

Hundreds of home may be built before new A34 deal

HUNDREDS of homes could be built in North Abingdon before a deal is struck on planned improvements to an A34 junction.

Vale of White Horse District Council officers have advised the authority's planning committee to approve CEG's plan for 950 homes off Dunmore Road on Tuesday, even though government funding for a 'diamond junction' at nearby Lodge Hill has not yet been approved.

That proposal, which would add slip roads to the south of the junction, is seen by many residents as necessary for the road network to cope with increased traffic in the area. At present, drivers can only join the A34 at Lodge Hill to travel north.

Council officers have suggested the planning committee could limit the number of homes occupied, rather than the number of homes built, before a deal is struck over the planned junction improvements.

County councillor Emily Smith said: "There's a real concern about the recommendation. More housing being built without the slips is the worst-case scenario. It will obviously put more traffic on the roads."



Villagers in Culham on their walk to protest about the plan for 3,500 homes in the area

Protestors pace perimeter of housing site

PROTESTERS paced the perimeter of a planned development that they say would dwarf their village.

Residents of Culham, which has a population of about 450, are concerned by proposals to build 3,500 homes on Green Belt land.

In a proposal in its Local Plan, South Oxfordshire District Council wants to deliver 'innovative' housing in the area to promote the continued success of Culham Science Centre.

Residents staged a protest walk this month, wearing green ribbon belts and carrying branches to signify the supposed protected status of Green Belt. Culham resident Sophie Wilson said: "Residents are outraged that the plan described the beautiful open countryside allocated as 'suburban in nature' – Culham is an ancient village with a small population.

"The major impact of such a development would be severe

congestions on the roads and villages around Abingdon."

Council leader John Cotton said: "The Culham site was identified in our consultation last summer but – with its strong transport links and proximity to a major jobs site – we have now asked for detailed views on its suitability for housing. We've had hundreds of comments sent in – both in support and against the idea – and we will be considering those carefully."

Firm confirms the loss of yet another bus route in county

ANOTHER rural bus route in West Oxfordshire is to stop operating in the wake of the withdrawal of council subsidies.

Pulhams Coaches has continued to operate the X8 route between Chipping Norton and Kingham railway station, via Churchill and Kingham village since its subsidy was removed in July last year, but announced this week that the service would end on Friday, July 21.

It said it had taken the decision due to low passenger numbers, which meant it could not make the service profitable.

Pulhams said in a statement: "Oxfordshire County Council removed the bus subsidy from this route last summer and we agreed to operate the service on a commercial basis, with a review after one year.

"Unfortunately, the low patronage on the X8 service means the service is not commercially viable without subsidy from the local authority. We understand this will be disappointing news for passengers but hope they appreciate our position."

The Pulhams X9 service between Chipping Norton, Charlbury and Witney will continue.