

Comments on the RBWM Borough Local Plan 2013 - 2033.

The Hitcham and Taplow Society raises concerns with the draft Local Plan. The Society has been in existence for over 50 years. It has a main objective to ensure that all development within the district is of the highest standard and preserves the quality of the environment. It represents a significant proportion of the residents of Taplow.

The Plan identifies the construction of over 14,000 homes in the next twenty years. The bulk of these are to be concentrated in the Maidenhead region of the Borough. The Plan contains no provision for any corresponding road development. The growth will produce significant extra east west commuting, centred on the A4, as it is unrealistic to assume that these new residences will all find employment in Maidenhead.

The A4 is already significantly over capacity to the east of Maidenhead, producing stress and pollution within Taplow for hours every day. The A4 is also the relief road for M4 closures, where traffic is to increase with its growth to four lanes. The Taplow section also acts as the diversion for Maidenhead bound traffic from Bourne End when Cookham floods.

When road capacity is over stretched, small increases in load produce disproportionately severe effects. We consider that the plans failure to address this problem is unacceptable and out of line with the governments' clear commitment to providing infrastructure development to match housing growth.

Clearly any progress on this front cannot be handled by the Borough alone but the total absence of any reference to the issue or apparent intention to work with adjacent authorities renders the plan unfit for purpose. As it stands it will produce severe problems, stress and pollution for residents of Taplow. It should be rejected until the problem is addressed.