

Cherwell District Council

Executive

4 December 2017

Annual Monitoring Report 2017

Report of Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy and Strategic Lead for Growth

This report is public

Purpose of report

To seek approval of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2017 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 presented at Appendix 1 and the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy and Strategic Lead for Growth be authorised to make any necessary minor amendments prior to publication.
- 1.2 To note the District's housing delivery and five year housing land supply positions and that it will be reported to Development Management officers and Planning Committee as required.
- 1.3 To note the implications of a new Accommodation Assessment for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show people, and that Development Management officers and Planning Committee are advised of the five year supply positions highlighted at paragraphs 3.10 and 3.11 of this report as required.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory obligation to produce a planning (authorities) monitoring report. An Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) has been prepared for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 (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 October 2017.
- 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.
- 2.5 This is the third AMR to include the indicators and targets from the adopted Local Plan 2011-2031 (July 2015).

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 2017 AMR, now presented, includes a comprehensive review of housing land supply, taking into account housing completions and permissions as at 31 March 2017; the up-to-date position on all anticipated housing sites (October 2017); consultation with developers and agents; consultation with Council staff in Development Management, Build® and Bicester Delivery Teams actively involved with individual sites; and current market conditions.
- 3.3 Following that review, it is concluded that the district has a 5.5 year supply of deliverable sites for the current period 2017-2022 and a 5.7 year supply for the next five year period (2018-2023) commencing on 1 April 2018. Subject to approval of the AMR, this up-to-date position would be reported to Development Management officers and Planning Committee as required to inform decision making.

Travelling Communities

- 3.4 The AMR also includes five year land supply assessments for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show people based on existing Local Plan requirements and a new joint Accommodation Assessment (2017). The Accommodation Assessment takes into account new planning definitions of 'gypsies and travellers' and 'travelling show people' introduced through revised, national Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in 2015. Both the PPTS and the Accommodation Assessment are material considerations in the determination of applications for planning permission.
- 3.5 Under existing Local Plan requirements (Policy BSC6) for 19 new Gypsy and Traveller pitches (2012-2031), the five year supply is 1.1 year. For Travelling Show

people and a Local Plan requirement (Policy BSC6) of 24 new plots (2012-2031), the five year supply conclusion is zero years.

- 3.6 To accord with national policy, the new Accommodation Assessment identifies the need for pitches for those people demonstrably still travelling. A significantly lower level of need is identified for Gypsies and Travellers under the new PPTS definition: 7 pitches from 2017-2032.
- 3.7 The Assessment highlights that there are many households where it is 'unknown' whether or not the new planning definition of Gypsies and Travellers is met. Should further evidence become available, need could rise by up to 12 pitches. Additionally, there is a potential need from 8 households arising from the closure of the Smiths (Newlands) Caravan Park near Bloxham. Those who fall outside of the national planning definition will have housing requirements that will need to be addressed through other means.
- 3.8 The Assessment states that for 'unknown' travellers *'it would not be appropriate when producing a robust assessment of need to make any firm assumptions about whether or not they meet the planning definition...'* (para.7.28).
- 3.9 Officers are of the view that a revised five year supply calculation is necessary but, at this stage, should not include an allowance for 'unknown' need. However, it is considered that the potential need for 8 pitches arising from the Smiths site (a site that until recently was included in the district's supply) should be included in the calculation.
- 3.10 The AMR's revised five year supply calculation for Gypsies and Travellers is therefore based on a need for 15 pitches from 2017 to 2032 (7 plus 8). Having regard to the projected supply of pitches, this produces a five year land supply of 5.0 years for 2017-2022, falling to 4.0 years for 2018-2022 (commencing 1 April 2018).
- 3.11 For Travelling Show people, the Accommodation Assessment identifies a known need for 12 plots from 2017-2032 which has been used to inform a revised five year land supply calculation. The 'unknown' need is low (1 plot). At present, the five year supply remains at zero pending the completion of Local Plan Part 2. In the interim, Policy BSC6 of the adopted Local Plan has a criteria based policy for considering sites promoted through planning applications.

Housing Delivery

- 3.12 The AMR's key findings for housing more generally during 2016/17 include:
 - A total of 1,102 (net) housing completions were recorded in 2016/17. This is 40 short of the annualised Local Plan requirement of 1,142 per annum and a fall compared to 1,425 for 15/16. However, it still represents a sustained, high level of delivery;
 - at 31 March 2017 there were a total of 7,708 dwellings with planning permission but not yet built;
 - the total projected supply including all deliverable sites is 9,241 for 2017-2022 and 9,383 for 2018-2022;
 - there were 278 (net) affordable housing completions in 2016/17.

Employment

3.13 The AMR's key findings on employment generating development include:

- the district has seen a considerable gain in employment floorspace with over 103,000 sq.m. completed over 2016/17;
- there is approximately 408,000 sq.m. (net) of employment floorspace with planning permission that has yet to be built;
- there is a total of 287.89 hectares of employment land on allocations in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 and sites identified in saved policies and the Non-Statutory Local Plan 2011;
- only 2.06 hectares of employment land was lost to non-employment uses during 2016/17.

Natural Environment

3.14 The AMR's key findings for the natural environment for 2016/17 include:

- there has been only one planning application granted permission contrary to the Environment Agency's advice on flood risk grounds. No permissions were granted contrary to a water quality objection;
- six planning permissions were granted for renewable energy schemes with four for biomass and two for solar photovoltaics (PVs);
- the area of the district covered by Local Wildlife Sites has considerably increased by 489 hectares (including RSPB Otmoor);
- there has been some decrease in the number of priority habitats and species that are recorded within Cherwell. However, this has arisen from changes to how the Thames Valley Records Centre undertakes its monitoring.

Local Development Scheme

3.15 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 Local Plan in July 2015, preparatory work on a potential Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and stages of work on Local Plan Part 2 and the Partial Review of Local Plan Part 1 (Oxford's unmet housing needs). The April 2017 LDS has been used for the purpose of monitoring. However a new LDS was approved by the Executive on 6 November 2017.

Neighbourhood Planning

3.16 The AMR also provides the updated position on Neighbourhood Planning in Cherwell including the submission of the Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan in April 2017. The public consultation on the Adderbury Plan ended on 24 November 2017.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)

3.17 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which supports the adopted Local Plan (2015) is maintained and monitored with the benefit of updates from infrastructure providers including the County Council. An updated IDP is presented at Appendix 2.

3.18 The IDP identifies infrastructure supporting and delivering Local Plan growth. It specifies other relevant plans, partners and delivery organisations, costs and funding known at the time of each update. Some of the infrastructure schemes updated include:

Education

- Opening of Longford Park Primary School in 2017 (Banbury)
- Completion of Gagle Brook Primary School (Elmsbrook) - opening expected in 2018
- Primary school at Hardwick Farm/Southam Road (Banbury) - due to open in 2020
- Expansion of Hook Norton Primary School completed
- Expansion of Christopher Rawlins CE (VA) Primary School, Adderbury commenced
- Expansion of Chesterton CE (VA) Primary School planned for 2018

Community facilities

- Longford Park community facility/centre – work commencing in Autumn 2017
- North West Bicester - community facility/centre (including nursery) - temporary facility operating; permanent facility has planning permission (15/00760/F)
- South West Bicester (Kingsmere) community hall with separate youth wing - under construction, expected to open in March 2018
- Retained sports hall at Former RAF Upper Heyford for educational and community use - completed
- Improvements to the Sunshine Centre, Banbury

Open space and recreation

- Bankside Community Park (38.5 ha) - work commenced on laying out the park
- Banbury Country Park (30 ha) - land secured and masterplan completed
- Whitelands Sports Village Phases 1, 2 and 3a - grass pitches, pavilion, car park and 3G pitch completed
- Provision of 1 adult and 2 junior football pitches, sports pavilion and multi-use games area (MUGA) at Longford Park - work commenced; expected completion in 2019

Other projects

- Bicester Wayfinding Project - completed
- Bus services (Banbury) - three new developer funded services commencing on 5 November 2017 - an extension of the B5 from Bretch Hill to Ermont Way, a new B9 service from Banbury 5 to the town centre and a new B3 bus service from Bankside Phase 1 to the town centre, Bodicote
- A41 Oxford Road corridor (Bicester): widening of A41 for right and left turn lanes and new signalised crossing – completed
- Reinforcement of existing electricity network: East Claydon to Bicester Preliminary work commenced in 2017; completion estimated in 2019.

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. New five year supply calculations for sites for travelling communities are also presented. It is recommended that the Annual Monitoring Report be approved and that Development Management officers and Planning Committee are advised of the five year supply positions as required.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 Cllr Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 *Amendment of the 2017 AMR in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning*

Officers consider the AMR to be a 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 and necessary to monitor implementation of the Local Plan.

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.

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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.

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