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Sent: 21 September 2021 10:55
To: Development Brief <developmentbrief@cherwell-dc.gov.uk>
Subject: PR9



Please find attached Yarnton Parish Council's response to the PR9 Development Brief

Regards

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21st September 2021.

Yarnton Parish Council's Response to Cherwell District Council's Draft Development Brief for PR9

This document supplements initial comments submitted by Yarnton Parish Council (YPC) ahead of a Zoom meeting with Cherwell District Council officers held on 31st August 2021.

Cherwell District Council (CDC) should work more closely with critically affected neighbourhoods to determine an overall structure of development style, build types and infrastructure across adjacent sites (eg. PR8 and PR9). Creation of separate development brief documents without an overarching document updated from earlier versions of the Local Plan Review is unhelpful. YPC remains concerned that the PR9 development is being considered in isolation from the other development parcels and would welcome clarification as to what the overall makeup of the infrastructure between Begbroke, Yarnton, Kidlington and Gosford will look like. The Development Brief for PR9 alludes to some infrastructure details such as schools in PR8 and sporting facility at Stratfield Brake, but still leaves residents unclear of the District Council's overall intentions. A fuller understanding of the entire development would help the Parish Councils take a more considered view of the proposals in each development site.

1. CDC will be aware of **Yarnton's flood risk**. YPC has agreed three key areas to prioritise and one of these is flooding supported by the Yarnton Flood Defence Group (YFDG) which has undertaken to properly understand local watercourses and flood risks. A development on Spring Hill is a concern as the village is already affected by water flowing off it, with flooding near the Medical Centre on Rutten Lane and Aysgarth Road. We hope that the development will not only ensure that the infrastructure is sufficient to manage on-site water flows, but also does not transfer flooding issues to the village's older pipe network which would be unable to hold larger capacities. YPC and YFDG would therefore welcome the opportunity to engage with CDC and the developers to ensure that the development does not increase the risk, but works to reduce the risk with appropriate piping infrastructure and plans for ongoing maintenance so that future generations are protected.

[YFDG has submitted a separate and thorough response to the development brief related to the issues of flooding. Yarnton Parish Council support this submission and strongly recommend that CDC take note of the information and evidence provided.]

2. The second key priority for YPC is **traffic (volume and speeding violations)**.
 - a) YPC needs to understand what measures will be in place to mitigate increased traffic and speeding.
 - b) Despite planning strategy proposals to promote walking, cycling and use of public transport, increased traffic volume on the A44 is inevitable with the development of PR8 and 9 and other developments outside CDC boundaries. Traffic flows must be maintained on it and side roads (eg. Cassington Road, Sandy Lane and Rutten Lane). An up-to-date traffic impact assessment covering roads within the village of Yarnton must be a minimum requirement before plans are finalised.
 - c) Speeding with its accompanying noise and air pollution is an issue along the A44. The brief should ensure measures will be in place to compel traffic to remain within the proposed 40 mph limit. The implementation of Average Speed Cameras would help enforce traffic speeds as would calming measures approaching roundabouts and crossings.
 - d) It is the understanding of YPC that OCC plan to introduce a 40mph speed limit and traffic light controls at roundabouts along the Yarnton section of the A44. With the introduction of pedestrian crossing points described in PR9 Briefing Document it is again important to understand the effect of all elements on A44, Cassington Road, Rutten Lane and Sandy Lane traffic flows. YPC also supports Begbroke's request for a pedestrian crossing to ensure safe crossing between the east and west parts of the village.
 - e) Parking outside William Fletcher School by staff and during school drop-off and pick-up is already an issue. Measures to prevent this must be an explicit part of the brief.
 - f) The proposed access point to PR9 on Rutten Lane by Yarnton Medical Centre introduces a hazard consequent to sight lines related local road contours. The proposed bus stop opposite will also further complicate this spot. We have been informed by Merton College that at peak times they anticipated vehicles using that junction once every twenty seconds. We recommend that this access point reverts to the A44 as in earlier plans as this is the most unsafe part of that road. Although it is within the 30mph speed limit, the majority of the traffic passing that point is travelling faster; we monitor the southbound traffic at that point and our figures show consistently that more than 50% of the vehicles are travelling faster than 30mph and always some over 50mph; after coming off the roundabout the traffic speeds up as it enters the village rather than slowing down.
 - g) Unless counter measures are established, access and egress at the proposed point in Rutten Lane will create increased traffic volume along with its associated noise and air pollution in Rutten Lane, Aysgarth Road and The Garth. It is recommended that appropriate traffic-calming measures are installed as part of the plan.
 - h) CDC should argue against proposed closure of Sandy Lane crossing to vehicular traffic. Its closure will inevitably increase traffic on the A44 and diminish access to medical, dental, religious, banking, shopping and leisure facilities within neighbouring communities.
3. YPC **welcomes the inclusion of green spaces** including the community woodland, allotments, nature reserve and extended cycle/footpaths. Amenities need to be integrally developed in the early stages of the development and be made rapidly available to residents. The Parish Council will need clarification of the ownership and ongoing responsibility for these areas and how maintenance will be funded. The Parish Council's preference is that ownership and maintenance responsibilities of all green space amenities including play areas lie with Cherwell District Council. The Parish Council also requests that a covenant is placed on all the remaining green spaces

(fields, community woodland, etc) to prevent any future building development leaving the green space for the community in perpetuity. The inclusion of green space chimes YPC's Climate Emergency commitments to help secure the safety of future generations who live in and near Yarnton village. We have been mindful of our responsibilities towards our environment, our fauna/flora wildlife and our carbon footprints with any activities the Council undertakes. The increased housing in the area is an obvious threat to these commitments and the retention of as much natural green space will remain a valuable asset.

YPC welcomes that consideration has been given to giving access to those with restricted mobility to enable all residents to access all green spaces. It is indicated that the nature reserve is for use of William Fletcher School, but within the bounds of safety and duty of care it should be possible that access will be available to all residents as access (including for those with restricted mobility) to a nature reserve and other green spaces for all ages would be a positive development. Yarnton Parish Council does not support a change of Frogwelldown Lane to become a bridleway or cycle path. Although this type of access to the area is desirable it must be established in a different way in order to protect the historic nature and character of the footpath.

4. The inclusion of good quality play areas with an appropriate variety of equipment is welcomed. The third YPC priority area is **youth provision** (all ages) and whilst the development brief refers to playgrounds for the younger ages there is clear absence of facilities for older children which the Parish Council believes would help combat anti-social behaviour. YPC will support work to develop facilities for older children and is currently working with the *Yarnton Playground Development* Group to survey children (of all ages) about what facilities they would like. S106 monies must be made available to support local plans to improve access to, and facilities to all child age groups. The University of Oxford has a commitment to build a stronger and more constructive relationship with the local and regional community and represents a resource opportunity to share its expertise to provide and support educational and developmental facilities for locals. Yarnton Parish Council hopes CDC will encourage the University to engage with local communities.
5. The provision of **sporting and recreational space** is also a concern for the village. Yarnton has very active football and netball clubs. Each section of these clubs desperately needs more space to accommodate the enthusiasm for the sport with the playing field space already unable to support the current demand (see annexe). The Development Brief alludes to a sporting hub located within the PR7A site. It cannot be expected that all users are able to walk or cycle to such a hub: some may have accessibility issues (it shouldn't be assumed that everyone is an elite athlete) and some may not wish to travel by foot or cycle on dark evenings – especially children. Virtually no direct public transport to the area exists from Yarnton so the natural consequence will further increase traffic on the A44 and other roads. Provision within the area of PR9 plus S106 monies must be available to increase, update and improve existing local facilities.
6. Yarnton is a village and PR9 is described as an extension to a village. With that in mind YPC considers 4 storey buildings to be out of keeping with a village environment. Any **building heights** should not exceed that of the buildings in the Cresswell Close/Hayday Close development to the south of the village. Furthermore, a village represents a community of all ages. Must all residents wishing to live in single-floor accommodation be restricted to live in a multi-storey flat/apartment? A community needs single floor dwellings – bungalows. No provision is shown in the brief which merely reflects the initial proposals set out by Merton College. This has further bearing on the earlier YPC concern that without co-ordinated development plans between adjacent sites, if not overall, it is not possible to know whether the visual aspect will shock, depress or please those

living within or even passing by. If 4 storey building is allowed each side of the A44 (PR8 and PR9) a high sided corridor with claustrophobic impression will be created.

7. Definite limits should be imposed to minimise light and noise pollution, for residents and wildlife in the green spaces. Timed lighting should be a minimum requirement within the brief.
8. Developers/construction contractors must adhere to Climate Change policies and adhere to the highest environmental standards including solar panels, triple glazing and insulation.
9. Developers should be penalised for deviation from the brief.
10. YPC is not convinced that the full impact of an additional 2500 homes between the villages of Yarnton and Begbroke has been accepted by primary care healthcare facilities. (Accommodating the entire proposed new housing stock within Oxfordshire at secondary and tertiary healthcare levels will introduce waiting list pressures that trivialise those consequent to COVID-19.)
11. YPC must be appraised about decisions related to the use of S106 monies and be assured that proportional benefit will be available to existing residents of Yarnton.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Whitley
Parish Clerk

Annexe Sports facilities

Football

We are currently having to leave players out from match day squads on Saturday as we are having an excess of players available compared to spaces available. For example we had 10 players who were available last Saturday that we had to unfortunately tell we couldn't include.

In addition to this, whilst we don't ever tell anyone they can't come training, the space we have to use, especially during winter months when we need use of floodlights, means it makes planning training sessions difficult sometimes due to having too many players at training compared to the space to operate in so this can hinder our training.

We have in the region of 60 players signed on for us which highlights the issues mentioned above in terms of not being able to offer football to everyone on match days and also how training sessions can be impacted on due to having too many people there for the space we have to use.

We have in fact discussed, albeit very briefly, potentially having a 3rd side due to number of players we have. The main issue which we have with this, and is what stopped us progressing any further with it for this season, is we would have no pitch or facilities for a third side to use.

The main basis of our players are from Yarnton and Kidlington. We do have some that come from other parts of Oxfordshire too but the majority are Yarnton and Kidlington.

Netball

From a junior point of view we are full. We have girls from Kidlington, Yarnton, Begbroke, Long Hanborough, Witney and Oxford.

We have had girls on the waiting list for 6 months as we have really good retention of our current players so getting them in has been really hard. We know planning ahead that we have 8 girls currently in year 6 at William Fletcher primary that we don't have space for. Clubs are running at capacity so an increase in girls of secondary age we wouldn't be able to offer any places too.

We have the coaching capacity to have more players but we are restricted by the venue size. We ideally require more court space to be able to accommodate new players/residents.

Ladies are from Yarnton, Kidlington, Begbroke, Bicester, Oxford, Witney, Long Hanborough, Freeland, Eynsham and Woodstock.

Worth bearing in mind that with Kites not having a senior team we are the only club offering netball for ladies in the area. Eynsham, Witney, Bicester being the closest clubs for us. Within Cherwell District it would be us, Bicester and then the Banbury based clubs.