



Campaign to Protect
Rural England

HAMPSHIRE

CPRE Hampshire Test Valley District Group

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07/01951/OUTN – Erection of Business Park

CPRE have long expressed concern about how the Andover Business Park will be developed. The site is a key one and its success or otherwise will have a significant impact on the future prosperity of the town and its surrounding villages. We are not opposed to its development, as laid down in the policies of the Local Plan, but the challenge is to get it right for the future of the local economy and the mix of jobs available for the local labour force. The Local Plan asserts that the Park “is intended to provide for the long term employment needs of Andover”. The recent Andover Vision says “we want to bring new skills into the town, new skills to support business growth and create the high quality employment opportunities we need”.

Both these documents – the Local Plan and the Andover Vision- involved widespread consultation across the community and embody a carefully thought out way ahead for the area.

It is therefore much to be regretted that phase 1 - Plot 4 and some 50% of the whole site- should involve an enormous warehouse and distribution centre. It will dominate the whole Business Park in a physical way and its generation of HGV traffic. We are not persuaded that this offers an acceptable way forward

- It is totally out of scale and nothing can disguise the slab like nature of the structure
- It is obtrusive and will dominate its surroundings
- It will not offer the mix of jobs and skills that the town needs
- It will create serious congestion issues around access to the A303 and will add to the food miles covered by the delivery fleet

The Local Plan under policy DES 01 “Landscape Character” aims to safeguard the landscape character by setting out 3 important conditions

A It can be accommodated without detriment to the distinctive landscape qualities of the area within which it is located

B its visual impact is in keeping with the local character of the area and

C there is sufficient landscaping to enable the development to integrate successfully into the local environment



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The scale and height of the main building (it is 16.35 metres high) make it a megastructure, a looming and dominating presence over the whole site. Its presence on the flat airfield site, falling away only slightly towards the west will be intrusive and highly visible from the A303 There is nothing in the submitted plans to convince one that the aim to minimise the sense of mass and scale has had any success; nor that the design effort to offer a horizontal emphasis will be effective.

On the employment front the town has long enjoyed” full employment” with an unemployment level of 1% or under. However the local economy has a much bigger than average share of low skill, low qualification, low paid jobs. There is a broad consensus emerging that the town needs a higher quality mix of jobs – higher skill, higher qualification, higher paid. This is one of the strands behind the recent launch of Andover College; to raise standards amongst our school leavers, now regrettably well below the average for the County and raise their contribution to a developing local economy. The mix of jobs and skills within a distribution depot on this scale is not something that will contribute to that approach.

In the view of the CPRE the proposal for Plot 4 runs counter to the policies of the Local Plan

- It will dominate the local landscape and be visually intrusive
- It dominate the Business Park and the businesses there
- It will exceed the traffic capacity of the link with the A303 even with the improvements to the access
- It will have serious knock on consequences for traffic movements on the west side of the town and in the adjacent villages