

12th May 2017

HOLTON PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO:

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2033 Second Preferred Options Document

Land at Wheatley Campus

4.60 The statements in this paragraph seem to indicate that the Campus is in the village of Wheatley. The historic Holton Park which includes the Brookes Wheatley Campus is in the parish of Holton, a rural village totally washed over by the Green Belt. The land adjacent to the north side and east of the site is bounded by agricultural fields and woodland, to the west the parkland area of Wheatley Park School and to the south the A40. The Campus site is equally near any habitation in Holton as it is to Wheatley and all the approaches to the site are rural in nature and in Holton. The site is on high ground and dominates the skyline as seen from Holton village. The parish of Holton currently has 135 dwellings.

Holton Parish Council support **4.61** *“The principle of redeveloping previously developed sites is set out in national policy. Proposals for redevelopment should not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development”*

Definition of the Built Area

Policy STRAT10 – Land at Wheatley Campus, Oxford Brookes University states the existing development footprint at 12 hectares this is disputed by Holton Parish Council.

The existing built form including, quite generously, the tennis courts, parking areas and roadways covers approximately 6 hectares which is in stark contrast to the development footprint set out in this policy of 12 hectares. This would indicate an intrusion into the Green Belt of approximately 6 hectares and therefore needs to be rectified to comply with Green Belt policy and preserve the local historic landscape.

***map attached showing the area Holton Parish Council consider to be the built form**

The ‘Strategic Allocation’ as shown in the Local Plan 2033 Second Preferred Options Document includes the whole site within a red line, the inclusion of all land as shown is not in accordance with paragraph 83 or 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Holton Parish Council supports the retention of the Green Belt status over the whole Oxford Brookes University 22 hectare site.

The development of the Oxford Brookes University site needs to be handled with consideration for the purposes of the Green Belt, as it appears that these are currently being side lined in favour of meeting housing need.

Holton Parish Council does not dispute that the site could provide housing but the impact of this provision needs to be considered further in line with the 6th bullet point of paragraph 89 of the NPPF *“limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which **would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development [emphasis added]**”*. The inclusion of all land as shown within the red line of the Oxford Brookes (former) Wheatley Campus is not in accordance with paragraph 89 of the NPPF and should be reviewed. At present the areas of all the playing fields contribute to the openness of the Green Belt.

A review of the developable area of this site needs to be undertaken by SODC and to be in accordance with current National and Local Planning Policy this should be tightly drawn around the built form only.

The inclusion of the two private but derelict dwellings on the Waterperry Road is considered to be incorrect and although owned by Oxford Brookes are not part of the campus. Developing these areas, in association with the redevelopment of the campus, would not be in accordance with any current National or Local Planning Policy and therefore these areas should be completely removed from the red line as shown in the Local Plan 2033 Second Preferred Options Document.

Preservation of the Playing Fields

Holton Parish Council support STRAT 10 “Proposals to develop land at Wheatley Campus will be expected to deliver: iii) *the retention of the existing sports pitches in the north west of the site.*” These playing fields contribute to the openness of the Green Belt and are adjacent to agricultural fields and woodland.

Landscape Buffer

Holton Parish Council support STRAT 10 “ii) *A layout and form which provides an appropriate buffer to protect the Scheduled Monument.*”

The ancient fish ponds to the south of the site should also be considered in need of protection and preservation.

In 2005 there were on the site tree preservation orders on 90 trees and 11 groups of trees (reference SODC Tree Preservation Order No. 35/2005) being part of the historic park. Although some of these will have been lost in the intervening period it is important to preserve the remainder.

Setting of Listed Buildings

St Bartholomew’s Church in Holton is Grade I Listed within 500 metres of the Oxford Brookes University site. The setting of a Heritage Asset is defined in the NPPF as:

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

High Court judgements Forge Fields and Barnwell Manor set out the importance of the setting of Listed Buildings.

It is considered that the Oxford Brookes site, by virtue of its location and direct views from the Church, is included in the setting of this Listed Building of exceptional interest. Only 2.5% of listed buildings are Grade I.

There are a number of other Listed Buildings in the surrounding area in addition to the Old House at Wheatley Park School which should not be ignored.

Volume

During a workshop with representatives of Oxford Brookes and their planning consultants, Bilfinger GVA, on 8th May 2017 it was repeatedly mentioned that the volume of the existing buildings would govern the final quantity and height of any proposed dwellings. This is not corroborated by any current National or Local Planning Policy.

Paragraph 89 (3rd bullet point) of the NPPF states *the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building*. This is not in relation to the partial or complete redevelopment of a site as this is covered by the 6th bullet point of paragraph 89.

It is important to note that there should be no confusion on this matter and that the volume of the existing buildings does not and should not be used to justify a wider expanse of or even higher proposed new dwellings.