

Cherwell District Council

Executive

4 January 2016

Annual Monitoring Report 2015

Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy

This report is public

Purpose of report

To seek approval of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2015, and to present the District's current housing land supply position.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve the Annual Monitoring Report (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 To authorise the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy to make any necessary minor amendments before publication.
- 1.3 To note the District's housing delivery position.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory obligation to produce a planning monitoring report. An Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) has been prepared for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 The AMR presents information on development that took place or was permitted over that period and, projecting forward, provides a comprehensive review of housing land supply as at December 2015.
- 2.3 The AMR also reviews progress in preparing the Council's planning policy documents and assesses whether development plan policies are being effective.
- 2.4 The information contained in the AMR will be used to inform policy making, planning consultation responses and in decision making on planning applications. The AMR will be made publicly available but is not subject to consultation. The review of the

District's five year housing land supply position is regularly scrutinised through the making of applications for planning permission and through planning appeals. The review takes account of two recent appeal decisions in which it was confirmed that the district had a five year housing land supply:

i. APP/C3105/W/14/3001612 - Land off Lince Lane, Kirtlington (14/01531/OUT)

ii. APP/C3105/A/14/2226552 – Land at Sibford Road, Hook Norton (14/00844/OUT)

- 2.5 This is the first AMR to include the indicators and targets from the newly adopted Local Plan 2011-2031 (July 2015). However, the Plan's adoption on 20 July 2015 postdates the AMR's basedate of 31 March 2015. It will therefore be the 2016 AMR that fully reports on these indicators.

3.0 Report Details

Housing Land Supply

- 3.1 The monitoring of housing supply is a key part of the AMR. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to “...*identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land*” (para 47).
- 3.2 The last AMR (2014) reported that the District had moved from a position of undersupply (for 2014-2019) to a 5.1 year housing land supply position for the period 2015-2020 including a 5% buffer.
- 3.3 On 27 August 2015, an appeal decision (ref: APP/C3105/W/14/3001612) was received which supported the Council's view that the District had a five year housing land supply with a 5% buffer applied. The appeal, relating to a proposal for 95 homes at Kirtlington, was dismissed by the Inspector who stated:
- ‘The ‘significant new evidence’ in this appeal is the Annual Housing Monitor 2014. The figures in this document are consistent with my findings above. I therefore conclude that the Council is able to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites and that it follows that the relevant policies for the supply of housing in the Local Plan are up to date’.*
- 3.4 On 7 December 2015, an appeal decision (ref. APP/C3105/A/14/2226552) made by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government was received in relation to a proposal for 54 homes at Hook Norton. While the appeal was allowed, the Secretary of State came to a similar conclusion on the district's housing land supply position:

'...the Secretary of State takes the view that at present the Council can demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply consistent with the relevant policies in the recently adopted Local Plan Part 1. Applying paragraph 49 of the Framework, the Secretary of State considers that the relevant policies in the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan for the supply of housing should be considered up-to-date, and he gives those policies full weight'.

- 3.5 The 2015 AMR, now presented, includes a comprehensive review of housing land supply, taking into account housing completions and permissions as at 31 March 2015; the up-to-date position on all anticipated housing sites (December 2015); consultation with developers and agents; consultation with Council staff in the Development Management, Build® and Delivery Teams actively involved in individual sites; and current market conditions.
- 3.6 Due to earlier development management decisions that led to the release of land, and because of the adoption of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031, the district has an extensive and varied stock of housing sites, many of which are in the process of being delivered. This includes the on-going urban extensions at Longford Park (Banbury), Southam Road (Banbury) and Kingsmere (Bicester); the strategic site at former RAF Upper Heyford; and many other smaller sites.
- 3.7 The conclusion is that the district has a 5.3 year supply of deliverable sites for the current period 2015-2020 and a 5.6 year supply for the next five year period (2016-2021) commencing on 1 April 2016. Subject to approval of the AMR, this up-to-date position will be reported to the Planning Committee as further relevant planning applications for housing are considered.

Employment

- 3.8 The AMR's key findings on employment generating development include:
- the district has seen a small gain in employment floorspace with 9,089 sq.m. completed over 2014/15;
 - there is approximately 380,000 sq.m. (net) of employment floorspace with planning permission that has yet to be built;
 - there is a total of 211.87 hectares of available employment land comprising allocations in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 and sites identified in Non-Statutory Local Plan 2011
 - only 1.76 hectares of employment land was lost to non-employment use during 2014/15.

Natural Environment

- 3.9 The AMR's key findings for the natural environment for 2014/15 include:
- there have been two planning applications granted permission contrary to Environment Agency's advice on flood risk grounds, however no permissions granted on water quality grounds objection;
 - 26 planning permissions were granted for renewable energy schemes with the majority for solar photovoltaics (PVs);

- the area of the district covered by Local Wildlife Sites has increased by 112 hectares (extensions at Bicester Airfield and at Quarry Spring Marsh, Wiggington);
- there has been some increase in the number of priority habitats and species that exist within Cherwell.

Local Development Scheme

- 3.10 The AMR reports on progress in preparing the Council's planning policy documents as set out in its Local Development Scheme (LDS) including the adoption of the new Local Plan in July, preparatory work on a potential Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the early stages of work on Local Plan Part 2 and the Partial Review of Local Plan Part 1 (Oxford's unmet housing needs). A new LDS is presented to Members elsewhere on this agenda, as are reports on Local Plan Part 2 and the Partial Review.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 3.11 The AMR also provides the updated position on Neighbourhood Planning in Cherwell including the 'making' of the Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan in October 2015.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)

- 3.12 Monitoring of the adopted Local Plan's IDP has commenced and a full update is presented at Appendix 2 to this officer report. A summary of the main changes, including the latest available information on the delivery of transport infrastructure, is presented within in the AMR.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Annual Monitoring Report provides important information to measure the effectiveness of planning policies and to assist policy making and development management decision making. It is the statutory mechanism for monitoring housing delivery. Its most significant conclusion is that the District continues to demonstrate a five year housing land supply. It is recommended that the Annual Monitoring Report be approved, subject to any necessary minor amendments, and that the District's housing land supply position be noted.

5.0 Consultation

Cllr Michael Gibbard, Lead Member for Planning

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 *To seek amendment of the 2015 AMR in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning*

Officers consider the AMR to be robust report supported by data and research. Delay could lead to uncertainty within the development industry and risks for decision making.

6.2 *Not to approve the AMR*

Production of a monitoring report is a statutory requirement.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 No significant direct financial implications arising from this report. The work on collecting data and preparing the AMR is met within existing budgets. There are risks of costs associated with unsuccessfully defending refusals of planning permission upon appeal particularly if the decisions made as a result of this report are not considered to be well founded.

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

- 7.2 Production of a monitoring report is a statutory requirement. It is also required by the Council to help substantiate its planning decisions.

Comments checked by:

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8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

- Accessible, Value for Money Council
- District of Opportunity
- Safe and Healthy

- Cleaner Greener

Lead Councillor

Councillor Michael Gibbard - Lead Member for Planning

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Annual Monitoring Report 2015
Appendix 2	Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update January 2016
Background Papers	
None	
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