

## Planning Policy

---

**From:** Carol Bartholomew <  
**Sent:** 12 September 2018 15:38  
**To:** Planning Policy  
**Subject:** Local Plan Issues and Options consultation  
**Attachments:** Local Plan Issues and Options CB Sept18.pdf

Dear Planning Department,

Please find attached by response to the Local Plan Issues and Options.

Submitted by

Kind Regards,



## TVBC Local Plan Issues and Options

Consultation on the first stage of the Local Plan.

Responses to questions submitted by Carol Bartholomew,

Email: [carol.bartholomew@bt.com](mailto:carol.bartholomew@bt.com)

### Question 1. What is good about living in Test Valley?

It is a good balance of what I need close to where I live.

### Question 2. What could be improved?

Test Valley markets itself as a rural area running along the route of the River Test. With this should come a great responsibility to keep the streams and rivers free from pollution, having adequate water and having knowledgeable people who know how to manage the streams, rivers and lakes. Andover being built on one of the headwaters of the River Test is now a large town and growing in population. It is most important that an assessment as to whether there is a water source great enough to supply the residents and businesses, that its purity is maintained and the waste water/sewage treatment plants are adequate to cope with the population and unforeseen events such as major downpours. The river Test and tributaries need to be seen as a whole as the way Andover manages drought and flooding will have an impact all down the valley. Building and habitat management and tree planting decisions in Andover will also have an impact. Wildlife is a great asset in the towns and in the villages and this means all of the Test Valley needs to be managed for wildlife. This is true across the UK as species of birds and insects diminish. Test Valley has many interested residents who could engage with this and make a positive difference if the Council gives a lead. Even the choice of plants in flower beds and hanging baskets can make a positive difference to wildlife.

Test Valley Borough Council need to take a lead on reducing emissions which add to climate change and to very much encourage renewable energy. Although the current Government are against wind farms on shore this could change as the economic factors change and the necessity to produce electricity close to the point of use could become a priority. Other forms of renewable energy production may be developed or improved and become commonplace so many sites will need to be planned for.

In 2008 the UK enshrined in law a target of cutting greenhouse gas emissions/carbon emissions, by 80% over the period to 2050. There are interim targets along the way to be reached and it will be an enormous challenge but a necessity to tackle runaway climate change. All aspects need to be supported, energy efficiency, renewable energy, transport, agriculture, in fact it needs to be considered in each and every aspect of life if we are going to achieve the 80% reduction.

New car sales of petrol and diesel cars will be banned by 2040 so people are going to be looking at the alternatives many years earlier and therefore the infrastructure of charging points and the ability to charge cars at home on the most efficient electricity plans will be required. This year huge numbers of people been shocked by the amount of plastic pollution in the land and sea and see it as a crisis, and worth changing their lifestyle to reduce their use of single use plastics. Next year there could be the same emphasis on Climate Change and a willingness for people to put in the effort to live in a way which can make a significant reduction in emissions. The Local Plan needs to support this change by being in the forefront whilst at the same time being able to change course to keep up with turbulent and changing times ahead.

Climate Change mitigation is equally important by being prepared for drought, floods or gales and making building, services and agriculture more knowledgeably able to consider how to adjust.

Test Valley Borough Council could demand more consideration of orientation of housing to help make most use of light and sunshine, but not to over-heat in summer, and positioning of solar panels. The qualities of workmanship need to be inspected to ensure housing built as well insulated housing is truly functioning as such.

The lifecycle from beginning to end needs to be examined in any planning proposal. For example using waste products for producing energy via anaerobic digestion is preferable to using crops grown for the purpose.

Currently there are newspaper reports of builders/developers who leave things unfinished such as lighting, pavements and road surfaces. There needs to be a means to where developers are penalised if work is left unfinished. There is a street in Andover with no paving or street lights as work was never finished before the houses were sold and remains the same six years later.

Test Valley could make more of its proximity of town and countryside by making it easier for people without transport to use both. We have a wealth of village fetes, country pubs and rural footpaths and some thought is needed as to how people in town can also enjoy the rural aspects if they have no transport as well as those in rural areas using the facilities in the town.

### Question 3. Aspirations for the Local Plan for the next 20 years.

To achieve the 80% reduction in carbon emissions. To reduce the total amount energy used, and have plans in place which mitigate against the effects of Climate Change. (Such as flooding drought, loss of habitat, loss of species of plants insects and birds, encouraging farming practises which suit our more unpredictable climate whilst preserving the soil structure and its fertility.) All new planting needs to be of value to wildlife of people incorporating food sources and nesting sites.

Each housing development and business or industrial development should be required to show how it will ensure it is not adding to climate emissions by incorporating efficiency and renewable energy measures into the design at the planning stage. Waste heat from energy production should be used to heat homes or workplaces and combined heat and power plants encouraged. This means having more industrial type plants close to housing for greatest efficiency.

Question 4. Housing requirements. Although Test Valley Borough Council have done a great job in building new houses on estates with recreational areas and local facilities more thought needs to be given to those who have different needs, single people, elderly people, single mums needing

support, people with a disability and those who are looking for rural housing. Some of the new estates are lacking in health facilities and while it is good to use the services in the towns there needs to be adequate GPs, Dentist, Child health provision within reach. The main hospital in Winchester is very difficult by public transport from Andover.

The question of leasehold and ground rent and services to be paid for needs to be clarified locally. People who believe they have bought their own homes outright are finding rising bills for unnecessary services very stressful. It is causing a lot of uncertainty. I believe legislation has now banned this procedure but I think Test Valley should help people to be aware of what they are buying and what extra clauses and costs are in place on particular estates and help manage the process for the new law to be effective. There needs to be help for residents who wish move out of these unnecessary contracts which have rising costs year on year.

Question 5. Should the Local Plan increase housing development to support local growth?

More research is needed as to who is moving to Andover? Do they work locally or do they travel out of Test Valley to go to work, college and school? If it is reducing the amount of travel time and fuel used and people are using the local facilities that is some evidence that local growth is valuable.

Question 10. Affordable housing – is 40% the right amount. The term 'Affordable Housing' needs an explanation as the cost of all housing, rented or purchased to extremely high. It would be of benefit if people renting or buying can be helped to understand this terminology.

Question 13. Self-Build plots and Question 14 Buildings of exceptional quality.

There needs to be some land allocated for self-build. In the 1950s and 60's there were many more opportunities for self-build as I know of people who built on Floral Way and around Barlow's Lane who were very proud of building their own house to their own design. I think individuals would take more care with insulation and making things sustainable. A self-build Passive House I visited over the Wiltshire boarder near Chute is an excellent example.

There needs to be opportunities for building with less conventional materials and designs so as to be able to learn whether non-conventional buildings would be more suitable for future climate changes, sustainable living or supporting community living.

There needs to be a policy which enables innovation and pride in one's work as these houses could become beacons of sustainable living. The policy needs to include small dwellings as well as family homes. Often small dwellings would be in rural areas but innovation needs to be in towns as well so that people still have access to services.

Question 15: Should the council set out a requirement sites should provide for the needs of groups, such as the elderly.

Response: Yes. Elderly people need to be close to facilities as they will then be more likely to use them and be less isolated from the community. Figures in the report show a forecast for the year 2024 where 43% of the population in Test Valley will be age 65 and above. Some people will wish to downsize and those with a disability may need a home adapted to their needs. Sites close to facilities and transport could be allocated. Other groups who needs are not being met are single adults and

families where a family member has a disability. If housing can be built to be accessible and accommodate wheelchairs and have a ground floor toilet/bathroom and flats built with a lift this would relieve a lot of distress when a person becomes disabled. There could be various size of housing so that there is a mix in the generations. These sites would need to be across Test Valley as people wish to be close to family and friends.

Question 19: Do you think we should establish internal space standards for future homes?

I have worked as an Occupational Therapist in Test Valley. Some of the housing is unsuitable for wheelchairs, because, as well as steps and steep slopes outside, wheelchairs are unable to manoeuvre inside due to right angles into doorways, narrow corridors, narrow doors and lack of space. As more people are nursed at home there is often a need for a hoist and a wheeled commode plus one or two carers, impossible in a small bedroom. Adding a stair-lift is a solution in some places but generally an accessible downstairs toilet is also needed.

Question 20: Do you think we should establish standards for accessible adaptable housing. Yes, if you mean all housing. All housing should be accessible from the road by wheelchair and have an accessible toilet. This means people can manage with a temporary disability such as a broken ankle or have visitors, family and friends to visit who need to use a wheelchair. It may mean that a person who becomes disabled does not have to be rehoused before leaving hospital which of course is a dilemma for individuals and services. ( From personal knowledge I know this often happens, where someone's current home is not suitable to go home to after an accident of a stroke)

Page 25 Air quality

Air Quality should continue to be monitored, particularly outside schools at the busy times of day. This air pollution is related to the school journey. A policy could be made to ensure buses and coaches and parents in cars turned off their engines while waiting, and more support and flexibility given to enable children to walk or cycle to school.

Sustainable work place travel should also be supported especially for industrial estates and industries employing large numbers of staff. Thought needs to be given as to how people can get jobs close to home and avoid the daily commute. People working from home may partially solve the problem but some sort of club or support would be good to prevent isolation and encourage good work life balance.

Question 35. Should the next Local Plan promote water efficiency from new developments?

Yes

Paragraph 7.12 states it is possible for local authorities to work with water companies to ensure adequate water treatment. This is essential to give our rivers and streams the highest level of protection from contamination. The Council also need to ensure the ground water supply is also protected from any form of contamination and used wisely. If ground water supply is not adequate for future developments these need to be halted until a new detailed plan of how to keep an adequate water supply has been made. The Council should prioritise keeping the chalk streams and rivers leading into the River Test pristine as this is a rare habitat.

I will be gravely concerned if fracking is given the go ahead without planning permission as is being discussed in Parliament currently (September 2018). I feel the Planning department in Test Valley Borough Council must be involved so as to consider whether there is enough water available for the process and whether toxic waste water can safely be contained. As licences have already gone out to

allow tests for suitable fracking sites in Test Valley around Stockbridge and Abbots Ann for example this is a problem which Test Valley Borough Council may well need to contest on behalf of its residents and the protection of the vulnerable water supply and river systems.

Flooding was an immense problem in Romsey in the winter of 2013-2014. As water is flowing all through the Test Valley plans need to be put in place to reduce the risk of it happening again. There needs to be more research and work done on slowing down water before it enters the river, possible by suitable tree planting on the slopes, or by construction of swales to keep the water where it is needed for longer. Permeable surfaces are needed for driveways and gardens and extensive paving and patios discouraged.

Question 36. Should we identify suitable sites for renewable energy including onshore wind?

Yes. As written in this document Issues and Options, the government states sites need to be identified in the Local Plan for them to be able to be considered.

Question 37. Which areas of the Borough would be appropriate and for which type?

Wind farms should be allocated to higher ground and open landscape near a place to connect to the National Grid and close to a road for access of construction vehicles. Data will be available for the best sites regarding the level or slope and orientation of land for solar panels, again close to a road and a National Grid connection point. Farmers are often approached by solar development companies when they search the local area for ideal sites. Farmers and landowners could be asked if they wish to suggest potential sites and identify these in the local plan. Both of these types of sites could be on low grade farm land or unproductive ground although there are some aspects of farming which can continue successfully around renewable energy plants. The land can also be managed for wildlife and biodiversity. If sites are identified and not used they will remain in their previous use. It is better to have more sites than required allocated in the Local Plan as there will be a lot to consider for the developer to ensure they have the optimum sites for wind or sun conditions. There will also need to be sites allocated for other renewable infrastructure such as anaerobic digesters, geothermal energy and combined heat and power stations, some of which would be best places on an industrial estate or close to the housing which will receive their gas, electricity and heat. Again the landowners will only develop sites as the timing, the market and the costs are right for that development so again more choice of sites is required. Photovoltaic panels often are best sited on roofs of buildings on industrial estates close to where the electricity will be used. Photovoltaics in car parks would be useful so that people can charge their electric vehicles.

Question 38. Should the Local Plan encourage energy efficiency when constructing new developments?

Yes, of course. This has been advised for 40 years or more and standards over the years rise. So yes to keep up with and go beyond current standards as it is beneficial for the reduction of climate gases and the comfort of the residents as well as saving money on heating bills. This also needs to include efficiency measures to keep the house cool in summer as well as warm in winter. Developers should also be advised to install a renewable energy generation plant, most suitable and efficient for each particular site and consider the orientation of buildings for effective light or shade. Highly skilled builders are needed so that a number of Passive House designs can be built for people willing to live with the restrictions and the benefits of a Passive House design. Zero carbon buildings are the target to aim for to help comply with the Climate Change Act of Parliament 2008.

#### Question 42 Biodiversity. Open Spaces.

Planting on the new developments need to be friendly to native birds, insects and wildlife providing food and habitat. Some planting should also reflect the human pleasures of seeing plums, apples and nuts growing, the blossom and the fruits indicating the seasons and the chance to pick a few fruit for a pie. Grass does not need to be kept short and this is unhelpful in a hot summer. Letting the weeds flourish will give a greater food and shelter for wildlife. Less grass and more mix of habitats to make use of every space for biodiversity. I believe this will enhance children's lives as well. Grassed areas for playing ball games but otherwise a mixed and varied range of planting. This will further reinforce the statement that habitats function best where they are well connected. These biodiverse mixed plantings can be encouraged on parts of all of the little patches of green in the towns and help link the designated areas of biodiversity.

Question 44. Promoting sustainable forms of transport. The bus routes need to connect with the railway stations and trains and buses need run into the evening so that people can get back from an evening out. There need to be routes to the local hospitals that fit visiting times and appointments. The surrounding villages need bus routes for college and work. This partly works for buses which specifically go to Peter Symonds College for example and the public can use these buses but unfortunately they are over-crowded. Running scheduled buses all day may not work but it may be possible to have routes and times advertised to solve certain transport needs. These would then have to be well advertised as special services. If all schools and colleges could get the recognition they deserved for excellence and being part of the community people could be more encouraged to use their local schools instead of making long journeys across towns and out of Test Valley. Are there any Sixth-forms and opportunities to take A levels and similar courses in Romsey? From my understanding many students travel to Winchester and Southampton.

Having a large number of footpaths and cycle ways in place are useful, especially if they are shortcuts. The new permissive path inside the hedgerow, alongside Salisbury Road to the Garden Centre near Andover/Anna Valley is fantastic.

#### Question 45 Question 46

The amount of parking per house needs to continue at present standards but it would be useful to keep an eye on work vans which people bring home in the evenings and weekends as these are larger than car park spaces and mean there is often an extra vehicles at certain times of the day. Also with the rise of internet shopping here needs to be room for delivery vehicles to parks and carers and nurses in the community could be visiting a house several times a day so it important there are some arrangements for those who are doing their jobs often on a tight schedule.

For people who wish to bring their work vans home the evenings and weekends, perhaps there needs to be some additional parking allocated away from the home, perhaps with a permit system.

Here is also a problem that although a garage is counted as a parking space a large number of people only use this for storage and are then searching for an additional space in a car park or on a street. I am wondering if a garage can in future be counted as a car park space as it is so rarely used.

So glad to see the provision for homes or car parks to be accessible for electric charging points on new developments. This is now essential.