

3 June 2015

working locally and nationally to
protect and enhance a beautiful,
thriving countryside for everyone to
value and enjoy

Planning Policy Team,
Strategic Planning and the Economy,
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Sent by email to: planning.policy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Dear David Peckford,

Response from CPRE BANBURY and CPRE BICESTER Districts to request for comments on scope of Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (PART 2)

We refer to your notification of 8 May 2015 and detail below our views on those topics listed that are of particular interest to us.

Employment. - We object strongly to the proposed examination of options for the release of land at motorway junctions for “large scale logistics development” (ie) massive warehouses. This will merely result in ribbon development in the open countryside. The example of the attempt by Framptons, on behalf of their client Barwood Developments, to slip in the motorway site at Stoke Lyne as an “omission site” in the dying days of the EIP in December is exactly what should be avoided. The release of over 100acres in the countryside at this single site devoted to low employment warehousing is an anathema.

If further logistic development is required it should be restricted to rail interchanges.

- Rather than continually trying to focus on farm diversification, surely it is time to concentrate policies directed at achieving support for farmers to raise their production of quality food to feed the growing population.

Transport. - The County’s proposed Local Transport Plan is a wish list rather than a plan. It remains a meaningless document which is not fit for purpose without input from the national agency Highways England.

Open space. - the jargon used in describing this topic is impenetrable. Does it include open countryside?

- In general we are supportive of the designation of “Local Green Spaces”, and indeed Gavray Meadow Wildlife Site and Langford Community Orchard in

Bicester spring to mind. Given the need for the Council to drive the process of creating a Garden City at Bicester, this seems the ideal point in which to lay out a clear framework of how this much vaunted designation will be achieved, controlled and maintained (see also topics on Green Infrastructure and Bicester).

- We should like to see footpath creation and protection falling under this heading.

Sustainable Construction and Renewable Energy. - we are supportive of this, and we should like to see our publicised views on solar farms and wind turbines reflected in your policies. For example all new solar power units should be confined to roofs and brownfield sites.

Are the maps showing “sites suitable for wind farms” still appropriate?

Natural Environment. - We are strongly supportive of both the topics listed under this heading.

In addition, the issue of due recognition of the importance of the existing grading of agricultural land should be addressed.

Green Belt. - We would propose that suggested incursions into the Green Belt are deleted, and, in line with the Government’s manifesto commitment, include a statement that Green Belt land will not be reviewed or taken. This statement could be expanded to include the ruling that only infilling and conversions will be permitted in villages that lie within the Green Belt (refer topic on Villages and Rural areas), NB including Kidlington.

Built environment. - support

Green Infrastructure. - support. See comment re Bicester Garden City under Open Space.

Also footpath creation and protection should be addressed.

Banbury. - to the list of land uses should be specifically included “allotment land”.

- a reference to “measures for flood control in the Banbury area” should be made.
- employment areas should be developed only on the west side of the M40 and not to the east of it.

Bicester. - See comment re Bicester Garden City under Green Space.

Kidlington. - See comment re Green Belt

Villages and rural areas. - Certainly something needs to be done to avoid completely out of scale and inappropriate proposals to develop sites in rural villages such as the recent failed attempt to develop 75 houses as an add on to Kirtlington.

- Protection of “allotment land” should be specifically included under this heading.

Infrastructure. - We are supportive of this and would in particular like to see the issue of water under the headings of supply, wastewater management and sustainable drainage and flood control specifically addressed given the extravagant

development programmes proposed in Local Plan Part 1. The airy and ‘pavlovian’ response from the utility companies, who feel statutorily obliged to confirm that they can meet all requirements irrespective of the size and spread of new development proposed, provides little comfort in the face of the challenge at hand. The Council needs to know exactly how this will be achieved, and have policies available to ensure compliance. For example, is there adequate land earmarked for sewage treatment sites around Bicester which is effectively doubling in size?

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Consideration should be given to add:

- 1) Woodstock extension. We were advised that Part 1 of the Local Plan could not take into consideration the proposal to extend Woodstock into Cherwell District which would provide an additional 1,000 dwellings. Part 2 seems to be the platform in which to address this proposal for good or ill.
- 2) Conflicting Priorities. The Plan should ensure policies are correctly cross-referenced to avoid any possibility of conflicting priorities.

Yours sincerely



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