

Local Plan
Proposed Submission August 2012

Appendix 4: Summary of Consultation

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Section 1: Public Consultation Arrangements

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

This appendix includes some changes to the version published on 28 March 2013 in the interests of clarity and accuracy. The changes include a report on representations to the sustainability appraisal including from key stakeholders.

Deleted text is shown struck-through. New text is shown in bold and underlined.

Proposed Submission Local Plan

The Proposed Submission Local Plan was publically consulted upon between 29th August 2012 and 10th October 2012.

Purpose of the Consultation

The consultation process was carried out in conformity with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and in particular Regulation 19 and the Council's own Statement of Community Involvement which contains the Council agreed protocols for the consultation on Development Plan Documents such as the Local Plan.

Who we consulted

All those on the consultation database including the designated general consultation bodies and specific consultation bodies.

How we consulted

A programme of consultation took place over the six-week between 29th August 2012 and 10th October 2012. A representation form and guidance note was produced and made available for all consultees - **Appendix A**.

The following consultation methods were used at this stage of the process:

- Public notices in local newspapers: Banbury Guardian and Bicester Advertiser - **Appendix B**.
- Attendance at Parish Meetings and a series of Static Display Boards as set out in Table 1 below. The Exhibition boards can be viewed at **Appendix C**.
- A summary leaflet sent to all households with the Cherwell - **Appendix D**.
- Letters to all bodies on our consultation database and all local libraries - **Appendix E**.
- The Council website was updated and all relevant material was displayed.
- The Council used Limehouse Software to capture many of the consultation comments ~~directly and will be updated with the remaining representation received through alternative routes either by email or letter.~~ **Representations were published on-line at cherwell.gov.uk**
- A summary of all representations received by the Council during the Consultation period is presented in **Appendix F**. **It does not include responses made**

specifically in relation to the detail of the draft Bicester Masterplan which is a separate document and must be completed in accordance with the Local Plan.

Table 1: Parish Meetings and Manned Exhibitions

Date	Meeting Type	Venue	Time
Wednesday 12 th September 2012	Parish meeting (North)	Council Chamber, Bodicote House	6.30 – 8.30pm
Thursday 13 th September 2012	Manned Exhibition	River Ray Room Bodicote House	11.30 – 5pm
Wednesday 19 th September 2012	Parish Meeting	Banbury Town council, Town Hall	5.30 – 6.30pm
Thursday 20 th September 2012	Manned Exhibition	Eco Demonstration Building, The Garth, Bicester	1 – 6.30pm
Friday 21 st September 2012	Manned Exhibition	Wendlebury Village Hall	1 – 7pm
Saturday 22 nd September 2012	Manned Exhibition	JP II Centre, Bicester	10 – 4pm
Wednesday 26 th September 2012	Manned Exhibition	Exeter Hall, Kidlington	1 – 5.30pm
Wednesday 26 th September 2012	Parish Meeting South	Exeter Hall, Kidlington	6.30 – 8.30pm
Saturday 7 th October 2012	Manned Exhibition	Canal Day, Banbury	All day

~~It does not include responses made specifically in relation to the detail of the draft Bicester Masterplan which is a separate document and must be completed in accordance with the Local Plan.~~

Section 2: Representations Received

This **section report** sets out a summary of the content of the representations received. It does not offer a commentary on those representations. It has been prepared to provide an overview of the challenge of addressing a complex set of positions from respondents. **The Local Plan Main Issues from Representations are identified. These comments were presented to District Executive on the 3rd December 2012. A full summary of representations is provided at Appendix F.**

Section: Policies for Development

Theme One: Policies for Developing a Sustainable Local Economy

- There is support for the increased employment land allocated in the Plan.
- Policy SLE1 is too flexible in allowing for other uses if employment does not come forward. This will lead to a loss of land for employment.
- The policies for employment sites are not flexible enough and unjustified in identifying the type of employment on each site. B8 uses should be allowed on all sites.
- The desire for high technology and low carbon industries is unjustified and unrealistic.
- Employment sites should only come forward for the types of employment intended.
- The role of internet shopping needs to be considered.
- The retail needs of the District need to be identified considering recent trends.
- There is no objection to the Council including a HS2 Policy but it should be redrafted as the current one implies the Council will be a key decision maker. Alternative wording is suggested. (HS2 Ltd)
- Car parking at the District's railway stations needs to be considered in more detail.
- There is concern about the amount of traffic generated by the proposed new development.
- Public transport should be considered to a greater extent and improved, including re-opening railway stations.

Theme Two: Policies for Building Sustainable Communities

- The RSS is likely to be revoked and the Council should not be using it.
- The RSS is based on out of date evidence and the Council should not be using it.
- In light of the 'Duty to Cooperate' the Council should work with the City Council to explore options for the unmet need for housing in Oxford.
- The Council has not met the affordable housing need in the District.
- There should be less growth at Banbury due to the topographical and landscape constraints and the increase in traffic congestion.
- There should be more growth at Banbury as it is not fulfilling this role as the most sustainable settlement and that set out in the South East Plan.
- Too much growth is focused at Bicester.
- Bicester should be the main focus for growth as it is less constrained
- There is too much growth at Banbury and Bicester and not enough in the rural areas.
- The villages have been given too much protection over the towns.
- Restricted growth in the villages is welcome.
- Housing growth is excessive if there are no jobs to go with new homes.
- Strategic sites will take too long to deliver so smaller sites need to come forward in the Local Plan as well.

- More housing is needed in Cherwell to meet trends in terms of decreasing household size and migration.
- Removal of reserve sites makes the Plan inflexible and should be re-considered.
- The Council has a significant shortfall in its 5 year land supply and it needs to bring forward more sites.
- The Plan should include Upper Heyford as a separate component within the settlement hierarchy in acknowledgement of its unique status as a significant brownfield development area
- Some villages which have received significant growth in recent years should get less development.
- The density policy is not justified and there should more flexibility.
- Affordable housing requirements are too onerous.
- There is lack of affordable housing for local people.
- There is support for the Rural Exception site policy.
- The 25% requirement in the Rural Exception policy is not justified.
- The housing mix policy is overly prescriptive and unjustified.
- Existing sites should be expanded for travelling communities.
- The provision of schools should be clarified and free schools should be acknowledged.
- The plan does not contain enough information about health and there should be more recognition that the health system has changed.
- More information is required on open space and recreation provision.
- References to places of worship should be included.
- The Council should work with builders and investors to improve the existing housing stock.
- Self-build should be promoted to a greater extent.
- There is no mention of the Olympic legacy.

Theme Three: Policies for ensuring Sustainable development

- The sustainable construction and environmental policies are needed and welcome
- The requirement for Code level 4 homes is unjustified and the building regulation requirements only should be used.
- The sustainable development policies place too many requirements on developers and are unjustified in their requirements.
- More attention should be given to the preservation of the environment and a low carbon strategy.
- There should be no development in the flood plain unless justified and flooding issues are resolved.
- There should be more woodland provided and rivers need more protection.
- A net gain in biodiversity is not always possible and should be removed as a requirement
- A Green Belt review should be undertaken for the local plan now, not later
- The Green Belt should remain generally protected
- Green buffers/boundaries are supported as they will protect villages around Banbury and Bicester.
- Green buffers/boundaries are unjustified, unclear; with no defined boundaries and will lead to a lack of housing supply.
- There should be protection of the historic environment, not just the built environment.
- The old towns of Banbury and Bicester should be considered and preserved.
- The conservation and enhancement of the Canal is welcomed but more is needed.
- Canal facilities may be needed outside the urban centres.
- Safer routes for cyclists should be included.
- Locally produced food should be encouraged.

- The impact of the loss of farming land is not recognised.
- Airport expansion should not go ahead.
- The Council should use Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) to bring forward sites.

Section: Policies for Cherwell's Places

Bicester

- Bicester could become a 'Garden city'
- The affects on surrounding villages of Bicester expanding is not considered in enough detail.
- The eco-town development should go through a public inquiry before any permissions are granted due to the significant number of homes proposed.
- The eco-town development will cause traffic and a loss of farm land.
- There is concern over the Lords Lane and Howes Lane junction becoming more congested.
- Development at Graven Hill will lead to traffic and will adversely effect villages to the south
- Job numbers at Graven Hill are not justified
- There is support for the preservation of RAF Bicester.
- Bicester Airfield requires protection and should not be built on.
- Bicester airfield should not accommodate an increase in powered flight due to noise concerns.
- The town centre boundary at Bicester is not clearly defined and conflicts with the masterplan
- The town centre area proposed is too large
- There is no justification for the local centres proposed for the sites at Bicester, development should be in the town centre.
- Any expansion of Bicester village should be fully justified.
- There should be greater promotion of the links between Bicester village and the town centre.

Out of centre and edge of centre schemes should not be given permission as thy effect the town centre.

- There remains a lack of services and facilities in Bicester.
- The proposed park at Pingle Fields is not appropriate due to traffic and pollution in this location.
- Too much development at Bicester will affect Otmoor in terms of flooding and water resources.
- Enterprise zones and Local Development Orders should be considered for Bicester to encourage growth.
- There is not enough land identified at Bicester for employment growth
- The Local Plan and Bicester Masterplan should be more similar in terms of policy.
- Congestion on the M40 and its junctions causes problems in Bicester and villages.
- There is no justification for the South East link road and route options have not been examined.
- Light pollution from Bicester will be a problem.
- Sites at Bicester which are the subject of representations received include:

For housing:

- South west Bicester (Phase 2)
- South east Bicester
- Land at Langford Park farm for housing (consideration of inclusion as part of the Graven Hill site)

- North West Bicester (and separately for employment)
- Graven Hill
- South of Lodge riding stables
- Land at Gavray Drive
- Land west of Caversfield (east of the B4100)

For employment:

- Land north of Skimmingdish Lane (including B8 uses), extending the proposed allocation in the Local Plan.
- Bicester Gateway
- Bicester Sports Association land for commercial uses (existing uses are proposed to move to Chesterton)
- North West Bicester

Various landowners and developers requested the inclusion or removal of these sites from the Local Plan. Some requested changes to the strategic site policies, including the strategic site boundaries, that are proposed in the Local Plan. This included contending that higher housing numbers be accommodated on sites and reasons as to why they believe they should not have to meet some of the requirements of the proposed policies. All sites submitted have been listed here but some **(non-strategic sites)** will not be considered until the Council's Local Neighbourhoods Document is produced next year.

2.2 Banbury

- Canalside is supported by most but sites with the main site should be able to come forward individually.
- Canalside site is undeliverable and unviable.
- The Council needs to be more proactive in delivering Canalside, including working with landowners
- There is a lack of employment land allocated at Banbury in light of the need for economic growth
- Existing employment land should be used at Banbury
- There is limited land available for businesses that will be lost from Canalside
- Banbury town centre is already congested and development will add to this.
- Traffic is a concern in Banbury and the south east link road should be looked at in more detail.
- The area at Bridge Street is congested and will only get worse.
- New motorway junctions are needed.
- Bankside Road should be upgraded to allow for more traffic use.
- There is general support for the development of town centre sites.
- Out of town retail development should be stopped with a focus on the town centre
- There is support for the new park for Banbury but questions are raised about its distance from Banbury town centre.
- More sports and open space provision is required in Banbury particularly in areas identified as deficient.
- The football club at Bodicote Rugby Club will lead to significant traffic and light pollution
- The cemetery at Southam Road should be extended northwards.
- The Council is not doing enough to bring forward the Bankside development.
- BGN school potential to relocate should be recognised.

Sites at Banbury which are the subject of representations received include:

For housing:

- Mckay Trading Estate, Lower Cherwell Street, (Canalside Area) for housing

- Land south of Salt Way, east and west of the Bloxham Road for housing
- Land at Wykham Park Farm (south of Salt Way) for housing
- Land north of Hanwell Fields for housing
- Land east and West of Southam Road for housing
- Cemex site for housing
- Grundons site for housing
- Land west of Warwick Road for housing
- Land at Bankside, for housing
- Land south of the Broughton Road for housing

For employment:

- The 20 20 Cricket club site at Thorpe Lane
- Land to the east of the M40, adjacent to the A361
- Land at Grimsbury Reservoir
- Land west of the M40
- Land east of the M40
- Land at Waterworks way

Other Use:

- The Horton Hospital (for the neighbourhoods DPD)
- Land at Bolton Road (mixed use)
- Land at Kraft, Southam Road for a foodstore
- Land to the south of Canalside for Banbury United Football club and leisure uses

Various landowners and developers requested the inclusion or removal of these sites from the Local Plan. Some requested changes to the strategic site policies, including the strategic site boundaries, that are proposed in the Local Plan. This included contending that higher housing numbers be accommodated on sites and reasons as to why they believe they should not have to meet some of the requirements of the proposed policies. All sites submitted have been listed here but some **(non-strategic sites)** will not be considered until the Council's Local Neighbourhoods Document is produced next year.

There were a significant number of objections from local communities to development north and west of Banbury. There is a view that consultation has been inadequate. Points of objections to development of land north of Hanwell Fields include:

- Negative effect on the landscape
- Will be prominent on the landscape
- Negative effect on Hanwell and its setting
- Loss of agricultural land
- Loss of established northern boundary of the town
- Negative effect on the setting of footpaths
- Light pollution
- Poor access to the town centre
- Traffic problems
- Existing facilities at Hanwell fields are at capacity
- Hanwell Observatory will be adversely affected by development north of Banbury.

Points of objections to development of land at Southam Road include:

- Negative effect on the landscape
- Will be prominent on the landscape
- Negative effect on the crematorium and its setting
- Loss of agricultural land

Loss of established northern boundary of the town

- Negative effect on the setting of footpaths

- Loss of historic features
- Noise from the motorway
- Poor access to the town centre
- Loss of the historic environment
- Traffic problems

Points of objection to development of land west of Bretch Hill include:

- will have no benefits for the existing estate
- will lead to a loss of valuable landscape
- The impact on vistas from Wroxton Abbey, the setting of the historic arch and the rural setting of Withycombe farm
- Impact on Drayton

Kidlington

- There should be green buffers at Kidlington
- Policy Kidlington 1 is supported as it will allow employment growth
- Further land should be removed from the Green belt at Langford lane
- The scope for high tech growth and the need for employment at Kidlington is not catered for.
- The area identified for review at Langford Lane is not based on sound evidence and should be more definite.
- A proper Green Belt review for employment uses should be undertaken with a number of sites considered
- There should be review of the Green belt for housing.

2.3.1 Sites at Kidlington which are the subject of representations include:

For housing:

- Land at Webbs Way

For employment:

- Land adjacent to Begbroke Science Park
- Land at and near Langford lane
- Land at Langford Locks

Various landowners and developers requested the inclusion or removal of these sites from the Local Plan. Some requested changes to the strategic site policies, including the strategic site boundaries that are proposed in the Local Plan. This included contending that higher housing numbers be accommodated on sites and reasons as to why they believe they should not have to meet some of the requirements of the proposed policies. All sites submitted have been listed here but some **(non-strategic sites)** will not be considered until the Council's Local Neighbourhoods Document is produced next year.

2.4 Rural Areas

- Villages are in the wrong categories according to evidence
- Policy Villages 1 is too restrictive preventing development in smaller villages.
- Policies do not allow brownfield sites to come forward.
- Policy Villages 2 should focus more development to the larger villages as they are more sustainable.
- Group 2 villages could accommodate more growth
- There are conflicts between the villages in Policy 1 and Policy 2.
- Infilling needs a broader definition to bring forward other sites.
- By restricting development in the rural area this prevents small sites coming forward for meeting needs.

- Only allowing limited housing in smaller villages is supported due to its potential impacts.
- Limited bus services need to be taken into account.
- Schools are at capacity
- There is a lack of recreation facilities in the villages.
- Water, sewerage and electrical facilities are inadequate for new development.
- Development will lead to traffic, congestion and a loss of village character.
- Sites should be able to come forward in the Green Belt for housing where there exceptional circumstances.
- Policies on Green Belt villages are not clear.
- Village clustering should be considered carefully.
- It is important that new developments in the towns are required to produce travel plans so that associated vehicles are routed away from towns and villages.
- Broadband should be encouraged more strongly as this is vital for growth.
- There should be rural employment sites allocated in the rural areas.
- There is not enough in the Plan helping to address village services closing
- Upper Heyford should be preserved and made a tourism asset.
- The Free School should be mentioned at Upper Heyford

If sites come forward they should be for well designed affordable housing.

- Some villages are producing or planning to produce 'Neighbourhood Plans'
- Development at South Banbury should be taken off Bodicote's housing allocation as it is considered part of Bodicote.

2.4.1 Sites which are the subject of representations in the rural areas include:

For housing:

- Land at Upper Heyford former Air base
- Land off Camp Road, Upper Heyford former Air base
- Land at Oak Farm, Milcombe
- Land off Merton Road, Ambrosden
- Land at Springfield Farm, Ambrosden
- Land north of Aynho Road, Adderbury
- Ashworth Land, Merton
- Land at White Post Road (Tappers Farm), Bodicote

For employment:

- Land at Shipton on Cherwell (Bonhams)
- Land at Cotefield Farm, Bodicote
- Land at junction 9 M40
- Land at the rear of Ploughley Road, Arncott

Various landowners and developers requested the inclusion or removal of these sites from the Local Plan. Some requested changes to the strategic site policies, including the strategic site boundaries, that are proposed in the Local Plan. This included contending that higher housing numbers be accommodated on sites and reasons as to why they believe they should not have to meet some of the requirements of the proposed policies. All sites submitted have been listed here but some **(non-strategic sites)** will not be considered until the Council's Local Neighbourhoods Document is produced next year. There were a significant number of objections from local residents from Wendlebury and nearby to the proposed South East Link Road at Bicester for the following reasons:

- Village will be boxed in by roads and there will be rat running.
- Car use will increase as accessing the village by foot will be reduced.
- No alternative routes are considered or proposed.

- The road will affect the setting of Wendlebury and will affect the setting of a scheduled ancient monument.
- The road crosses a BAP habitat.
- There will be encroachment of Bicester on Wendlebury.
- There is no mitigation of the road proposed.
- Consultation has been inadequate
- Why is there no Green Buffer for Wendlebury? (While these comments were mainly made to the Bicester Masterplan, they need to be addressed in order to show that the proposed South East Link Road is 'deliverable'.)

Infrastructure

- No proper infrastructure plan has been produced for the Local Plan

Power companies may have strategic power distribution circuits in areas proposed for development. These should be considered and if moved paid for by developers.

- Little consideration given to the capacity of the Horton Hospital with all the new housing.
- The IDP contains no reference to ecology and little reference to green infrastructure requirements

4. Evidence Base and Consultation

- There is a lack of available evidence and justification to support the Plan.
- The evidence is out of date.
- The housing numbers produced are confusing and inaccurate.
- There is no justification for switching between sites at Banbury.
- There is no evidence as to the amount of retail development that is needed in the towns.
- Extending the town centre boundaries is not justified.
- There is no up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- No Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment has been produced.
- Work is required considering the jobs/housing ratio that is required.
- Work needs to be produced using the most up to date ONS projections and demographic information.
- The Council cannot determine how much development is needed and where until this evidence is produced.
- There is no evidence to support the fact the Council has projected forward growth at the same rate between 2026 and 2031.
- There is an over reliance on windfalls particularly as Bicester's windfall rate has been so low in recent years.
- There is no evidence for the distribution of housing proposed in the plan.
- There is no proper assessment of how many windfalls may come forward.
- More consultation is required as the public have not have a chance to comment on the new sites that are proposed.
- Council should consider the Local Housing Delivery Groups' "A review of local standards for the delivery of new homes (June 2012) Viability Testing Local Plans (June 2012) and budget announcement March 2011.

The Plan needs to be viability tested

- Up to date ecological surveys are required for all of the proposed strategic site allocations
- The combined hydrological impact of the proposed sites at Bicester on the designated sites and priority habitats in the River Ray catchment and on the Bicester

- Wetland reserve Local Wildlife Site is of concern
- The justification for the categorisation of villages has not been published.
- There is no justification for the lower number of homes proposed to be allocated to the rural areas.
- There is no justification for the allocation of villages to a group in Policy for villages 1.
- The 'Craitlus study' is not sound.
- The population of Kidlington should be clarified in the Plan.
- The SA relies too much on the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment. The LSCA was too subjective and flawed.
- The draft core strategy SA highlights the sustainability of sites, why have unsustainable sites been included.
- The Sustainability Appraisal is not accurate.
- The Council should undertake more consultation.
- The Council has breached human rights.

Section 3: Analysis of Representations

~~The Local Plan has received a high number of responses from four broad groups;~~

- ~~1. Infrastructure providers (including statutory providers & utilities);~~
- ~~2. City, Town & Parish Councils;~~
- ~~3. Local residents groups; and~~
4. **Developers / Landowners.**

In total about 200 organisations and individuals made comment on the **Proposed Submission** Plan **August 2012** (excluding two action groups with multiple signatures), equating to approximately 2000 individual comments / points.

The following analysis of representations was presented to District Executive on the 3rd December 2012 and updated on the 4th March 2013 and has been further updated 21st March 2013 with review of Hanwell Parish Council's representations. **The analysis includes the responses of specific consultees, key stakeholders, national organisations and resident groups.**

Infrastructure Providers

Oxfordshire County Council

The County Council consider the Plan broadly meets the tests of soundness namely positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. They make some comments which they believe can be overcome and joint working should continue.

These are the main ones:

- The Plan will need to be changed to reflect recent announcements such as the electrification of the Railways in Cherwell, the government's commitment to East West Rail and the new station at Water Eaton.
- Delivery of the south east link road at Bicester will be a priority.
- Alternative options to securing a University technical college should be explored as funding has not been successful at Bicester
- County Council assets at Bicester tie in with the ambitions for Bicester town centre.
- The Green Belt Review should be expanded to include land at Begbroke Science Park for employment.
- Further consideration of the importance of Oxford Airport is needed.
- The County and the District should continue to work together to develop Infrastructure plan.

More attention is needed in relation to strategic public transport planning, transport planning at Banbury, education, and making policy wording consistent.

Environment Agency

The Policy for North West Bicester is not consistent with PPS1 Ecotown supplement; not all elements of the PPS supplement have been included. If the policy is intended to future proof the local plan should the PPS be removed then all elements of the policy should be included.

In particular, ecotown supplement requirements for ET17 Water (requirement for a water cycle study covering water efficiency and demand, neutrality, quality, surface water management, infrastructure requirements and delivery etc) and ET18 flood risk (development avoids, does not increase and where possible reduces flood risk and takes

a sequential approach to layout- although ESD6 seeks to achieve this). The Bicester South East Relief Road route is not marked on the proposals map for the Local plan. The route on the Bicester Masterplan indicates it crossing the Langford Brook; the impact on flood risk and nature conservation will need to be considered.

At Bicester Business Park/Bicester Gateway the use of “flood plain” and “areas liable to flooding” are too vague and make the application of para 100 of the NPPF difficult. Policy wording should be amended to read “There will be no built development within flood zones 3”

Since the permitted scheme at Bicester Business park the EA has undertaken hydraulic modelling of the watercourse and future development proposals should use the most up to date information. Whilst it does not preclude the site completely from being developed proposals might need to consider the constraints in greater detail. It would be preferable for the policy to indicate no built development in flood zones 2 and 3 as this would make development more resilient to climate change however it is appreciated that this is aspirational and is not explicitly stated in the NPPF.

The level of detail in Canalside policy wording is inappropriate and cannot have been informed by the Level 2 SFRA. Allocating areas of the site for specific development uses would only be appropriate if supported with evidence from the level 2 SFRA. The EA will continue to work with the Council on completing the SFRA.

Regarding Southam Road Key site specific design and place shaping principles bullet point 2 does not make sense and conflicts with NPPF para. 100. It should be revised to read “There will be no built development within flood zones 2 or 3 and a green buffer will be provided along the watercourse.”

Advisory: There may also be access and egress issues for residents using Noral Way, which is partly within flood zones 2 and 3. The level of risk could be assessed in a site specific FRA however there is a risk in allocating a site where safe access could not be achieved. CDC’s emergency planners should be able to give a view on this.

Employment land at the M40 is supported.

Environment Agency- Update

The EA reviewed the updated Level 2 Canalside Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. When they commented on the previous version of the report they raised concerns with a number of fundamental issues in relation to, amongst other things, the functional floodplain and the assessment of flood risk and hazard across a range of flood events. The current version of the report addresses these fundamental issues and they no longer consider that that Policy Banbury 1: Banbury Canalside is unsound.

Highways Agency

In the first instance the Highways Agency would recommend more sustainable measures to reduce the need to travel are explored in the first instance with large infrastructure improvements such as the Bicester South East relief road and Banbury Inner relief road explored as a last resort. They note that it is currently unclear how these projects are to be delivered or what their affect on the Strategic Road Network will be?

The Plan is also considered not clear about funding or delivery of key transport schemes noted within the document. There is concern that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is only in Draft. The Highways Agency are broadly supportive of Eco-town development (Policy Bicester 1) but have concerns as to the operation of M40 Junctions 9 & 10 when

Eco-town is developed. Concern expressed that the Integrated Transport and Land Use Studies for Banbury, Bicester and the rest of Cherwell Rural Areas are out of date. Questions regarding the package of infrastructure measures needed for each study area therefore remaining outstanding.

The Local Plan should provide clarification as to the operation of M40 J11 and whether the proposed development in the district can be accommodated on the key junction that provides access to Banbury. The Highways Agency are content that M40 Junction 9 can mitigate development at Graven Hill site. Welcome proposed improvements to works and new infrastructure but require update of the transport and land-use study evidence base. Concern that no detail has been provided on the improvements to M40 J9 or mitigation of J10 & J11 in the draft IDP.

English Heritage

English Heritage supports the plan generally and welcomes the conservation of the Canal. It recommends the following changes are made:

- Place more emphasis on preserving the historic environment not just the built environment. Some parts of the District are not built e.g. ANOB
- Concern is expressed about the South East link Road at Bicester
- An assessment needs to be undertaken in order to assess the roads impact and re-alignment considered. It needs to be shown that it is in public interest that it goes ahead.
- Concern is expressed over Bicester 12 and its impact on Wretchwick Medieval
- Settlement. Land should be excluded from the allocation that affects its setting.

Natural England

At least a phase 1 ecological survey should be undertaken for each allocated site to allow consistency with paras 110 and 165 of the NPPF. A phase 1 survey should provide a good indication of whether protected species are likely to be a constraint on a site and whether further survey work is required. It is similarly unclear how the landscape and amenity value of each site has been considered. Unless it is demonstrated that these matters have been taken into account in the allocation process, Natural England advises that the plan is unsound.

Employment land at the M40 is supported.

Thames Water

Whilst the levels of growth in the Local Plan are not considered to be unmanageable, infrastructure upgrades will be required at Bicester in particular and developers should work with Thames Water to draw up water and drainage strategies. The exact scale and location will be determined once there is a clear phasing plan. Thames Water support the aims of water neutrality at the Bicester Eco-town (Policy Bicester 1) but suggest Policy ESD 6 should include reference to sewer flooding and an acceptance that flooding could occur away from the flood plain as a result of development where off-site infrastructure is not in place ahead of development.

Western Power

Western Power own a number of strategic electricity distribution circuits in the District and expect developers to contribute to the cost. If needed Western power would normally seek to retain the position of certain electricity circuits. There are considered no restrictions in

terms of the position of new development and its overhead lines but advise that these are taken into account

Campaign to Protect Rural England

The CPRE are generally supportive of the overall Vision, Objectives and Strategy of the Plan and in particular the policies that seek the protection of the countryside. Concerns are raised however on the reliance of the South East Plan targets and growth proposed at Bicester. They note the Council's brownfield target is not particularly ambitious. All policies in Chapter B.3 Ensuring Sustainable Development are supported and in particular Policies on Oxford Green Belt and Green Boundaries to Growth. The CPRE generally support the strategy for placed based policies but suggest Shipton-on-Cherwell quarry as a possible site. Further clarification is sought for the limited Kidlington Green Belt review. Other points of issue relate to Infrastructure delivery, monitoring, quality of maps and resourcing.

District City, Town & Parish Councils

Oxford City Council

Stronger reference should be inserted in the Plan to the 'Duty to Co-operate', similar to the wording proposed as a modification by the Inspector to the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy. Disagrees that "there is no suggestion at this stage that a wider review is required". The City Council will continue to press for an urban extension to the south of the city but until this is secured the City would wish the option for a selective Green Belt review in other areas around the city to be maintained.

The City Council has some concerns about the shift in the type of employment provision at Bicester e.g. to the knowledge economy as this overlaps significantly with the key sectors of the city's economy.

It is concerned that expansion at Bicester Village could seriously impact on the potential of the Westgate shopping centre redevelopment in Oxford.

Reassurance is needed that adequate infrastructure funding will be in place to mitigate the impact e.g. on the A34. A programme of measures and funding schemes should be identified to properly mitigate any additional demand arising from future housing and jobs growth.

Aylesbury Vale District Council

Raises concerns regarding impacts of road traffic from the proposed developments at Bicester and improvements that would be needed on the A41 towards Waddesdon and Aylesbury. No evidence that road improvements to Bicester have considered committed growth within Aylesbury Vale. Evidence is needed.

Bicester town centre's role to be considered as a wider service to include rural communities is unclear. Provision of car parking and bus services to enable rural communities to access Bicester town centre is also unclear. It is not clear whether Bicester town centre has considered the future growth in rural villages in Western Aylesbury Vale. Evidence is needed.

It is not clear whether the Green Infrastructure deficiencies in Aylesbury Vale will be addressed.

Assurance needed that Policy ESD13 will be implemented having regard where relevant to the valued landscape in western Aylesbury Vale. Also confirmation is needed that Policy ESD11 Conservation Target Areas and SSSI shown on the Proposals Map depicted in Aylesbury Vale do not apply and are shown for strategic context only.

The assessments in the Sustainability Appraisal raises questions. The scoring will need to be reviewed when looking at Appendix B Table SLE4 and Table B11 Bicester 12 East Bicester Objective 12.

Banbury Town Council

Banbury Town Council is generally supportive of the Plan but believes that good transport links are essential to growth and would like to see a South East Relief Road as well as the proposed Inner Relief Road seen as vital to capacity issues. The Town Council support a 30% target for affordable housing but highlight applications just below this target. Support Area Renewal (Policy BSC.5), the relocation of Banbury Canalside Gypsy site & concern at the deficiency of Open Space provision in the Town (Policy BSC.10).

There is strong support of the Green Boundaries to Growth Policy, particularly at Salt Way and Crouch Hill as well as Policies ESD.16-18. The Town Council strongly support development at Banbury Canalside as the main brownfield option for the town although delivery is a concern. Allocation of Hardwick Farm, Southam Road is supported. Concern expressed at the high value attached to the land between the cemetery and the M40 for Hardwick Hill Cemetery Expansion which they would like to see as a specific allocation. Preference for future greenfield residential development is given to West of Bretch Hill, with concern raised at the extension to Bankside Phase 2 because of traffic congestion. Although respecting the need for further growth the Town Council are apprehensive about proposed development at North of Hanwell Fields.

Support is given to Banbury 6 – Employment Land West of M40 but concern is raised at its potential for B8 rather than more desirable B1 and B2. Policy Banbury 7 – Strengthening Banbury Town Centre is supported as well as Land at Bolton Road which can be used to create connections with Parsons Street. Support the Spiceball Development Area as a culture quarter for a new library and theatre / Cinema. They would like to see community woodland on the fringe of Banbury.

Bicester Town Council

Bicester Town Council welcomes the production of the Bicester Masterplan and the opportunity it presents to address existing infrastructure deficiencies in the town. Concern is raised regarding inconsistencies between the Bicester Masterplan and the Bicester chapter in the Local Plan. Bicester Town Council also wishes to draw attention to identified need for new allotment land and burial ground extension (Policy 9: Burial Site in Bicester). Strongly support jobs led development but would like to see further employment land allocated in the Local Plan as reflected in the Masterplan, with a general view that employment land should be focused in the South East and residential in the West and North.

Bicester Town Council would also like to see all residential development contributing towards affordable housing and not just schemes of 10 or more. Support approach to transport provision but would like to see more integration with the Evergreen 3 east to

west rail and its electrification including the use of rail freight, although concern is raised at capacity of London Road level crossing. Site specific comments relate to North West Bicester where concern is raised at the timing and provision of services which also apply to Graven Hill and South west Bicester Phase 2. Strong support is given to Bicester Business Park, Policies Bicester 4 – 8 & Policies Bicester 10-12.

Kidlington ~~Village~~ Parish Council

The Village Parish Council accept the Local Plans principles that housing development at Kidlington should be limited to local needs only within the existing Green Belt however they object to Kidlington being allocated a Category A village. Kidlington is considered to have a larger more complex housing need and the Village Council do not consider the proposed 259 dwellings is based on sufficient evidence of future housing needs. The Village Council argues that the Plan contains an underestimation of the Kidlington population. The Plan should seek a minimum total growth target of 13,400 dwellings reflecting RSS housing figure.

The Village Parish Council are particularly supportive of the proposed Kidlington Masterplan but would like reassurance that it will include an up to date reassessment of local housing need. Kidlington Village Parish Council have raised concern that site below 10 dwellings will not contribute towards affordable housing requirements and instead recommend that this is reduced to three. Support is given to the extension to the West side of Oxford Road although consider the proposed 2,500sqm threshold for retail impact assessment is set to high. Concern is raised at the miscalculation of existing retail floor space which should show under trading. Welcome the proposed selective Green Belt Review at Langford Lane which will allow for the development of approximately 11.3ha of employment land for high tech industry. Although would like to see the review opened up to residential development to reflect the jobs created.

The Council would like the Plan to qualify the degree of growth proposed at London Oxford Airport within its existing boundaries. Supportive of proposals for a new train station at Water Eaton Park but would expect review of evidence for Station at new Technology Park and at Lyne Mead in Kidlington.

Parish & ~~Ward~~ Councils and Parish Meetings

Many of the Districts Parish & ~~Ward~~ Councils have made comment on the Local Plan¹. In general the outlining Parishes to Banbury & Bicester have expressed concerns at the potential impact at growth on the rural setting of adjacent villages, traffic in respect of rat running, capacity issues of school provision and visual impact. The proposed Green Boundaries to Growth (Policy ESD.15) is generally supported in principle although several anomalies have been identified. Bodicote Parish Council has expressed anxiety at the potential for coalescence with Banbury.

Wendlebury Parish Council in particular has concerns regarding the ~~location of~~ the proposed Southern Link Road at Bicester. ~~and resultant rat running.~~ **It states that no alternative routes have been proposed and the suggested route would have considerable impact on Wendlebury including on the well-being of residents. It states that the proposed relief road would cross a large BAP habitat, about a**

¹ Adderbury Parish Council, Ambrosden Parish Council, Bucknell Parish Council, Bletchington Parish Council, Bloxham Parish Council, Bodicote Parish Council, Caversfield Parish Council, Chesterton Parish Council, Cropredy Parish Council, Fritwell Parish Council, Finmere Parish Council, Gosford and Water Eaton Parish Council, Hanwell Parish Council, Launton Parish Council, Milcombe Parish Council, Merton Parish Council, Middleton Stoney Parish Council, South Newington Parish Council, Stoke Lyne Parish Council, Stratton Audley Parish Council, Wendlebury Parish Council, Wroxton & Balscote Parish Council & The Astons and Heyford Ward.

Scheduled Ancient Monument and damage the setting of Wendlebury countryside contrary to Local Plan policy to strictly control development in open countryside.

Wendlebury PC considers that the proposed relief road would destroy the quality of the rural and natural environment, 'boxing-in' the village, cutting off direct access to the countryside, discouraging horse riding, increasing noise, air pollution and reducing the attraction of the village to incomers. It states that there appears to be no clear boundary to limit growth of Bicester along the A 41 towards Junction 9 of M40.

Several of the Parish Councils have expressed concerns at their categorisation within Policy Villages 1 although the smaller villages are generally supportive. Many of the Parish Councils have sought further clarification as to the distribution of housing amongst the grouped settlements as set out in Policy Villages 2 as this is considered unclear. General support is given to the proposed Affordable Housing Policy and threshold of 3 dwellings.

Merton Parish Council have sought exclusion of land from the Green Belt. Bletchington Parish Council are proposing to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. Some criticisms have been expressed at the CRAITILUS study and the lack of an up to date SHLAA and SHMA. The protection of RAF Bicester for leisure purposes is advocated by Caversfield & Stratton Audley Parish Council.

Hanwell Parish Council support 'Hanwell Village' as a category C settlement, one of the least sustainable settlements within the District as it has few services and poor transport connections.

Hanwell Parish Council strongly objected to policy Banbury 2 as they consider the Plan does not justify why Banbury 2 and Banbury 5 (North of Hanwell Fields) are now included and West of Warwick Road is excluded. The Parish Council believe that the Plan does not justify why the clear, defensible boundary to the north of Banbury which now defines the limit of built development should now be significantly altered or how the new edge will constitute an effective, defensible long term boundary. They also consider the Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment 2009 are flawed documents and don't provide sufficiently robust evidence to base a Sustainability Appraisal of sites around Banbury. Further evidence and careful assessment is required.

Hanwell Parish Council indicated that the Plan does not justify the inclusion of East & West Southam Road. These sites are considered constrained by noise, heritage and other environmental constraints and adjoin industrial area to the south although these sites might be suitable for long term employment use.

Local Residents and Action Groups

Four ~~Three~~ specific action groups; Hanwell Village Residents, Hanwell Fields Development Action Group (HFDAG), Bicester (and villages) Against Sham Eco-town (BASE) and Adderbury Conservation Action Group (ACAG) have submitted representations to the Cherwell Local Plan. ~~alongside the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) a national group.~~

Hanwell Village Residents

HVR agree that Hanwell Village should be category C and do not consider the village to be a sustainable location for growth. They support policy ESD 5 on

renewable energy. But consider that it should be revised so that wind monitoring masts and other associated engineering works will be subject to the same assessments as wind turbines and that the cumulative impacts of wind farm development are referred to.

HVR object to the inclusion of sites Banbury 2: East and West of Southam Road and Banbury 5: North of Hanwell Fields, and states that the exclusion of West of Warwick Road has not been justified and contradicts the conclusions of the Draft Core Strategy on the relative sustainability of sites. They consider that the Plan does not explain how an effective, defensible long-term urban boundary to the north will be provided, how Hanwell village and its rural setting will be protected, nor how the suggested Green Buffers will be achieved. HVR believe that the Southam Road site would create a poor environment for new housing and may be more suitable for sensitively designed employment uses. They do not see how the overall conclusions on the sustainability of sites Banbury 2 and Banbury 5 can be reached on the evidence available.

HVR consider that the Plan does not justify why development south of Salt Way would be more harmful than development to the north of Banbury. The strategic decision to offer greater protection to the Salt Way area is regarded as being highly questionable and needs proper justification and further assessment.

HVR ask that if the proposed housing sites to the north of Banbury are approved, there needs to be the strongest protection for Hanwell village and its setting and a well defined boundary with effective green buffers where appropriate.

Adderbury Conservation Action Group

The ACAG has sought clarification regarding the status of the 'Green Boundaries to Growth' (Policy ESD.15), the status of Adderbury within Policy Villages 1 which the group considers should be a Category A settlement and not subject to excessive growth and highlighted pressures on their local school.

Bicester (and villages) Against Sham Eco-town

BASE are concerned with the rapid expansion of Bicester and in particular the proposed Eco-Town in North West Bicester (Policy Bicester 1). They do not consider Eco-town is viable and therefore undeliverable and that in sufficient public consultation or public meetings have been carried out by the Council. They strongly object to Policy Bicester 1; as the scale of development is over 1,000 acres with a site capacity likely to be near 8,000 homes rather than advertised 5,000 homes given modern density standards.

They consider there is no requirement to allocate an eco-town if a better way of meeting future needs exists. Surplus MOD land is preferred for residential growth close to railway stations. The South East Plan target is only 5,000 dwellings at Bicester, why have more? Additional car trips will be generated, there is unlikely to be 5,000 new jobs and new shops on the edge will damage town centre.

The group have also raised concerns at the level of consultation undertaken, the lack of any environmental appraisal, consideration of alternatives or public Inquiry. They note that 100% of development will be on agricultural farm land when alternative sites are available on brownfield land. They believe that this development would harm Bicester and nearby villages, more vehicles on the road and shortfall in school places.

Campaign to Protect Rural England

~~The CPRE are generally supportive of the overall Vision, Objectives and Strategy of the Plan and in particular the policies that seek the protection of the countryside. Concerns are raised however on the reliance of the South East Plan targets and growth proposed at Bicester. They note the Council's brownfield target is not particularly ambitious. All policies in Chapter B.3 Ensuring Sustainable Development are supported and in particular Policies on Oxford Green Belt and Green Boundaries to Growth. The CPRE generally support the strategy for placed based policies but suggest Shipton-on-Cherwell quarry as a possible site. Further clarification is sought for the limited Kidlington Green Belt review. Other points of issue relate to Infrastructure delivery, monitoring, quality of maps and resourcing.~~

Hanwell Fields Development Action Group

The HFDAG is active in the opposition to the allocation of North of Hanwell Fields (Banbury 5) & Southam Road (Banbury 2). The HFDAG submitted two separate letters undersigned by 90 & 60 signatures respectively. The letters of objection seek to de-allocate both sites from the Plan which they consider are located in unsustainable locations for Banbury's growth, citing the lack of education capacity, limited employment opportunities, traffic, requirement for a health care facility, distance from shops and expected anti-social behaviour as reasons. The group also expresses concerns at proposed development breaching the 'natural' boundary of Dukes Meadow Drive a northern boundary to the town.

Other issues of concern with Banbury 2 include the high visual impact on local landscape and surrounding properties, increased flood risk and noise pollution, loss of agricultural land, the urbanisation of Banbury and the fact that proposed housing is not located near existing residential development.

The group has also raised procedural concerns relating to the reliance on the South East Plan numbers, consistency with the NPPF, lack of public consultation and Banbury Masterplan, errors within supporting evidence and inconsistencies with earlier documents. A detailed analysis of other housing numbers and other Banbury sites has also been undertaken.

Developers / Landowners

The development industry is promoting a large number of residential and employment sites on the edges of Banbury and Bicester as major locations for growth as well as some smaller scale proposals in the rural villages and at Kidlington in the Green Belt.

The development industry in general are supportive of the Plan's strategy to direct most growth towards Banbury and Bicester as the most sustainable locations for growth however some of them have expressed concern at the lack of sustainable growth proposed in some of the villages, particularly with regard to affordable housing provision, infilling, brownfield sites, small scale employment opportunities and support for rural services².

Many of the main developers promoting sites in the District have sought to raise objections to the lack of an up to date SHMA and SHLAA which they consider to be essential pieces of evidence in support of the Local Plan and have criticised the Council for not allowing

² Barton Willmore on behalf of Archstone Land, Kemp & Kemp on Behalf of Berkeley Homes (Oxford and Chiltern) Limited & Framptons on behalf of Mintondale Developments

sufficient public consultation on this evidence, often quoting NPPF paragraph 47 'use the evidence base to ensure that the Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing'.

Although there was general support in principle for the retention of the South East RSS housing figures in Cherwell it was still felt by many developers that the Local Plan should still adopt locally derived housing figures.³ The South East Plan is considered to only plan for reasonable levels of housing and not to boost significantly as suggested by the NPPF and the South East Plan evidence is also considered to be out of date and based on earlier household projections.

The Local Authority would instead be expected to test higher housing figures related to 2011 Census data and later housing projectors. In short the proposed housing target should be based on; population growth, the economy, military changes, labour force ratio, market factors, housing hold projections / demographics, infrastructure and flexibility.

Several developers also raised viability concerns regarding Affordable Housing Policy (BSC.3), the detailed Infrastructure Needs within the Placed Based Policies and the Renewable Energy Requirements set out under ESD.2-4. The lack of a finalised IDP was also noted as a concern.

³ CALA Homes, Woolfbond Planning on behalf of Miller Strategic Homes, Barton Willmore on behalf of Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd Marrons on behalf of Hallam Land Management & Boyer Planning on behalf of Bloor Homes (Western) Ltd

Section 4: Implications for the proposed Local Plan

As the detailed assessment shows, many contradictory positions were advanced by different respondents, which is not a surprise given the different interests being consulted over levels and locations of growth. The Planning Policy team has considered the points made. Some respondents offered text refinements that can easily be accommodated to achieve greater clarity in the document. Most of the points offered concerned points of detail or individual concern, very few responses challenged the premises on which the Plan has been developed and structured.

Across all of the responses two main themes emerge which we have addressed by considering text changes and showing more clearly how the evidence base has informed the content of the plan and the locations for growth.

Some issues raised are effectively early indications of the challenges that CDC will need to be prepared to address at the Plan Examination in 2013.

At Banbury concerns at North of Hanwell Fields, Southam Road, West of Bretch Hill are being considered with the benefit of new landscape evidence which is the process of being finalised. This includes the refined identification of green buffers and where necessary the scope for mitigation.

These responses illustrate the challenge facing Banbury, which is that wherever development is located at the edge of the town there are topographical limits and significant constraints which need to be balanced with the advantages of development in each location.

At Bicester concern relates to the impact of proposed relief road on the village of Wendlebury. The Bicester Movement Study has now considered a full range of route options an alternative route option avoid direct impact on Wendlebury. Although the Local Plan allows for consideration of a proposed relief road, any specific proposals will be pursued outside of the main Local Plan process.

Section 5: Proposed Plan Changes

Arising from the representations received and the additional evidence, the following changes to the Local Plan are proposed for further consideration and testing including where necessary through the Sustainability Appraisal.

Theme One

- Make sure it is clear that new business and commercial investment will be supported
- Plan will support University investment as playing a vital role in the strengthening of the economy of the District.
- Introduce greater flexibility of 'B' uses to assist with site promotion.
- Proposal to strengthen the Town Centre is underpinned by a new Retail analysis
- Takes account of rail investment HSLOS, East-west rail and Evergreen three
- Growth at Bicester and associated Movement Study shows need for a relief road. The new WYG options appraisal has considered alternative route options which require further testing and will be developed separately from the Local Plan process.

Theme Two

- Revised policies for housing mix and strong support for community self build.
- Renewal Areas - alignment with 'Brighter Futures for Banbury' programme, initially in wards at Banbury. Gives planning basis for urban regeneration programmes.
- Updated Gypsy and Traveller policy to take account of recently published needs assessment.
- Education policy updated to include new education provision including special schools.

Theme Three

- Guidance on the Energy policies ESD 1-5 has been published to provide guidance on how the plan might be interpreted.
- Green buffers on the edge of Bicester and Banbury to safeguard important gaps and avoid coalescence between town growth and surrounding villages. Updating of maps accordingly (see appended drafts subject to further testing). Where a green buffer is not shown, protection is provided by the policy against development in the open countryside.
- Oxford Canal is recognised as a major linear connection now has a Conservation Area designation

Bicester

- Reflected on emerging landscape evidence and amended proposed Town Maps to take account of emerging Green Buffer proposals.
- Clarified phasing proposed for Bicester East in context of new information about site deliverability.
- Additional small sites for employment will be identified through Local Neighbourhoods DPD.
- Town Centre - make clear the proposed extension of the town centre is to be confirmed through the work on the Local Neighbourhoods DPD.
- Review phasing of sites in housing trajectory having regard to latest information on deliverability.

Banbury

- Reflected on emerging landscape evidence and testing previous evidence in view of contested sites. Testing assumptions for individual sites. Emerging evidence suggests the need for some site refinement at Banbury which will need to be tested

through the Sustainability Appraisal. The town has a choice as to where growth is directed - whether to the south or the north. Banbury Southam Road east side is connected to the employment site. But west of Warwick Road is no longer a reserve site and south of Salt way are not supported in the light of emerging landscape evidence.

- Town Centre - make clear the proposed extension of the town centre is to be confirmed through the work on the Local Neighbourhoods DPD.
- Bolton Road - change to retail plus residential and commercial.
- Spiceball - change to culture, cinema, retail and renewed Mill with improved connectivity to the town centre.
- Canalside – viability study is underway. Development area contains a number of development options including wharfs on canal, use of river. Need for buildings/features marking arrival.
- North of Hanwell Fields – review implications of emerging landscape assessments of edge of Banbury and current planning application for its potential to increase the proposed level of housing growth with appropriate level of mitigation.
- Southam Road – the emerging landscape assessments consider that land to the west of Southam Road has more development challenges than the eastern part of the development area.
- Banbury Movement Study – being published to update the BANITLUS.
- SPDs will follow completion of the Local Plan.
- Town Maps take account of emerging Green Buffer proposals.
- Review phasing of sites in housing trajectory having regard to latest information on deliverability.

Kidlington

- Refer to preparing a Kidlington Framework 'Masterplan' to address the specific issues faced by Kidlington and its green belt constraint.
- Refer to opportunity to strengthen economy of the town by maximising the role of Oxford University and the its strategic location between Bicester and Oxford on the A34, taking advantage of the new transport investment in improved rail links to Oxford and Bicester including a new Water Eaton station. Planning to conduct a limited green belt review at Kidlington to secure additional high value employment growth.

Villages

- The plan limits growth at the villages as they are less sustainable locations than the 2 towns. Housing distribution figures to be updated taking account of latest completions and permissions and to consider the effect of recent planning decisions and appeals.
- Where villages prepare (and complete) a Neighbourhood Plan they will form part of the statutory Development Plan and have considerable weight in guiding limited growth in villages to the location supported by the community.

Section 6: Sustainability Appraisal – Update

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive requires responses to consultation to be taken into account during the preparation of the plan or programme and before its adoption or submission to a legislative procedure. Consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal took place alongside the Local Plan between 29th August – 10th October 2012.

~~CDC received direct responses to the SA from 16 individuals and organisations resulting on 56 comments on the SA. It should also be considered that, comments received only on the Local Plan will ultimately affect the SA too if they result on changes to the Local Plan.~~

There were a number of anomalies in the reporting of the SA representations to the consultation on the Proposed Submission Local Plan (August – October 2012) which have now been addressed.

The individuals and organisations listed below made direct responses to the SA. The Report to the Executive on 4 March 2013 did not list in the SA section the responses from the organisations and individual marked below in bold text.

Organisations responding

- **Aylesbury Vale DC**
- Berrys on behalf of Gleeson Developments Ltd
- Bioscan
- Cropredy Parish Council
- David Lock Associates / Gallagher Estates
- English Heritage
- Framptons on behalf of Barwood Developments
- **Hanwell Parish Council**
- **Hanwell Village Residents**
- HFDAG
- Hives Planning on behalf of Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance and trustees of the Adderbury and Milton Feoffee Charity
- Natural England
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Rapleys LLP on behalf of Bedworth Trading Ltd
- **Savills on behalf of Milton Village Meeting**

Individuals responding

- Mr R Bratt
- Mr J Colegrave
- **Mr A Jones**
- Mrs K Jones
- MsC Nunn

The Consultation Bodies⁴ for the purposes of the SEA Directive are the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage.

English Heritage main comments related to the potential effect of development on the historic environment in Bicester; potential harm to Alchester Roman Town and the Wretchwick Deserted Medieval Settlement in particular.

Natural England confirmed they did not have any comments to make on the SA report and the Environment **Agency** only made comments to the Local Plan.

The County Council provided comments on the archaeology and ecology of specific sites.

~~The main comments from other consultees relate to the following:~~

Para' 6.9 of the March 2013 Report to Executive, summarised other SA issues as follows:

- Lack of information on the selection of sites through the progression of the Local Plan and whether the SA process to date has adequately justified the progression/rejection of development sites. The sites questioned were: Salt Way/Wykham Park Farm (omission site), West of Bretch Hill (Banbury 3), Hardwick Farm/Southam Road (Banbury 2), and North of Hanwell Fields (Banbury 5);
- whether the SA demonstrates that the growth proposed for Banbury in the Local Plan is the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives
- support for the limited number of dwellings proposed for villages. Future work (through Local Neighbourhoods DPD) should reflect current population, type and mix of housing and materials to reflect village characteristics; and
- need for further evidence to assess the sustainability of sites and inform mitigation measures in Banbury due to Banbury's topographical and capacity constraints to growth.

The following should also have been noted:

- **Increasing residual development in the rural villages away from the main centres of Banbury, Kidlington and Bicester is not considered sustainable or in accordance with ESD1 due to the need to use the car to access facilities and services.**
- **In relation to transport, SA scores should be reduced for SLE4 and Bicester 12 until mitigation and infrastructure upgrades are secured.**

How we responded to Sustainability Appraisal direct representations

The March 2013 SA responded to the August-October 2012 representations by:

⁴ Those authorities which, because of their environmental responsibilities, are likely to be concerned by the effects of implementing the plan or programme, and must be consulted on the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the Environmental Report.

- incorporating a summary of the reasons why strategic sites have been taken forward in Appendix B.
- incorporating in Appendix C a summary of why sites were rejected and reporting the assessment of the rejected sites as per the SA Core Strategy 2010 for referencing, update of the 2010 SA assessments with latest relevant evidence where relevant.
- providing a response to the representations received in Appendix D.
- updating SA assessments with latest available evidence.

Potential changes to the Local Plan and its evidence

Where matters of soundness are raised through consultation on the Local Plan, or materially significant issues arise from new evidence, any proposed changes to the Plan should be appraised and the SA report updated, or a supplementary report produced. Changes that are not significant will not require further sustainability work.

Presently the main identified areas of proposed change in the Local Plan or its evidence which could potentially affect the Sustainability Appraisal are:

- ~~Emerging landscape and environmental evidence affecting the assessment of sites and the identification of sites including Green Buffers;~~
- ~~Latest housing completions and permissions; and~~
- ~~Changes to town centre policies (Bicester 5 and Banbury 7) and housing mix policy (BSC4).~~

However, as a number of pieces of evidence are presently being finalised, a further check for any other necessary changes will need to be made.

Potential effect of main issues raised through SA consultation and Local Plan changes

At the present time it is considered that the emerging evidence (particularly on landscape), together with the responses to the consultation and updates to baseline information such as housing completions and permissions are likely to have an effect on the appraisal of the sites/policies listed below. Whether this will alter the result of the Sustainability Appraisal and whether other sites/policies will be affected cannot be ascertained until the evidence is finalised and all sites proposed and rejected through the Local Plan process are reassessed.

Sites where the Sustainability Appraisal is likely to be affected	
Sites in the Proposed Submission Local Plan	Sites not in the Proposed Submission Local Plan
Bicester 1 North West Bicester/Eco town (Howes Lane, Lords Lane)	Land West of Warwick Road (BAN 4 in the Draft Core Strategy 2010)
Bicester 8 Bicester Airfield	Way (BAN 4 in Options for Growth 2008)
Bicester 11 North East Bicester Business Park	Wykham Park Farm and South of Salt Park

Sites where the Sustainability Appraisal is likely to be affected	
Sites in the Proposed Submission Local Plan	Sites not in the Proposed Submission Local Plan
Bicester 12 Bicester East	Land west of Bloxham Road (BAN 5 (a) in Options for Growth 2008)
Banbury 1 Banbury Canalside	Land east of the M40 (BAN7 in the Supporting Report to Options for Growth 2008)
Banbury 2 Hardwick Farm/Southam Road	South East of Hanwell (BAN 9 in the Supporting Report to Options for Growth 2008)
Banbury 5 North of Hanwell Fields	South of Thorpe Way (BAN 10 in the Supporting Report to Options for Growth 2008)
Banbury 8 Land at Bolton Road	

~~None-site specific policies presently affected by proposed changes arising from new or emerging evidence or consultation responses are ESD 15 Green Boundaries to Growth, Bicester 5 Strengthening Bicester Town Centre, Banbury 7 Strengthening Banbury Town Centre and BSC4 Housing Mix.~~

~~In Sustainability Appraisal terms it is considered that changes to Bicester 5, Banbury 7 and BSC 4 are unlikely to give rise to any significant negative effect and it is unlikely that further assessment will be required.~~

~~The Sustainability appraisal of Plan policy ESD 15 will depend on the outcome of final landscape and environmental evidence.~~

~~Next steps for the SA~~

~~The Sustainability Appraisal is currently being updated with an updated baseline evidence and a clearer review of options rejected to date. Policies will be reassessed on the basis of this baseline including sites previously rejected. Alongside this assessment will be an updated Habitats Regulation Assessment.~~

~~The amended Sustainability Appraisal report will be consulted upon alongside the 'focused consultation' on the Local Plan Proposed Submission.~~

~~These new documents will be available from the CDC Website.~~

Section 7: Proposed Additional ‘Focused’ Consultation

In preparation for the Examination of the Local Plan, the officers have received advice from Counsel on the final stages of plan completion and the implications of the proposed changes arising from new evidence and representations.

The Plan must be considered ‘sound’ at Examination to be adopted by the Council and Counsel’s advice is now shaping how we proceed to complete Plan drafting and the next steps we take.

A number of changes are proposed to the draft Cherwell Local Plan arising from a combination of responses received to the consultation on the plan (Aug – Oct 2012), and some arise from evidence being completed since the plan was consulted upon. Most of the proposed changes are relatively minor, but a small number of policy changes are regarded as *major* and judged by our legal advisers to be ‘*significant material changes*’ to the plan.

In addition, changes may be required to the site yield on sites following the receipt of additional evidence. The total amount of growth proposed in the Local Plan for the District up to 2031 is not proposed to change and remains 16,750 (RSS compliant) but these changes are again judged to be ‘*significant material changes*’ to the plan.

At present, 3 necessary major policy changes are proposed for further testing:

- Policy ESD15: Green Boundaries to Growth – The production of additional evidence to define more clearly the purposes and boundaries of the green buffers, a key policy proposal within the 2012 Local Plan draft. Changes are proposed in the interests of maintaining Banbury and Bicester’s distinctive identity and setting; protecting the separate identity and setting of neighbouring settlements which surround the two main towns; preventing coalescence and protecting gaps between the two towns and their surrounding settlements; protecting the identity and setting of valued features of landscape and historical importance that are important in shaping the long term planning of the towns; and protecting important views (see draft maps appended).
- Policy BSC4: Housing Mix – arising from the representations received it is proposed to revise the proposed policy to be less rigid as it is impeding site negotiations.
- Policy SLE2: Securing Dynamic Town Centres and Bicester 5: Strengthening Bicester Town Centre – representations had noted that the proposed Local Plan text and maps for strengthening town centres appeared to imply that CDC may be looking to increase by 3 fold the area of the town centre in Bicester. This would diffuse the town centre first policy were it to be an approach that is adopted. It is proposed to make it clear that there is an area of search for expanding the town centre.

The vast bulk of the Plan is expected to be unchanged, though some minor points of clarification are proposed through out it as ‘minor’ changes. Additionally, potential changes to site yields and will need to be considered in the context of final landscape evidence.

The proposed changes to strategic housing sites are:

- Bicester 12: East Bicester – Pre-application discussions confirm that the site could be brought forward earlier than originally proposed as a readily deliverable site, with appropriate mitigation.

- Banbury 2: Banbury: Hardwick Farm, Southam Road (East and West) – the emerging landscape assessments consider that land to the west of Southam Road has more development challenges than the eastern part of the development area. It is proposed to retain the overall development boundary but to review the overall amount of development considered on the western part.
- Banbury 5: North of Hanwell Fields – Review implications of landscape assessments of edge of Banbury, and current planning application, for potential to increasing the proposed level of housing growth with appropriate mitigation

The legal advice we have received is to rerun the Sustainability Appraisal to take account of these proposed and policy and site changes (which has begun by our retained consultants Environ) and re-consult on these few major changes to the Local Plan. This is not a full consultation on the whole Plan and its strategy as conducted in autumn 2012. This additional consultation will also enable those points raised by key Agencies and Stakeholders to be considered and shown to have been addressed prior to the completion of the Local Plan (eg new Town Movement Studies which address concerns of the Highways Agency)

Re-consultation is a regular feature of plan making.

Proceeding to sign off and submission of the Local Plan without undertaking this additional ‘focused’ consultation would entail a major risk of being judged to be ‘unsound’ at the start of the Plan Examination and not being allowed to proceed, given the findings of our own evidence.

The additional ‘focused consultation’

This will entail public consultation (including with key stakeholders) on a table of changes - the ‘focused changes’ - together with other minor changes , with an explanation of why they are needed.

A 6 week period of consultation is required, with a period thereafter to compile the responses and report to Executive and Full Council together with the final proposed Local Plan for adoption and submission to the Secretary of State.

Conclusion

The Local Plan is its final stage of preparation. Consultation responses on the Proposed Submission Local Plan August 2012 have been considered by officers and the Council’s evidence base is nearly complete.

Consideration of the new evidence and the comments received on the Plan has concluded that a small number of significant changes are required. The clear legal advice received by officers is that these changes need to be consulted upon alongside an updated Sustainability Appraisal. The SA will consider the effects of the changes and will take into account the final pieces of evidence.

The consultation will be a ‘focused consultation’ on the significant changes for a 6 week period. Other minor changes will be separately identified. Following the consultation, the representations received will be summarised and the Plan with final amendments will be presented to full Council for formal approval so that it can be submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination.