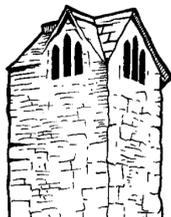


The Friends of Abingdon
Civic Society

Re: Appeal Reference Number: APP/V3120/A/13/2191911/NWF

The Friends of Abingdon Civic Society stands by all its comments in its original objection to the application to Vale of White Horse District Council by Hallam Land Management Ltd for permission to erect 160 residential dwellings on land east of Drayton Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire. We wish to emphasize the following points in response to Hallam Land Management's Grounds of Appeal.

1. We were assured by the government that the National Planning Policy Framework would bring an end to the top-down targets set by central government. When the Planning Minister Greg Clark outlined the new rules to Parliament, he summed up the policy by saying 'It is the end of top-down targets ... it now puts power into the hands of local people'. Therefore we are surprised to see that the main argument (paragraphs 1–4 of the Grounds of Appeal) is based on top-down targets centrally set many years ago and published in documents to which, to quote the appellants, 'very little or no weight should be attached'.
2. The statement in paragraph 5 that the Drayton Road site is appropriate for sustainable development within Abingdon is misleading. In particular, the final sentence 'It enjoys a high level of accessibility, by a variety of modes, to a wide range of employment opportunities, to the town centre and to community services and facilities' is incorrect for the following reasons:
 - public transport links from the site to the rest of Abingdon and to employment opportunities further afield are poor;
 - the community facilities, including doctors, dentists, leisure facilities, etc., are difficult to access other than by private car;
 - there is no state secondary school within reasonable walking distance of the proposed site.
3. We cannot accept the appellant's claim in paragraph 7 that there are no adverse impacts that would outweigh the benefits of the proposals (see point 4 below).



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4. The whole of paragraph 8 flies in the face of evidence accumulated over many years and supported by the submission from Oxfordshire County Council which refers to the 'existing substantial problems regarding the capacity of the network in and around the town and especially with junctions in the vicinity of the application site'. If further evidence is necessary, it can be found in the enormous number of objections submitted by residents across the whole of Abingdon and beyond based on their long-standing experiences with traffic congestion in this area. We cannot accept the appellant's statement that the requirements of NPPF, paragraph 32, have been met. In particular, we do not accept that 'safe and **suitable** access to the site can be achieved for all people'.

Mrs Roberta Nichols
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Friends of Abingdon Civic Society

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