



## Notes from the Meeting of Full Council held in the Community Office At 7.00pm on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017

**Present:**

**Councillors:**

Ian Hill – Chairman (IH)  
Matt Reid – Vice-Chairman (MR)  
Bob West (BW)  
Fiona Paterson (FP)  
Tom Bindoff (TB)  
Nicky Smallbone (NS)  
Tony Williamson (TW)  
Terry Jackson (TJ)  
Rob Smith (RS)

**Officer:**

Kristina Tynan (KT)

**Members of the Public:**

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60/17 Apologies for absence

Rachel Huckvale, Roger Beattie , Jeremy Bell, Stephanie Van de Pette.

61/17 SODC Consultation on Second Preferred Option – Consultation deadline is 17/5/2017

There was much discussion on this and a number of issues were raised that we should include and which policies WPC support ,are against or which ones to comment on. For easier reference and clarity, the following response which incorporated all the points raised at the meeting, was agreed by email due to the deadline of the 17/5/2017 and sent to SODC.

**Chapter 3** - Generally we are in agreement with the vision and objectives. In particular we note and strongly support the emphasis on supporting rural communities (OBJ1.2) and focusing growth on the Science Vale area and Didcot Garden Town (OBJ1.4 and OBJ 1.1) while recognising that growth of the market towns and villages is necessary to maintain their viability.

**Chapter 4,** Planning Policy reference number: **STRAT1**      **OBJECT**

We are encouraged by the increased emphasis on strategic developments in Didcot and Culham which we believe is consistent with OBJ 1.4, focusing growth on the Science Vale area. We recognise that not all development should be in that part of the district and the larger villages, such as Watlington, do need to grow in order to maintain their role as local service centres.

However we do not believe that the Green Belt should be regarded as sacrosanct, and indeed later policies confirm that you are happy to encroach on the Green Belt when it suits you. In particular, we would like to see serious consideration of development off Grenoble Road to help address Oxford City's unmet need. In terms of minimising traffic with its associated disadvantages of pollution and energy consumption, it makes sense to locate housing as close as possible to where it is needed. If Oxford does not have enough housing to support its industrial and university workforce, then that is where the houses ought to go.

**Chapter: 4**      Planning Policy reference number: **STRAT3**      **OBJECT**

We recognise that the SODC policy has to contribute to the unmet housing needs of Oxford City, and that agreeing to a quarter of this is reasonable.

The implication of the final paragraph of STRAT3 is that the number of new houses allocated to the district, and

Watlington in particular, will change with time, most probably increasing. This makes life very difficult for those of us trying to convince local residents to support a Neighbourhood Development Plan when all they see is the number of new homes allocated to their village increasing with each new version of the Local Plan. We believe that you should settle on a number to be embedded in the plan and refuse any further changes once you have announced that number. If it is too early for you to do this, then it is too early to issue the draft plan.

**Chapter: 4** Planning Policy reference number: **STRAT6 and STRAT 7** **SUPPORT**

We strongly support the developments at Culham. This area has much in its favour including existing employment opportunities, good access to transport and lying in the Science Vale. If the plans for a new Thames crossing and a rerouted connection as part of the Oxford -Cambridge corridor come to fruition, this site would be well located to benefit.

**Chapter: 4** Planning Policy reference number: **STRAT 8** **OBJECT**

We support the need to regenerate Berinsfield.

The requirement that the entire cost of the necessary regeneration package be met from the 2100 homes to be built there is unnecessarily stringent. If money is being poured into a major development just down the road at Culham to increase employment opportunities in the area, it would seem illogical to provide no financial support to an established residential community within a few miles of the site.

**Chapter: 4** Planning Policy reference number: **STRAT 9** **OBJECT**

We have previously objected to the Chalgrove site in the preferred options consultation and to the principle of a large new town in the Issues and Scope and the Refined Options consultations. These objections have not been removed through any of the work we have seen since then.

We do, however, welcome the change from Chalgrove being the only strategic site selected in the Preferred Options consultation to being the last choice of new strategic developments in this consultation.

The impact on the surrounding communities would be too damaging for such a project to be executed successfully. The development would drastically alter the character, and scale of Chalgrove. It would also require services such as schools and shops that would make the existing services in Chalgrove and neighbouring villages unviable leaving these communities with no option but to drive to the new centre. The new community itself would most likely be isolated and out of step with the existing and well integrated communities around them. Development of Culham would be a more consistent approach within the context of the larger economic picture for growth centred in the Science Vale.

The concept of a single large new development has been strongly rejected by the residents of the District. If there has to be one, then this needs to be properly justified and it needs to be placed somewhere that has reasonable employment opportunities and infrastructure.

Take Berinsfield as a lesson and learn from it. A development at Chalgrove would possibly be even more isolated and poorly integrated into its neighbouring settlements.

**Chapter: 4** Planning Policy reference number: **HEN1 and TH1** **COMMENT**

We are surprised that there is no mention at all of the need to address Henley's severe air quality issues. Increasing the number of homes to be built there without remedial traffic actions would seem to be unlikely to help the situation.

In general we note that the information given to support development in Henley and in Thame is not as comprehensive as that for Wallingford. This might be because these two towns both have a made Neighbourhood Plan, in which case a reference to this would be helpful.

**Chapter: 5** Planning Policy reference number: **H10** **SUPPORT**

We support delivery of new homes in smaller villages and hamlets. The economic and social viability of Watlington town as a local centre depends on the viability of its surrounding settlements, and the ready accessibility of the town from these neighbouring settlements. We support the development of small sites, not necessarily as infill, to improve the sustainability of these settlements. A limit on the number of new homes related to the current size of the settlement should be imposed consistent with the 5% to 10% limit in this policy.

**Chapter: 5** Planning Policy reference number: **H11** **SUPPORT**

We support the requirement for 40% affordable housing on all sites with 11 or more new dwellings. In particular we support the requirement for affordable housing to be mixed with market housing not only in physical location but also in style and general appearance.

We have some concern that the clause “subject to the viability of this provision on each site” provides a let-out that will be exploited, as evidenced by the recent approvals in Henley for accommodation for the elderly.

**Chapter: 5** Planning Policy reference number: **H11** **OBJECT**

We are also concerned that such affordable housing as is built in Watlington will be allocated to those with no connections to the community. We have no objection to new families moving into the area. However, our 2016 housing survey identified a number of families, including many long-established local families, in which adult children who wished to remain in the village had to move away because of a lack of suitable accommodation. We would like to see a proviso included into the Local Plan that some percentage of affordable housing should be restricted to those who can demonstrate a connection to the village either through family or current employment.

**Chapter: 5** Planning Policy reference number: **H14** **SUPPORT**

We encourage your support for self-build not only in the strategic allocations but also for the development sites in the larger villages.

**Chapter: 5** Planning Policy reference number: **H16 and H17** **SUPPORT**

We support the requirements for sites for gypsies, travellers and show people. In particular Watlington has a small but well established community of show people who live in two small clusters of park homes. Our draft NDP includes a possible extension to one of these sites for placement of further park homes. This site could be used to provide affordable accommodation for anybody who wished to live in Watlington, not necessarily only to show people or travellers.

In addition and quite unrelated to sites for travellers, we note that park homes are not mentioned at all in this consultation document. We recognise that they are not ideal long term solutions, but we believe that park homes and similar low cost pre-fabricated housing provide an opportunity for affordable market housing in an area where prices for homes are very high. The Local Plan should recognise this and provide a wider range of options. We would wish to see Inclusion of park homes on small dedicated sites

**Chapter: 7** Planning Policy reference number: **TRANS3** **COMMENT**

We are pleased to see safeguarding for a route around Watlington included in the plan, but have a number of comments regarding this. These are given below:

a) Providing a route around Watlington is not acceptable if it then imposes an increased and unsupported traffic burden on neighbouring communities. In particular the villages of Shirburn, Cuxham and Britwell Salome would all be adversely affected by an increased capacity for traffic through (or round) Watlington, with Cuxham in particular being unable to support increased HGV traffic.

b) For the reason given above, the draft Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan has been very careful to describe the route as a “re-aligned B4009” rather than a bypass. We realise that development of such a road is a County not a District responsibility but would like to see the Local Plan making a statement that B4009 / B480 routes as a whole cannot support a large increase in traffic without a far more extensive rerouting than a bypass around Watlington suggests.

c) The route shown on the safeguarding map (Appendix 5) is incorrect. At its northern end it is not appropriate for it to link into the lane between the existing B4009 route and Pyrton village. This route is narrow, with large protected and significant trees bordering it and with the Shirburn Castle registered park and garden alongside it. Our guidance was that it would be necessary for the route to connect directly with the current B4009 route.

**Chapter: 7** Planning Policy reference number: **TRANS3 Paragraph 7.18** **COMMENT**

We have some concern about the accuracy of the Evaluation of Transport Impacts for the Chalgrove / Watlington area. The model used for the 2015 ETI could not accurately represent Watlington traffic as it did not extend south of B4009. The new model used for the 2017 ETI covers the area southwards to the edge of Reading in the fully

modelled area, but does not include Chalgrove or Watlington in the detailed modelling area. In view of the junctions at either end of Couching Street in Watlington and the pinch points along Couching St we would expect detailed modelling to be necessary for reliable assessment of whether the B4009 through Watlington could handle an increased traffic load.

**Chapter: 8** Planning Policy reference number: **EP1** **OBJECT**

Policy EP1 says “Development must be compliant with the measures laid out in the Council’s developer guidance document and the associated air quality action plan (AQAP), as well as the national air quality guidance and any local transport plans.”

However the current AQAP (2014) states in a section entitled “Air Quality Planning Guidance” that SODC should:

- “Include air quality requirements in development policies”, and
  - “Include information on carrying out air quality assessment in planning guidance.”
- Further, the Low Emission Strategy document (2015) which is part of the AQAP states that
- “Within this plan [Local Plan 2031] we need to account for the transport activity related to development in the district and its impact on air pollution and climate change. Within this plan we will:
    - set out our understanding of the current air quality and climate change issues in the district including the current air quality management areas
    - assess how our aspirations for development may impact on these issues and the potential for worsening air quality in other areas and
    - consider measures that will help reduce emissions from transport and support the actions set out in this Low Emission Strategy.”

This is a circular argument with neither the AQAP nor the Local Plan providing the necessary guidance. SODC should ensure that explicit and useful air quality guidance is provided in one or all of these documents.

**Chapter: 9** Planning Policy reference number: **DES9** and Paragraph number: **12.5 – final table** **OBJECT**

We support the requirements for renewable and low carbon energy usage, but the section on monitoring and review appears to be inconsistent with the supporting text for DES9. The supporting text for DES9 says 15% is the government target for renewable sources, but the monitoring table sets a target of 10% for developments of more than 10 houses.

We recognise that houses are not necessarily a major contributor to energy usage and pollution but we can see no valid reason for setting the target lower than the national target. If anything we would like to **see a** more ambitious target.

Revise the monitoring table to be consistent with government guidelines, or even higher than the target since the housing will be around well beyond the 2020 date for the national target.

62/17 Chalgrove Neighbourhood Development Plan Pre-Submission Consultation – Deadline 5/6/2017.

Website:<http://www.chalgrove-parish.org.uk/NDP/CPCNDP.html>

**Resolved:** That a small group get together and produce a draft response which will be considered at the next Strategy Meeting on 23/5/2017

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.55PM**

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