

Cherwell District Council

Executive

5 December 2016

Kidlington Framework Masterplan

Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy

This report is public

Purpose of report

To seek approval of the Kidlington Framework Masterplan so that it can be presented to Council for adoption.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve changes to the draft Kidlington Framework Masterplan (Appendix 1) following consultation.
- 1.2 To recommend that Council agree to adopt the Kidlington Framework Masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.3 To authorise the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy to publish an Adoption Statement and to make any further minor changes to the Masterplan before the meeting of the Full Council.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Work on a Kidlington Framework Masterplan commenced in 2013. The Masterplan is included within the Council's approved Local Development Scheme (January 2016) as one of the Council's proposed policy documents. Evidence gathering work occurred before adoption of Local Plan Part 1 but the Masterplan was reviewed in the context of the Local Plan Inspector's Report and the Plan's subsequent adoption in July 2015. The Masterplan seeks to build upon adopted policy and is referred to in the Local Plan. It provides planning guidance to assist decision making and will also assist officers in preparing Local Plan Part 2.
- 2.2 The Masterplan explores issues and opportunities relating to a wide range of planning matters within Kidlington's built-up area and its immediate environs. Preparation of the Masterplan has involved a number of key stages of work. This includes:

- i. a baseline review of existing studies and background material including the Local Plan evidence base. This has been supported by site visits and dialogue with Kidlington Parish Council and other individual stakeholders including developers;
- ii. an initial spatial and socio-economic 'picture' of Kidlington was established which included developing an understanding of the village's challenges and assets;
- iii. stakeholder workshops were held in September 2013 to test this 'picture', to establish a 'vision' and to identify priorities for change in line with Local Plan policy;
- iv. spatial opportunities were developed and discussed with the Parish Council reflecting priorities from the workshops (and other evidence gathering);
- v. updating the masterplan to take account of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) and the associated Inspector's Report;
- vi. public consultation on the a draft Framework Masterplan occurred from 14 March 2016 to Wednesday 13 April 2016 supported by a public exhibition held on 30 March 2016.

2.3 Officers have engaged with the Parish Council throughout the course of preparing the Masterplan. A Draft Masterplan was approved by the Executive for public consultation on 7 March 2016. The results of the consultation have now been taken into account and consequently modifications have been made to the document as now presented for approval.

2.4 Upon approval by the Executive it is intended that the Framework Masterplan be presented to Council for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). As an SPD the Masterplan would have statutory status as planning guidance. It does not establish Development Plan policy which is the role of the Council's Local Plans.

3.0 Report Details

3.1 The Framework Masterplan (Appendix 1) is a comprehensive and substantial document. It is supported by a Consultation Statement (Appendix 2) which explains the stakeholder engagement and public consultation that has taken place in preparing the document. A Screening Statement (Appendix 3) has also been prepared concluding that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required. Statutory consultees had the opportunity to review a draft Screening Statement during the formal consultation period. Those which have responded concur with the officer conclusion that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

3.2 The Draft Masterplan has been prepared in the context of the adopted Local Plan's vision, spatial strategy, objectives and policies, particularly those for the villages and rural areas. Policy Villages 1 (Village Categorisation) defines Kidlington as a Category A village and Policy Villages 2 provides for some housing growth within the built-up limits of Kidlington. Policy Kidlington 1 provides for the accommodation of high value employment needs in the vicinity of Langford Lane/London-Oxford Airport and Begbroke Science Park. Policy Kidlington 2 seeks to strengthen

Kidlington Village Centre. Policy ESD15 seeks to manage development so that complements and enhances character through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design.

3.3 Paragraph A.11 of the Local Plan, the Spatial Strategy, includes the following:

“Kidlington’s centre will be strengthened and its important economic role will be widened. Economic development will be supported close to the airport and nearby at Begbroke Science Park. There will be no strategic housing growth at Kidlington but other housing opportunities will be provided”.

3.4 Paragraph C.224 of the Local Plan states:

“...With regard to Kidlington’s own needs policies Villages 1 and 2 provide some opportunity. Small scale affordable housing schemes to meet specifically identified local housing need may also be brought forward through the release of rural exception sites (Policy Villages 3). The Kidlington Framework Masterplan will also identify further opportunities...”.

3.5 The proposed Kidlington Framework Masterplan is consistent with this policy framework. It is divided into two parts:

Part 1: Kidlington Tomorrow - Realising the Potential

Part 2: Kidlington Today – Baseline Information

3.6 Part 1 provides the Masterplan’s vision, themes, objectives and opportunities. It has six main themes:

Theme 1: Revealing Kidlington’s distinctive identity

Theme 2: Planning for a sustainable community

Theme 3: Strengthening Kidlington Village Centre

Theme 4: Supporting community needs

Theme 5: Supporting future economic success

Theme 6: Integration and connectivity

3.7 The proposed Masterplan contains a proposed Vision Statement:

“In 2031, Kidlington is a distinctive and sustainable community with a strong sense of identity. Its landscape setting, access to high quality homes and community facilities and revitalised Village Centre make it an attractive place to live and work. Its strong connections with Oxford and Bicester, rail link to London and London Oxford airport support a growing high value employment base which is well integrated with the wider village.”

3.8 In support of this vision, the Masterplan’s objectives and opportunities (Part 1) include the following elements:

- i. Revealing Kidlington’s Distinctive Identity – for example, through mapping and documentation; physically enhancing the village’s arrival points and gateways; providing defined routes to village attractions; redefining the character of Kidlington centre; increasing accessibility to and awareness of the village’s landscape and heritage assets and enhancing the canal’s recreation corridor;

- ii. Creating a sustainable community – for example, making the best use of land; securing high design standards; seeking to deliver high quality homes, providing guidance on the conversion of existing houses, using more traditional Oxfordshire materials alongside contemporary design, improving connectivity, and encouraging opportunities for self-build and other innovative housing models;
- iii. Strengthening Kidlington Village Centre – including increasing the mix of uses and the attractiveness of the village centre; improving connectivity and the public realm; identifying opportunities for reviewing car parking and servicing arrangements; providing guidance for new development and uses; supporting the potential expansion of retail uses, identifying opportunities for residential and office development subject to consideration of the precise village centre boundary through Local Plan Part 2;
- iv. Supporting Community Needs – for example providing guidance on how a potential reconfigured community hub at Exeter Close might be achieved and encouraging other local community hubs;
- v. Supporting Future Economic Success – supporting the growth of an integrated high value employment cluster as provided for by the adopted Local Plan, integrating nearby employment areas with the rest of the village, developing synergies with other important centres of high value economic activity, benefiting from the Oxford to Cambridge high-tech corridor;
- vi. Integration and Connectivity – balancing movement in favour of pedestrians and cyclists; providing guidance on changing the character of Oxford Road from 'highway' to street; connecting economic hubs, cycle and walking routes; and, securing maximum benefit for Kidlington from the Local Transport Plan.

3.9 Part 2 provides a review of baseline information and the current planning policy context. It describes and analyses Kidlington's location and context, its village character and green infrastructure, its community facilities and village centre, the current situation with regard to movement and connectivity, its socio-economic context and the economic, employment and housing issues it faces.

3.10 The Masterplan incorporates an Action Plan which includes a list of priority projects in the interest of delivering the Masterplan's objectives for the village centre, Exeter Close and the recommended improvements to sport and recreation facilities, the canal corridor, the relationship between Kidlington and nearby employment centres and to the environment of Oxford Road. This includes the potential establishment of specific projects and working groups (for example for the canal, village centre, Exeter Close and planned employment cluster), and ensuring that the action plan is coordinated.

Consultation Results

3.11 Over 260 representations were received in response to the formal consultation. The Consultation Statement at Appendix 2 to this report includes a summary of the issues raised and also of the representations themselves.

3.12 In brief, the key issues were:

- Transport – concerns about traffic and bus services; views on the Local Transport Plan’s proposals for the area; the need for traffic calming; the need to improve opportunities and safety for cyclists and horse riders and new footpath links; support for a new railway station; the need for improved connectivity. The County Council raised issues about the compatibility of the suggestion to make the A4260 in central Kidlington more of a street with the road’s status as a north/south priority route (this matter has been discussed directly with the County Council);
- Village Centre – desire for improvements to the village centre and to improve the range of shops and facilities available; views about making Kidlington more of a destination and others expressing concern about potentially increasing congestion; some concern that changing retail habits have reduced the need for additional retail development; general views that the central area of the village centre needs improvement;
- Parking – concern that there might be loss of parking; encouragement for underground parking and concern that multi-storey parking may have adverse visual impacts;
- Exeter Close – mixed views about the suggestion of redevelopment; views about the importance of connectivity through the site, concern that there might be loss of provision for sports clubs;
- Built and historic environment – the importance of high quality design and the protection of assets, the need for more control over the conversion of housing to flats due to the impact on village character; support for additional guidance on design and materials;
- Natural environment and biodiversity – the importance of protecting and promoting biodiversity and of ecological value;
- Recreation - significant but not unanimous objection to the suggestion of possibly consolidating sports pitches at an expanded Stratfield Brake; concern about the suitability of Stratfield Brake as a hub; concerns about the potential loss of more immediate facilities and the inaccessibility of alternative provision; concern about the potential impact on participation in sport and the individual sport clubs; concern about potential traffic implications; views about the importance of green infrastructure and local open spaces; support for the improvement of facilities and concern that the village does not have enough recreation provision.
- Oxford Canal – mixed support for the Masterplan’s proposals and improvement of the Canal corridor and its facilities; concern that any improvements will impact upon existing residential amenity, the tranquillity of the countryside, wildlife and pedestrian safety;
- Services/Facilities/Infrastructure - concern about the capacity of infrastructure in Kidlington to accommodate additional development particularly in terms of education and health care;
- Social/Community Issues – concern that the Masterplan needs to focus more on the needs of the elderly; concern that the level of flats approved in Kidlington is affecting the sense of community and demographics; the need for housing to

respond to demographic needs; concern about the affordability of housing; the importance of retaining the identity of Kidlington but varying views on whether the focus should be on Kidlington as a village; views that Kidlington is a sustainable location for more housing;

- Economy/Employment – views that further employment development is not required; other views that Kidlington has potential for high value economic development; a request for more emphasis on how better integration between the village and employment areas can be achieved; views that employment land should be provided not only for high value businesses but for other sectors including B2 industrial use and for smaller service related businesses; concern at future commercial expansion of the airport; the need to refer to the Strategic Economic Plan.
- Green Belt - support for continued protection of the Green Belt; views expressed on the importance of different areas of the Green belt and development opportunities;
- Strategy – views (from the County Council) that the A4260 corridor is considered a sustainable location for development and that increased density of housing and commercial development along existing and future public transport routes is important in improving their viability and resilience; concern about improving the quality of life and the character of the village; views on the opportunities for urban extensions; concerns about potential coalescence between Oxford and Kidlington; concern that the relationship with Oxford is not emphasised enough; views about development opportunities at Kidlington; concern that the Masterplan is too rural focused; concern that the Masterplan overstates Kidlington's function.

Response to the issues raised

3.13 The Consultation Statement at Appendix 2 explains how the issues raised have been taken into account. It is important to note that the SPD can only build upon adopted Development Plan policies, cannot establish new Development Plan policy and cannot allocate land for development. Consequently, issues raised which relate to the potential allocation of land are ones for either Local Plan Part 2 or, if they relate to Oxford's housing needs, the Partial Review of the adopted Local Plan.

3.14 The key changes to the Masterplan as consulted upon are as follows:

- further clarification on the role of Masterplan in the context of adopted and emerging Local Plans;
- reformatting the document to bring the vision, objectives and principles to the front (Part 1) of the document; addition of an Executive Summary;
- removal of the suggested opportunity for enabling development on existing areas of open space to facilitate a sports hub at Stratfield Brake / removing reference to sports pitch relocation/consolidation and instead emphasising the need for improvements to existing facilities;
- the inclusion of updated information on football clubs with information from the Oxfordshire Football Association;
- the updating of green infrastructure information particularly with the inclusion of Conservation Target Areas (reflecting adopted Local Plan policy ESD 11);

- providing greater emphasis on the natural environment and biodiversity and updating information on areas of amenity space;
- review of guidance for the A4260 in central Kidlington and ensuring compatibility with the Local Transport Plan's Oxford Transport Strategy (following further discussions with County Council);
- addition of reference to the need to test public realm improvements to ensure no significant increase in traffic congestion or delays to public transport services
- updating the Masterplan more generally to reflect updates to the Local Transport Plan (July 2016);
- providing further clarification on the housing opportunities provided for by the adopted Local Plan Part 1;
- providing clarification on the opportunities for the potential reconfiguration of parking alongside improvements to the built environment, including reference to decked rather than multi-storey opportunities;
- addition of reference to the potential for a 'flagship' area of open space at Exeter Close;
- addition of reference made to the need to consider impact of development at Exeter Close on setting of Crown Road conservation area;
- general review of design and development principles having regard to representations received;
- updating of action plan.

3.15 The Kidlington Framework Masterplan is now complete and presented for approval before seeking adoption by Council. It provides planning guidance which seeks to help implement adopted Local Plan policies, to deliver improvements to the built and natural environment of Kidlington, and to encourage development opportunities within the village centre and elsewhere that will bring benefits to the local community. The work of the consultants involved in preparing the Masterplan, and the engagement and consultation with stakeholders, also provide a basis for considering whether any Development Plan policies and land allocations for Kidlington will be required in Local Plan Part 2. Consultation on an Options Paper for Local Plan Part 2 is scheduled for the New Year.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 Work on a Kidlington Framework Masterplan commenced in 2013. Evidence gathering work occurred before adoption of Local Plan Part 1 but the Masterplan was reviewed in the context of the Local Plan Inspector's Report and the Plan's subsequent adoption in July 2015. Public consultation on a draft Framework Masterplan occurred from 14 March 2016 to Wednesday 13 April 2016 supported by a public exhibition held on 30 March 2016. The results of that consultation have been considered in producing a final document for approval. Upon approval by the Executive it is intended that the Framework Masterplan be presented to Council for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). As an SPD the Masterplan would have statutory status as planning guidance. It does not establish Development Plan policy which is the role of the Council's Local Plans.

5.0 Consultation

Internal briefing: Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning
Public consultation as set out in section 3 of the report

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: Not to approve the Framework Masterplan and seek changes.

Officers consider that the Masterplan responds appropriately to the policies in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1), provides guidance that will assist decision making, and responds to the views of the local community. Significant changes may require further consultation.

Option 2: Not to approve the Framework Masterplan and to rely only on the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1).

The production of the Masterplan is referred to in the adopted Local Plan Part 1 and in the Council's Local Development Scheme. The project has been in progress since 2013 and there is community expectation for a final Masterplan to provide additional planning guidance.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 Adoption of the Kidlington Framework Masterplan is being met within existing budgets.

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

- 7.2 Supplementary planning documents are statutory documents capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions.

Comments checked by:

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8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision:

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: Yes

Wards Affected

All (including Kidlington East and Kidlington West directly)

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

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

Lead Councillor

Councillor, Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Kidlington Framework Masterplan (draft for adoption)
Appendix 2	Consultation Statement
Appendix 3	SEA/SA Screening Statement
Background Papers	
None	
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