

## **Outline submission from the Itchen Valley Parish Council and The Upper Itchen Valley Society for the Blueprint Consultation**

### **Transport**

- Good for commuting to London from Winchester station and driving to Winchester /Basingstoke /Soton
- Bad for bus journeys
- Some employment locally on farms and in small businesses eg at Itchen Abbas Business Park
- Most will use a car. Some responses to the Parish Council questionnaire (“Q responses”) criticise lack of co-ordination between trains and buses.
- Many commented on poor road maintenance.

### **Schools**

- Small state primary school in Itchen Abbas
- School buses to Winchester secondary schools
- Excellent choice of pre-prep, prep and public schools for girls and boys
- Nursery schools in Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy

### **Environment**

- Mostly in South Downs National Park and Conservation areas
- Attractive countryside, SSSIs, SAC designation for the Itchen
- Leisure facilities – boules, fishing, cricket in Easton, golf courses at Avington and Hockley, many private tennis courts, good network of footpaths. Playing fields and children’s play areas
- Shopping, GPs, dentists about a 5-mile drive away
- Good village/community atmosphere
- Many respondees were very concerned about creeping urbanisation of this rural area.

### **Housing**

- Range of family houses in most price ranges except the lowest
- Small 2/3 bedroom cottages popular with single people and couples
- Some council property including sheltered housing in Itchen Abbas for over 60s.
- Exception site in Martyr Worthy – 10 houses run by Hyde Housing Association plus three small dwellings in Itchen Abbas on a recent Banner Homes development.
- Few current residents lived here as children with the exception of major landowners
- No evidence of demand for people to live very close to parents.
- Demand for low cost houses on the exception site (built 2007), by people able to show a local connection, was only just enough to justify it.
- Q responses showed a reluctance to move away unless forced to do so by inability to drive/ too much development in area / work relocation.
- Many people remain within the Valley villages when they do move.
- Very few houses remain on the market for long so the area is popular despite the high prices.

**Who lives in the Itchen Valley?** Typical (but fictitious) Itchen Valley residents.  
Please feel free to modify!

### **‘Edward and Susie’**

- a couple in their mid forties with three children, one at the village school and the two older ones at private prep schools.
- Edward commutes to London and Susie is a part time HR consultant.
- They chose to come to the Itchen Valley because of the good choice of schools, the proximity of the Station and a desire to bring up their children away from the city.
- They moved out of London five years ago and enjoy leisure activities with other families in the villages.

School runs take up a large part of Susie’s time. They have an au pair and some help in the house and garden. Susie has groceries etc delivered from a supermarket .

- Parking at Winchester Station can be a problem particularly if either of them need to go up to London slightly later in the day.

### **‘Peter and Jane’**

- In their early sixties. They bought a medium sized house in one village about 20 years ago, when Peter’s job moved to Basingstoke, but a few years later moved to a larger one in another village.
- Not ready to downsize and need spare bedrooms when their children and grandchildren come to stay.
- They take an active part in the local community, shop in Alresford and much less often in Winchester (apart from occasional trips to a supermarket).
- Jane’s mother is in a care home locally and she visits her a couple of times a week.
- Peter was a director of a company in Basingstoke but has recently retired.
- They have a small house in France where they would like to spend more time but worry about security if they leave their house here empty for too long.
- They anticipate that they may need some help in the house or garden as they get older and may eventually move to Headbourne Worthy.

### **‘Rosemary’**

- Rosemary is in her fifties and has been divorced for some years. She has a job at Winchester hospital and earns a reasonable but not large income. She was attracted to the Itchen Valley by the range of small houses in the villages.
- She plays an active part in the community, does Pilates in the Village Hall and enjoys walking on the many footpaths. She expects to stay on in her house when she retires in a few years.
- She travels to work by car and uses the park and ride. It is not really practical to use the bus route which is a 15 minute walk away anyway but she may use the bus more when she retires and has more time and a reduced income.

### **Future Development**

- Large developments are unpopular, particularly where high density, mass house building on greenfield sites is concerned.
- Q responses showed that residents do not feel a need for more development and indeed most have chosen to come here because of the character of the villages and lack of development.

Successful recent developments are:

- Westhill Dairy in Avington (conversion of redundant farm buildings)
- Chandos Terrace in Avington (row of houses similar to The Row)
- The Old Dairy Easton (conversion of redundant farm buildings)

Less successful recent developments are:

- Banner Homes site in School Lane, Itchen Abbas where the houses do not reflect the local character and the density is too high. Drainage was not considered, resulting in the communal Klargest unit being sited at the gate of an existing house in the lane leading to the school.
- Chillandham Cross in Martyr Worthy. These houses did not sell quickly. Access involves driving too close to the existing house to reach the three new houses. One large house is compromised by two very small ones does not seem to work here. By contrast the development of four equally sized houses to the north was very successful.

Conclusions from Q responses so far:

- Development should be on a small scale.
- People are very much against urbanisation of the area.
- Older people downsizing do not want to move into houses with very small rooms as they are used to space. Fewer bigger rooms would be preferable.
- Developments in keeping with the locality or in redundant farm buildings are more acceptable.
- Improved public transport is another main concern of residents.

Other considerations:

- Loss of smaller houses:

Over the years we have lost smaller, and therefore more affordable, houses either by conversion of two into one or by overdevelopment through building extensions.

Drainage

- Easton has mains drainage, the other villages do not and planning officers are not giving sufficient consideration to drainage problems when approving applications. Where there are no mains drains, it is not appropriate to leave it to the Building Regulation staff to find solutions.
- Road drains are poorly maintained and many roads flood from run-off from fields and high ground. This needs to be addressed urgently in some areas.

Access

- The grassy banks and verges and the narrow lanes leading down to the river lend great charm to these villages and their Conservation Areas. These verges can be badly and in some cases permanently damaged by builders' lorries. An obvious example is the five years of development work at the bottom of Chilland. Would it be possible to look at including conditions about the size of vehicles in appropriate cases or refusing consent because it is not possible to carry out the development without damage to the surroundings?
- verges are not being properly maintained. If residents must look after these verges, why should contractors not be required to pay for re-instatement?

Development timescales:

- Problems also arise where developments are started but take an inordinate amount of time to complete.
- Could conditions be imposed requiring development to be completed within a certain time frame?

## Appendix

### Population projection for the Itchen Valley Ward

Age	0-4	5-15	16-44	45-64	65-74	75+	total
	Pre-school	School age	Young family	Middle age	pensioner	elderly	
2001	93	199	569	608	201	141	1811
2006	91	188	574	615	200	182	1849
2011	89	176	578	622	199	223	1887
2016	92	158	543	605	217	239	1854
2021	89	157	525	597	220	270	1858
2026	86	151	522	564	215	301	1839
2031	83	146	510	525	230	315	1808

### Natural Change dwellings

Year	Dwellings
2001	839
2006	
2011	877
2016	897
2021	916
2026	930
2031	941

The average number of people per dwelling falls from 2.16 to 1.92 over the period 2001 to 2031.

It should be noted that the figures in the appendix cover the Itchen Valley Ward. This includes other villages so that the need for additional houses is less than would appear from these figures.

The total number of adult residents in the Itchen Valley is approximately 1100.