



Begbroke and Yarnton Green Belt Campaign (BYG)

D4: BYG submission *re* Historic England and the Importance of Input from ICOMOS International.

In our **D2** submission **REP2-062** we commented on Historic England's (HE) assessment of Botley West. Most notably, it omits consideration of the impact on its OUV of the changes that would take place in the wider setting of the Blenheim WHS.

Reference is made by HE to the ICOMOS International 2024 Technical Review. In full awareness of the Botley West proposal, the Review expressed concern that *"the proposal would lead to a large change in the landscape character of the setting of the property (from rural to semi-industrial) if implemented which may have an impact on the maintenance of its OUV"*.

1. We are concerned as to why HE has chosen to exclude the impact on the OUV in its *own* assessment, merely referring to ICOMOS and the obligation for the Applicant to address the matters raised in its Technical Review. Changes to the wider setting that might impact the OUV of the WHS must surely also fall within its own remit?
2. HE stated it had requested ICOMOS to provide an update to its 2024 Review which considered the details of the Botley West proposal. It is of concern that no indication has been given as to the likely timing of that update.
3. Furthermore, in its latest submission (**RP3-081**) HE no longer makes any reference to the ICOMOS update or when it might be received. HE is the State Party responsible for interacting with ICOMOS. Its help in ensuring that an updated Technical Review is received in time for the ExA, the Applicant, and all other IPs to review and be guided by its content, is clearly important.
5. Given the limited scope adopted by HE itself, lack of the updated report from ICOMOS International dealing with the detail of the Botley West application would be a significant omission from the Examination. There would then be no view expressed by a competent authority on the impact on the WHS OUV resulting from changes to its wider setting.
6. This would be a serious omission, quite possibly compromising the validity of any conclusion on the suitability of the Botley West project.
