

The Planning Inspectorate

COMMENTS ON CASE (Online Version)

Please note that comments about this case need to be made within the timetable. This can be found in the notification letter sent by the local planning authority or the start date letter. Comments submitted after the deadline may be considered invalid and returned to sender.

Appeal Reference: APP/U3100/V/23/3326625

DETAILS OF THE CASE

Appeal Reference

Application By

Site Address

SENDER DETAILS

Name

Address

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?

- Applicant
- Agent
- Interested Party / Person
- Land Owner
- Rule 6 (6)

What kind of representation are you making?

- Final Comments
- Proof of Evidence
- Statement
- Statement of Common Ground

Interested Party/Person Correspondence

Other

YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

Dear Planning Inspector,

Please reject the HIF1 application, per the P&RC's 7-2 vote on July 18th.

There remain 8 significant areas of improvement required:

1. Climate Change - This is a material consideration against the HIF1 application. OCC are committed to a ZERO CARBON future. Together with the Science Vale, and local businesses, forward-thinking developments SHOULD NOT rely on new car, and HGV routes. An existing railway services the proposed HIF1 route: Invest in improved rail services. Build a bespoke cycleway alongside the railway. Support the shift toward greener, more affordable and reliable public transport.

2. Green Belt - As above, local technological development and scientific endeavour makes the Science Vale an important region for growth; economically, and the associated infrastructure to support this. Incentivise the Culham Science Centre expansion, and associated housing developments to showcase how the UK can deliver economic growth, housing and new development with as little impact as possible, preserving our local environment. 20-minute settlements are proving successful on the continent, enable these in Oxfordshire. Their success would result in significant local infrastructure investment, and models that could be further improved and delivered elsewhere, not to mention potential savings to the government and OCC from not having to fund HIF1.

3. Impact of Traffic in Abingdon, and beyond HIF1 scheme boundary - UPDATED POST-COVID TRAFFIC MODELLING IS NEEDED. MODELLING SHOULD INCLUDE ABINGDON, INDUCED DEMAND from the proposed scheme, and beyond the boundary of the scheme to ensure that bottlenecks are not just being pushed from one location to another. As is, any improvements that HIF1 might deliver to Didcot would be offset by gridlock into Abingdon. Current traffic issues are focused at peak time, mid-week, and during term. If schools and businesses (Culham Science Centre, etc) worked together, quicker, cheaper alternatives to HIF1's massive, expensive, Carbon-intensive new scheme could be delivered, e.g. staggered working hours, more trains (Didcot - Culham - Oxford), etc. What evidence is there that other options have been considered? Locals will keep asking until we see evidence.

4. Noise impacts on Appleford - in addition to the noise, please consider the air and light pollution that will impact the whole area. HIF1 will also enable the re-routing of HGVs - at elevation - and completely transform the local environment, with knock-on countryside impacts, e.g. vista from the Wittenham clumps, etc. Per point 1, the changes required to satisfactorily improve the application are significant, and require rejection of HIF1 application as stands. A further significant alteration requested by Appleford, is for the reconfiguration and siting of the Appleford Sidings Bridge. The Appleford Sidings Bridge could be repositioned to perpendicularly cross the Sidings. This would make it shorter, cheaper and reflect less noise back toward Appleford dwellings. Logically, financially and environmentally, the current positioning makes no sense.

5. Absence of Health Impact Assessment - per comments to point 4, the negative impact current plans will have on the local area - to people, habitats and communities, cannot be underestimated.

6. Harm to the landscape - as above. Research increasingly confirms the valuable underground networks that exist between mature trees. These are irreplaceable. New planting will take decades to mature, and can never replace what's been destroyed. Locals do NOT want to prevent any change, but like point 2, ref the Green Belt, the destruction of local nature, landscape and habitats should not happen unless all other options have been exhausted. Locals are still waiting for evidence of the alternative options. Particular concerns also remain relating to flooding implications.

7. Design of Gateway - the Science Bridge requires improvement, as does the Appleford Sidings Bridge.

The Appleford Sidings Bridge should be improved, and moved West, so that it perpendicularly crosses the sidings, rather than the current angle which requires it to be larger, longer, more expensive, and more (noise) reflective than needs to be. As planned, the Appleford Sidings Bridge will magnify noise back to local residents, at great cost. This should not be allowed. It is poorly designed, and needs to be reconfigured alongside the even larger, bigger, and more expensive Science Bridge.

8. Conflict with Council's own Local Transport Plan. - how are the Council allowed to set, and then ignore their own policies?

Thank you