

I write on behalf of the Hitcham and Taplow Society (HTS) with regards to the Wycombe District Local Plan published for consultation.

The Society has been in existence for over 50 years. It represents a significant proportion of the residents of Taplow and Hitcham in its efforts to ensure that all development within our area is of the highest standard and the quality of the environment is protected.

It is with respect to this latter objective - the protection of our environment - that HTS feels justified in registering its objection to Wycombe DC's proposal to locate an additional 750 houses in the adjacent Bourne End and Wooburn area, most of them less than a mile from the Taplow Parish boundary.

By identifying Cookham Bridge as in need of unspecified improvements, the Plan acknowledges the high likelihood that these new residents will generate a substantial growth in traffic heading south. Some will travel to Maidenhead. Others will drive to the A4 (already significantly over-capacity) or the Great Western Railway to commute eastwards into London or west along the Thames Valley. Given the fragility and limited capacity of Cookham Bridge, many will drive through Taplow's narrow, rural roads causing congestion, pollution and stress.

Together, the emerging local plans for the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough and the Buckinghamshire Districts of Wycombe and South Bucks & Chiltern are proposing thousands of new houses which will lead to significant traffic growth on the A4 and, critically, on its feeder roads such as those through Taplow. Yet none of these plans seems to pay much attention to the need for considered investment in infrastructure which this increase in population will necessitate. Three of these neighbouring local authorities appear to formulate plans which ignore any impact beyond their district boundaries, and the fourth aims for a cross-border land-grab without appropriate consultation. None seem to have recognised that it is essential to work together to consider 'the big picture' and assess the consequential impact on local infrastructure and develop coordinated practical remedies.

HTS will remain opposed to any significant increase in the local population until it is satisfied that neighbouring authorities have applied cross-boundary joined-up thinking and have plans to invest accordingly.

Roger Worthington
Secretary, Hitcham and Taplow Society