

# **Cherwell District Council**

## **Executive**

**4 January 2016**

### **Draft Banbury Masterplan Consultation**

## **Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy**

This report is public

### **Purpose of report**

To approve the draft Banbury Masterplan for public consultation and engagement over a six week period.

The draft Banbury Masterplan provides a vision for the future of Banbury and a set of themes for coordinating a series of actions as detailed in an Action Plan. A combination of steps has been identified to help promote the development of Banbury in a comprehensive, integrated way which builds on the adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2011 - 2031).

## **1.0 Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve the draft Banbury Masterplan for six weeks consultation and engagement with the public and stakeholders.
- 1.2 To authorise the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy the correction of any minor spelling, grammatical or typographical errors together with any improvements from a presentational perspective prior to the publication of draft Banbury Masterplan for consultation.
- 1.3 To request officers to report back to the Executive the results of the consultation.

## **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 The Adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2011 - 2031) part 1 establishes the Development Framework for the District. It includes a section on how Banbury will develop and which sets the framework for the draft Banbury Masterplan (see Appendix 1).
- 2.1 Following the adoption of the Cherwell Local Plan (2011 – 2031) Part 1 in July 2015 the previous work on the Banbury Masterplan has been fully revised to ensure that the Masterplan conforms with the Local Plan. Our consultants, WYG, have

worked with both Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council to prepare the current draft and subject to a period of consultation, to conclude the project during 2016.

- 2.2 The Masterplan provides more detail on the overall growth of the town and the different policy areas which contribute, than the framework set by the Local Plan establishes. It highlights the relationship between the development sites allocated through the Local Plan and shows in more detail how the town will develop.
- 2.3 The draft Banbury Masterplan is a comprehensive document that reviews the challenges which the town faces, now and as it grows and how the combination of new housing, employment, transport, regeneration measures as well as the relationship to 'Brighter Futures' and environmental improvements will strengthen the town.

### **3.0 Report Details**

- 3.1 The draft Banbury Masterplan provides more detail on the overall growth of the town and the different policy areas which contribute, within the framework set by the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2011 - 2031) part 1.
- 3.2 The draft Banbury Masterplan is a comprehensive document that reviews the challenges which the town faces, now and as it grows and highlights the relationship between the development sites allocated through the Local Plan. It shows in more detail how the town will develop through the combination of new housing, employment, the transport measure detailed in LTP4, regeneration activities as well as how the relationship to other interventions such as 'Brighter Futures' and environmental improvements will strengthen the town.
- 3.3 The document will support the preparation of Local Plan part 2 by offering a view on how the town centre of Banbury might be further strengthened and the economic strengths of the town maintained along with the integration of detailed transport measures to reduce congestion and improve connectivity as the town grows.
- 3.4 In summary, the role of the Banbury Masterplan is to:-
  - Articulate a future role for the town;
  - Identify opportunities for economic growth;
  - Provide investment and market confidence;
  - Support the delivery of the Cherwell Local Plan;
  - Identify how to deliver the Canalside area;
  - Promote an attractive town centre with a full range of facilities; and,
  - Identify a series of measures to address traffic congestion and improve accessibility.
- 3.5 The objective of the Banbury Vision and Masterplan is to set out a holistic vision for the town which is suggested as being:-

*'The vision for Banbury is a premier regional centre with a fast growing economy developed from the strengths of the area; and at its heart, a vibrant and attractive*

*town centre, set in a high quality and distinctive environment with greater housing choice, improved accessibility and a reduction of congestion’.*

3.6 This vision is formed from six inter-connecting strategic objectives that will guide action:-

- Promote Banbury as the regional service centre of choice for the wider region;
- Establish a strong economy;
- Reduce congestion and improve accessibility;
- Create a vibrant and attractive town centre;
- Create a high quality environment and distinctive character to live and work;
- Promote opportunities for local people.

3.7 Taking action through these interconnected themes will enable the town to address a number of key challenges faced by Banbury as identified within the Masterplan. These are seen as being:-

- Competition from out of centre retail development that could impact on town centre trade;
- Traffic congestion in the town centre and on strategic routes;
- Potential of the town centre to respond to challenges and regenerate;
- Deliverability of Canalside and the impact on housing numbers;
- The canal area has not been fully developed;
- Poor connectivity between the town centre and the railway station; and,
- Poor public transport connections between residential and employment areas.

3.8 The Masterplan sets out detailed proposals for the six themes and shows:-

- How new strategic housing and employment sites integrate with the current town;
- A range of employment opportunities that will reinforce the role of Banbury in the regional economy and ensure the economic strengths of the town in manufacturing, food and drink, High Performance Engineering and Logistics continue to be supported;
- A transport and movement strategy that aligns the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Transport Plan (LTP). LTP4 contains a number of important transport themes and proposals that are important for Banbury. These include new bus routes and new highways improvements to relieve congestion;
- How the town centre might be managed in a co-ordinated and comprehensive way;
- The creation of a ‘green heart’ to the town, created from the enhancement of the canal and riverfront area together with a network of open spaces to improve the setting of the town and the quality of life for existing and new residents.

3.9 The Masterplan recognises that the proposals include requires the support of many public sector partners and the engagement of the private sector. It needs a one team approach, with strong leadership to drive through the actions and deliver the planned growth. The Masterplan provides the framework for targeting scarce public sector resources to gain maximum benefit and the leverage of private sector investment.

- 3.10 An action Plan is included to frame the delivery of the vision and to generate consensus and support for cross-organisation working to renew and strengthening Banbury, where and when.
- 3.11 The Masterplan is also a strategic document that is designed to influence the refresh of the OXLEP Strategic Economic Plan and establish the case for LEP funding to support key infrastructure such as transport which the town needs to be able to successfully grow.

## **4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1 The draft Banbury Masterplan aims to provide a vision for the future of Banbury and a set of themes with associated actions that are detailed in an Action Plan. This combination of steps will help promote the development of Banbury in a way which accords with the adopted Cherwell Local Plan. It also shows how a series of social, economic and environmental measures can support Banbury grow in a comprehensive, integrated way.
- 4.2 Agreement is sought to commence consultation and engagement for a six week period with the public and other stakeholders in accordance with the measures set out in the Statement of Community Involvement which provides the steps Cherwell must follow in its consideration of planning documents.
- 4.3 The intention is to conclude this process with a Masterplan for Banbury that can be adopted by Cherwell District Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) during 2016.

## **5.0 Consultation**

Internal briefing: Councillor Michael Gibbard, Lead Member for Planning and CDC Banbury Development Board. Oxfordshire County Council has contributed to the elements of the draft Banbury Masterplan relating to transport and education.

## **6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To drop the Town Masterplan

This has been rejected as the Masterplan provides more detail on the overall growth of the town and the different policy areas which contribute to that growth than the framework set by the Local Plan provides; whilst highlighting the relationship between the different development sites, provides a greater level of certainty for developers and the community as to how the town will develop.

Option 2: To reduce the number of themes set out within the Masterplan

This has been rejected as it would make the Masterplan less comprehensive and miss the opportunity that the plan illustrates to secure gains from the town from the combination of new housing, employment, transport, regeneration measures as well as the relationship to 'Brighter Futures' and environmental improvements.

## **7.0 Implications**

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 7.1 The work on preparing the Banbury Masterplan is being met within existing budgets.

Comments checked by:

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### **Legal Implications**

- 7.2 The Banbury Masterplan once completed will form part of the Development Framework for Cherwell District.

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## **8.0 Decision Information**

### **Key Decision**

**Financial Threshold Met: No**

**Community Impact Threshold Met: Yes**

### **Wards Affected**

All wards in Banbury

### **Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework**

District of Opportunity

Safe and Healthy

Cleaner Greener

### **Lead Councillor**

Councillor Michael Gibbard, Lead Member for Planning

## Document Information

<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	Adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2011-2031) – Introduction to section on Banbury
Appendix 2	Draft Banbury Masterplan Consultation
<b>Background Papers</b>	
None	
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