

P15/S3228/O

PLANNING COMMITTEE SUBMISSION FROM MIND THE GREEN GAP

PART FIVE

16th May 2016




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This is the fifth in a series of short documents from Mind the Green Gap. It provides further sound planning reasons to support refusal of the Application on 18th May.

Previous mailings have demonstrated that this unplanned and speculative application should be refused for the following reasons:

1. The site is not allocated in any local plan: past, present or future.
2. The development would create coalescence between Didcot and East Hagbourne.
3. Inappropriate levels of density...
4. ...Compromises good quality design and local distinctiveness.
5. Loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land.
6. Severe harm to AONB.

This document details the failure of the Application to secure **INFRASTRUCTURE**.

Each of our submissions to the Planning Committee is available on the **Mind the Green Gap** website.

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"We need to spend on infrastructure to support existing residents and those moving into the new houses we're getting ... that includes new roads and improvements to roads already struggling." Cllr. John Cotton, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council 25th November 2015.

7. FAILURE TO SECURE INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy CSI1 of the Core Strategy advises,

“all new development must be served and supported by appropriate on and off-site infrastructure and services and that planning permission will only be granted when infrastructure and services to meet the needs of the new development are agreed, in place or will be provided within an agreed timescale”.

The Officer’s report confirms that there is no legally binding S106 agreement in place. No draft agreement has been published. In fact, there is not even a Universal Undertaking from the Applicant to enter into such any such agreement.

This means that currently this application fails to secure amongst other things:

- 40% Social housing
- Any new primary schools
- Improvements to Jubilee Way roundabout.
- Green Space

This failure is exacerbated by the fact that the Application proposes to deliver no new social infrastructure on site.

The importance of having a binding agreement is vital. Right now there is only doubt and uncertainty. Whilst OCC has been pressing for a S106 contribution of £465k to an infrastructure scheme to relieve Jubilee Way roundabout currently operating beyond capacity, the Officer’s report indicates that only a third of that will be potentially forthcoming through a “Developer contribution to Jubilee roundabout c. (£167K total).”

Members will recall that recent, high profile Applications at Tetsworth, Chinnor and Stadhampton were all refused on the basis that no

infrastructure agreements in place at the time of their determination by the Planning Committee. SODC’s Officer at Stadhampton remarked,

“the crucial point is that speculative proposals such as this, as opposed to plan-led development, can adversely affect the proper and planned delivery of infrastructure. The application is unacceptable for this reason.”

This point is well made particularly in the new world of “pooling”. Only five contributions can be assigned to each infrastructure project. In the 2031 Infrastructure plan – explicitly referenced by CSI1 - the budget to upgrade to Jubilee Way roundabout is given as £6,000,000. Therefore this Application proposes a Developer contribution of just 2.7% to the total cost. The end of traffic misery in Didcot seems even father away.

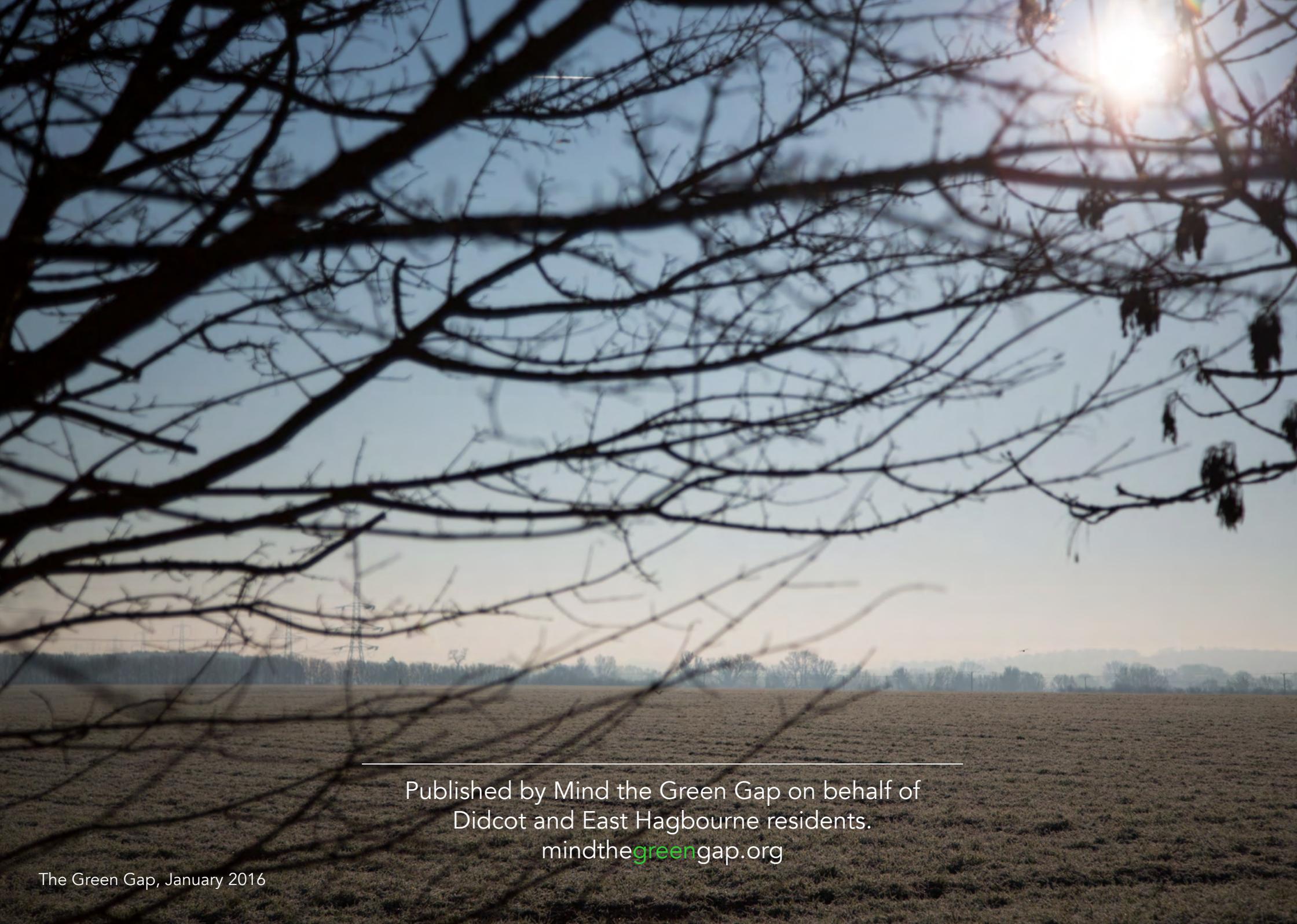
Finally, let us place the agreements in context. NPPF paragraph 177 states:

“It is equally important to ensure that there is a reasonable prospect that planned infrastructure is deliverable in a timely fashion.”

There is no reasonable prospect of any infrastructure here, let alone infrastructure delivered in a timely fashion.

This is to not to suggest that it might not be possible to reach such agreements. Only that when you are required to make a determination, none are in place.

Infrastructure, or most pointedly the lack of infrastructure, at Didcot is a huge and public issue. SODC has been dynamic in trying to rectify this situation with the successful Garden Town bid and other initiatives. Failure to secure any infrastructure – or social housing - with this Application is a serious and fundamental flaw. It is a reason therefore that it must be refused.



Published by Mind the Green Gap on behalf of
Didcot and East Hagbourne residents.
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