't seem to have been applied consistently across the borough. For example, development in the market town of Stockbridge although in tier 2 and with a full range of services and facilities is limited to being permitted provided that its size is appropriate to the scale and function of the local centre, it respects the local character of the town and it would not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the local centre. No allocation for new development has been made for the next 16 years.

Paragraph 3.21 says that policies and decisions should support development that reflect local needs and identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive. It goes on to say that national guidance recognises that people in rural areas face challenges in terms of housing supply and affordability and that new housing can be important for the sustainability of rural communities. There is some required development in rural villages, but this varies between a minimum requirement of 10 with the upper amount being 50 in one case only. Meanwhile, the vast bulk of new housing is being proposed in already congested areas.

Therefore the other obvious consequence of this spatial strategy approach of concentrated development is that little or no development is proposed in the rural villages which will exacerbate the current decline and closure of schools, post offices, village shops and pubs in those villages as houses are unaffordable to young families and there is little choice of housing. Residents in these villages will therefore have to transport their children to distant schools and travel to shop and for other services and amenities – hardly a sustainable 20-minute principle for them. It's a laudable aim for people to live so close to their work or other amenities, that they walk or cycle to them, but it's not at all realistic and the vast majority of people will still use their vehicles on an already very busy (and sometimes gridlocked) road system.

INDUSTRIAL

The Policy SA8 refers to a development of 8.5ha. However the combined areas of the two sites (12.6ha for land west of Upton Lane and 4.6ha for the land east of Upton Lane) is significantly greater than this at 17.2ha as can be seen from Figure 4 below as measured from Defra Magic mapping . WHY is the Draft Local Plan is describing 8.5 ha of proposed development when in fact the allocated sites are over twice that size?

The area proposed for this major development is currently outside of the settlement boundaries within the current Adopted Local Plan as shown in Figure 5. That means that the Council has effectively moved the settlement boundary to include the proposed development allocations and has therefore effectively massively shifted the policy goalposts. Indeed the Sustainability Appraisal for the site allocations acknowledges the poor location stating that: "The site also relates poorly to the settlement boundary of Nursling and begins to sprawl development into the open countryside".

The land at Upton Lane is currently designated as countryside and therefore development at Upton Lane is currently restricted by Policy COM2 of the adopted Local Plan which states that:

Policy COM2: Settlement Hierarchy

Draft Local Plan 2040 Regulation 18 Stage 2 Public Consultation

Within the boundaries of the settlements identified in the hierarchy (Table 7) and identified on inset maps 1 - 55 the principle of development and redevelopment will be permitted provided that it is appropriate to the other policies of the Revised Local Plan.

Development outside the boundaries of settlements in the hierarchy (as identified on map 1 - 55) will only be permitted if:

- a) it is appropriate in the countryside as set out in Revised Local Plan policy COM8-COM14, LE10, LE16- LE18; or
- b) it is essential for the proposal to be located in the countryside.

Based on the current adopted Local Plan therefore, any development proposals for land at Upton Lane would be outside the settlement and would only be considered for approval under exceptional circumstances. The character of this land has not changed – it is still countryside used for agriculture. And the land has not changed location – it must still therefore be considered to be outside the settlement boundary.

Upton Lane is a country lane with no street lighting. The use of this lane as the sole access into and out of the proposed allocations both sides of Upton Lane implies that significant artificial lighting will be required on Upton Lane itself and on the access roads from Upton Lane to serve the proposed development. Judging by the high levels of lighting required in connection with the Nursling Estate and Adanac Park this will turn an area of dark countryside into a brightly lit urbanised area totally changing the character and quality of the area at night as well as during the daytime. The Draft Local Plan states that:

Lighting - 5.204 This policy aims to prevent and minimise light spillage, light pollution, glare and sky glow, in order to maintain and enhance the intrinsic darkness of the skies and landscape, for environmental, visual amenity and biodiversity reasons. The policy sets out principles that will be applied to development and lighting proposals across the Borough, with specific provisions for the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and its setting.
