

Matter 2 - The Plan's Strategy – Matter 2

Questions 1-5

(Applicable Plan Policy references include: PR6, PR7, PR8, PR16 and CP1.)

Paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that sustainability is the golden thread which runs throughout our planning system, and that all three pillars of sustainability must be met – social, economic and environmental. I do not believe they have been met either individually or collectively in the Plan:

For example:

- The Plan (P246) notes that the railway station *'will have a vital role to play in establishing sustainable patterns of commuting for the new population of the town. Direct, safe and attractive access to the station for all modes of travel will be needed, and train services of sufficient capacity to meet peak demands'*. Yet the journey times to London have increased over the last few years and the relief road proposal will create an unsafe and congested environment around the station. The plan for the station area put forward back in 2009 was more acceptable – with a less hostile environment for commuters and more homes.
- The Wycombe Commercial Sites Assessment report (2016) identifies that Princes Risborough does not perform strongly on key commercial drivers for national and regional growth trends.
- The Lepus (2015) report notes that there is no significant industry to provide employment in the town. The *'Majority of residents of the Risborough's work outside of the ward'*, there are *'Less start up enterprises looking in the area'*, and the *'Potential for future growth in industrial units is likely to be limited'*.
- As noted in the, UK Government Construction Leadership Council's *'Innovation in Buildings'* report (Nov 2017) in relation to private developers (Page 6), *'Housing completions are typically slowed to match the rates to maintain desired sales prices'*. For anything other than modest housing growth WDC would need to invest in a major public sector housing programme of their own.
- The Sustainability Appraisal for Princes Risborough (March 2016) by Lepus Consulting, states (pN9/N10) that *"In general, options performed negatively with regards to biodiversity, landscape, cultural heritage, water, climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation and land resources'*. It goes on to state that the larger scale of development proposed now *'may be more likely to lead to negative environmental effects, in particular on the setting of the nationally important AONB'*.
- The WDC Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Sept 2017) notes (p152) that *'the planning process should lead to the avoidance of flood*

risk by where possible steering development towards the areas of lowest flood risk.' Yet the Plan is steering development into areas of high flood risk in Princes Risborough with no solutions on how to overcome this risk.

- The relief road proposed will send heavy goods vehicles through existing and new residential areas, and the new railway station hub. There is no consideration to the pollution and safety issues this would create for residents, cyclists, joggers, pedestrians and horse riders.

There is no aspirational vision reflecting the unique AONB location, it is not positively prepared or justified, it is not aligned to the NPPF, and wider strategic issues regarding infrastructure have not been addressed. There is no link between transportation, employment and the housing numbers proposed.

Suggestions:

- Agree through the local community a sustainable development plan with new homes, proportionate to the size of the town, its employment opportunities, location and setting.
- Undertake a sustainable drainage strategy to mitigate against climate change and risks of flooding.
- Develop our AONB tourist potential with a strategic plan to attract more visitors to the area.
- Make better and more imaginative use of our existing infrastructure rather than destroying our existing farm land, Green Belt and AONB with new infrastructure – I have put forward suggestions in this regard in my Representation, **Relief Road – lack of soundness, Suggestions for Change.**