



For internal Use only	ID:		Rep No:	

VALP Proposed Main Modifications Consultation

RESPONSE FORM

Responses are encouraged via the Council's online consultation system available on the website, see <https://aylesburyvaledc.jdi-consult.net/localplan>. However, this form can be returned via email to localplanconsult@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk or in hard copy if necessary to:

Planning Policy, Aylesbury Vale District Council, The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP19 8FF

The consultation runs from 12pm Tuesday 5 November until 5.15pm Tuesday 17 December

This form has two parts:

Part A - Personal Details and Part B - Your comments

PART A

1. Personal Details

Title	<input type="text" value="Mr"/>
First Name	<input type="text" value="Simon"/>
Last Name	<input type="text" value="Willis"/>
Organisation <i>(Where relevant)</i>	<input type="text" value="Willis Dawson"/>
Address Line 1	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 2	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 3	<input type="text"/>
Post Code	<input type="text"/>
E-mail Address	<input type="text"/>
Telephone Number	<input type="text"/>

2. Agent's Details (if applicable)

Title	<input type="text" value="Mrs"/>
First Name	<input type="text" value="Sarah"/>
Last Name	<input type="text" value="Hamilton-Foyn"/>
Organisation	<input type="text" value="Pegasus Group"/>
Address Line 1	<input type="text" value="Pegasus House"/>
Address Line 2	<input type="text" value="Querns Business Centre"/>
Address Line 3	<input type="text" value="Whitworth Road, Cirencester"/>
Post Code	<input type="text" value="GL7 1RT"/>
E-mail Address	<input type="text" value="Sarah.hamilton-foyn@pegasusgroup.co.uk"/>
Telephone Number	<input type="text" value="01285 641717"/>

PART B

REPRESENTATION FORM

Please Note: You do not need to return this form if you have made the same comments via the council's online system for this consultation. Duplicates will not be considered.

Please specify which Proposed Main Modification, part of the Sustainability Appraisal addendum or Habitat Regulation Assessment your comments relate to. Any representations on the content of the new evidence published alongside the Proposed Main Modifications must also relate to a specified Main Modification to the VALP or they will not be accepted. If you wish to comment on more than one Modification please use a separate form for each.

e.g. MM001

MM007

Do you support or object?

Support Object

Do you consider the Local Plan to be legally compliant?

Yes No

Do you consider the Local Plan to be sound?

Yes No

Whilst Pegasus support the initial conclusions of the Inspector, that the existing spatial strategy focussed too much on Aylesbury and that this should be addressed by new allocations in the north of the district, on the edge of Milton Keynes; Pegasus object to the reliance on one site to meet the housing shortfall in this part of the district. It is not clear how the Council decided that only one site should be proposed to meet the shortfall, rather than 2 or 3 sites etc. A range and choice of sites would assist in boosting housing supply.

An objection is made to the SA Addendum which is not transparent. It fails to demonstrate why the 3 options were chosen, or indeed ultimately why one option was preferred over and above the others. There is no RAG assessment of the 3 options, instead the report relies upon Appendix 1 Alternative Appraisal Findings which are based on a sustainability topic and ranking in order of preference. Given that the HELAA assessment of sites (ED208) May 2019 has been updated in respect of the sites chosen, it is considered that the RAG assessment of 2017 should have been updated.

Furthermore, it is considered that an option combining sites should have been assessed, such an option would have been sufficiently distinct to highlight the implications so that a meaningful comparison could be made. Such an approach would have been in accordance with the NPPF and PPG.

The PPG is clear that "*The sustainability appraisal needs to consider and compare all reasonable alternatives as the plan evolves, including the preferred approach, and assess these against the baseline environmental, economic and social characteristics of the area and the likely situation if the plan were not to be adopted. In doing so it is important to:*

outline the reasons the alternatives were selected, and identify, describe and evaluate their likely significant effects on environmental, economic and social factors using the evidence base

....

provide conclusions on the reasons the rejected options are not being taken forward and the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives.

Any assumptions used in assessing the significance of the effects of the plan will need to be documented. Reasonable alternatives are the different realistic options considered by the plan-maker in developing the policies in the plan. They need to be sufficiently distinct to highlight the different sustainability implications of each so that meaningful comparisons can be made.

Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 11-018-20140306

The SA Report Addendum (ED204) at paragraph 1.1.6 states that work to inform the selection of one or more additional sites for allocation was subsequently undertaken, alongside targeted work to inform the preparation of the proposed modifications. It is not clear what has been done as there is very little evidence documented in a transparent way to justify the choice of sites.

Whilst figure 5.1 of the SA Addendum shows the sites in the HELAA on the edge of Milton Keynes, these sites have not been appraised since 2017 yet updates to the HELAA (some sites) have been made which are relevant to the assessment of those sites.

The SA appears to be based on the fact that HELAA assessment identifies Shenley Park.

Paragraph 5.3.3 states that *“there is also a need to consider the possibility of allocating one or more sites identified by the HELAA as unsuitable. Following discussions between the Council and AECOM, the conclusion was reached that the following sites should be explored further.”*

Of the unsuitable sites only land at Eaton Leys (GRB002), and Salden Chase Extension (MUR001) were considered as options alongside land at Shenley Park. Consequently, only these sites are presented as alternative options.

The SA states in paragraph 5.3.4 that in considering sites in the vicinity of Newton Longville, there is limited opportunity for strategic expansion, given the need to maintain a landscape gap between Newton Longville and Milton Keynes edge, more limited potential to deliver new and upgraded infrastructure alongside new housing. However, the HELAA update in May 2019 failed to take account of new information including a landscape assessment and transport appraisal for land west of Newton Leys. Furthermore, there does not seem to be a consistency in approach here as the proposed Shenley Park development will breach the Swan’s Way/MK Boundary Walk and therefore will significantly narrow the landscape gap between Whaddon and the Milton Keynes edge. Land west of Newton Leys (comprising part of NLV013 and also SHM010) will on the other hand maintain a significant landscape gap between Newton Longville and Milton Keynes and it is also relevant to note that the existing committed Newton Leys development will at its northern edge eventually extend closer to Newton Longville thus narrowing the existing landscape gap (see Appendix 1 Location of Options for Development).

The SA also states in paragraph 5.3.5 that in considering sites in Stoke Hammond Parish, these sites would deliver only piecemeal development and that they would not relate well to the MK settlement edge. These comments are both incorrect and misleading as site SHM010 abuts up to Land south of Newton Leys (identified as SHM012 within the HELAA), which has planning permission and is currently being built out. Also, the SA fails to take account of new information including a planning appraisal, which promotes a comprehensive and sustainable development to the west of Newton Leys (comprising part of NLV013 and also SHM010) rather than the assumed piecemeal development referred in the SA.

As referred to above, the summary of the proposed modifications (ED229) that *“the Council has revised the conclusions of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment regarding development around the southern and south west edges of Milton Keynes. It was considered appropriate to concentrate development on one strategic site rather than split the development on smaller sites to maximise infrastructure provision and lessen the impact on the countryside and existing settlements.”*

ED 208 provides the update of sites in North East Aylesbury Vale (May 2019), no map of sites is attached and instead, the document relies on the sites previously assessed in the AVDC HELAA Housing and Economic Development Land Availability Assessment Report in January 2017. Whilst in ED 208 the assessment of some sites has been updated, not all sites have been updated e.g. despite information being provided to the Council by Pegasus on behalf of Willis Dawson in March 2019, no such update has been made for NLV013 and SHM010

In respect NLV013 and SHM010 Pegasus, on behalf of our client Willis Dawson, submitted further evidence including a Planning Appraisal (Appendix 2), Landscape Appraisal (Appendix 3), a Traffic Impact Study (Appendix 4) and a Concept Plan (Appendix 5) on 8th March 2019 demonstrating how the site could be brought forward for development.

The Council's update in May 2019 (ED 208) does not take account of this new information submitted to the Council, in fact the same conclusions from the HELAA in January 2017 are re-iterated.

The 2017 HELAA considered land to the north east of Stoke Road junction (NVL013) as unsuitable due to *'rolling exposed landscape northwest to southeast. Development in this location would be harmful to the built character of the area and not relate to adjacent settlements and be likely to have harmful landscape and visual impact.'* However, the site appraised in the HELAA was significantly larger in extent (32.5ha) than that proposed in the recent Planning Appraisal, and extended much further up the northern slope towards Newton Longville than the current proposals. Therefore it would be erroneous to transpose those conclusions to the current site.

The 2017 HELAA also considered land west of Newton Leys Stoke Hammond (SHM010) *'would be harmful to the built character of the area and not relate to adjacent settlements and be likely to have a harmful landscape and visual impact'*. However, the site circumstances have changed materially since the Council's initial site appraisal was undertaken back in 2015 when the first version of the HELAA was published. The further building out of the adjacent Newton Leys development and its surroundings means that the immediate site context has significantly changed since 2015, and this in itself warrants a full reconsideration and reappraisal of the site.

An up-to-date Landscape Appraisal of these two land parcels west of Newton Leys is attached (Appendix 3). This report concludes that, in landscape and visual terms, the site is considered highly suitable for residential development.

The attached Planning Appraisal Statement (Appendix 2) and a Landscape Appraisal consider the merits of land to the west of Newton Leys has an excellent prospect of being able to deliver an additional allocation pursuant to the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan in meeting the Council's and the Inspector's need to identify additional housing for c 400 dwellings in close proximity to Milton Keynes. The Transport Impact Study for the site (also attached Appendix 4), the study considered the site's expectant trip generation for a development of around 400 dwellings, trip distribution, the provision of vehicular access, collision date and access by sustainable travel modes. The Study concluded that the development is unlikely to have a severe impact on the surrounding road network, the sites benefits from a sustainable location with a variety of facilities located within 2 miles of the development, notably within the existing Newton Leys development and the potential to provide a number of pedestrian and cycle connections to existing routes with Newton Leys development. Furthermore, the existing Newton Leys development currently has a 30 minute bus service to Bletchley Station and onto Central Milton Keynes. The vast majority of homes proposed on land to the west of Newton Leys will be located within 400m of a bus stop once the full Newton Leys bus service is in place.

Land south of Newton Leys, which is currently being built out, lies within the administrative boundaries of Aylesbury Vale District Council. Therefore, the principle of extending the Newton Leys development over the Local Authority boundary into AVDC has previously been accepted.

Furthermore, land south of Newton Leys is due to be completed by 2021 according to the Council's trajectory and therefore this site can follow on immediately afterwards with first occupations in 2022. The site extends to 20.14 hectares, is bounded to the east by the administrative boundary of Milton Keynes Unitary Authority and the Newton Leys strategic development which is now at an advanced stage of being built out, which has included provision of local amenities and services, such as a new Primary School which opened in September 2016, a local centre including an ASDA supermarket and the recently opened new community pavilion for multi-use indoor sports, community activities and changing facilities.

The site has no statutory or non-statutory landscape designations. The site comprises similar and consistent topographical characteristics to the adjacent Newton Leys development which is under construction at the present time, comprising gently rolling landscape.

The site is well contained by roads to the south and west and the existing residential development immediately to the east.

A new northern boundary in the form of a tree belt can be established to prevent encroachment onto higher rising land thus protecting the gap between Newton Longville and the MK edge and creating a landscape framework which respects the local characteristics, including a woodland belt to supplement the contiguous Old Fox Covert woodland block.

The site therefore can be considered as 'rounding off' the existing Newton Leys development by developing land lying within established long term physical features on the ground.

As such, the site represents the only contained medium scale site (c.400 units) within AVDC that is both immediately adjacent to the Milton Keynes administrative boundary and also existing adjacent Milton Keynes development and facilities. (The site at Salden Chase is closer to Newton Longville than our clients site at West Newton Leys.)

Consequently, it is considered that not all reasonable alternatives have been considered in order to accommodate development in the North East of Aylesbury Vale, adjacent to Milton Keynes, therefore the proposed modifications are not sound.

In order to ensure that there are a range and choice of sites and to ensure that there is a five year housing land supply it is considered that the SA should have examined all reasonable alternatives, in a transparent way, taking into account the latest evidence, and not just focusing on 3 selected sites. The alternative options considered need to be sufficiently distinct to highlight the different sustainability implications of each so that meaningful comparisons can be made. Furthermore, the SA fails to provide sufficient explanation for the choice of sites to be subject to SA.

It appears that the decision was made to concentrate development on one strategic site rather than split the new housing figure between sites to maximise infrastructure provision and lessen the impact on the countryside and existing settlements. This approach is not justified, by including more sites – this still enables developer contributions towards infrastructure plus the provision of any required on-site infrastructure as long as they accord with the NPPF. Furthermore, a medium scale proportionate extension to the existing Newton Leys development can help support and improve existing infrastructure.

An objection is made to the SA process and the selection of Shenley Park as the preferred site, particularly as Shenley Park is "highly sensitive in landscape /visual impact terms." And whilst the SA in 2017 considered the site suitable, it also stated that the site was "*sensitive from a heritage/landscape perspective, including as it forms a landscape gap between MK and Whaddon.*" Significant development in this location was also recognised as contrary to the Biodiversity Opportunity Area and/ or the Bucks GI Strategy objectives. Given the above it is not clear what has changed since these conclusions in 2017.

If you do NOT consider the Local Plan to be sound, please specify on what grounds:

Positively prepared Justified Effective Consistent with National Policy

Enter your full representation here:

If your representation is more than 100 words, please provide a summary under 100 words here:

Pegasus consider that not all reasonable alternative sites have been considered to determine which site should meet the housing needs adjacent to Milton Keynes; particularly in the light of new evidence that was submitted to the Council in March 2019. The new evidence considered that the merits of land to the west of Newton Leys has an excellent prospect of being able to deliver an additional allocation pursuant to the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan in meeting the Council's and the Inspector's need to identify additional housing for c 500 dwellings in close proximity to Milton Keynes.
The process of site selection is not transparent and the SA cannot be justified.

Please specify the changes you think are needed to be made to the proposed main modification. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text.

Changes to the proposed modifications should be:

1. include land at Newton Leys for approximately 400 dwellings
2. Policy D2 to be amended to include the above site.

If the inspector decides further hearing sessions are needed would you wish to speak at these?

Yes No

If Yes - you wish to speak at any further hearings, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

Pegasus consider that there are fundamental flaws in so far as the SA has not assessed all reasonable alternatives; as such the proposed modification to include land at Shenley Park is unsound.

Do you wish to be notified...

- When the Inspector's report is published?
 When the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan is adopted?

**Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan: Responses should be returned to Aylesbury
Vale District Council by 5.15pm Tuesday 17 December 2019
(responses will not be accepted after this time)**