

Cherwell District Council

Executive

6 February 2023

Annual Monitoring Report 2022

Report of Assistant Director – Planning and Development

This report is public.

Purpose of report

To seek approval of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2022

To seek approval of accompanying updates to the Local Plan's Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the Brownfield Land Register.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve for publication the 2022 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) presented at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 To approve for publication the 2021/22 Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) update presented at Appendix 2.
- 1.3 To approve for publication the 2021/22 Brownfield Land Register (BLR) presented at Appendix 3.
- 1.4 To authorise the Assistant Director - Planning and Development in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning to make any necessary minor and presentational changes to the Annual Monitoring Report, Infrastructure Delivery Plan update, Brownfield Land Register if required prior to publication.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory obligation to produce a planning (authorities) monitoring report. An Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) has been prepared for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 and is presented at Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.2 The AMR presents information on development that took place or was permitted over 2021/22.

- 2.3 The AMR reviews progress in preparing the Council's planning policy documents and assesses whether development plan policies are being effective. It incorporates the monitoring indicators and targets from the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 and the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Partial Review for Oxford's unmet needs.
- 2.4 Subject to approval, the information contained in the AMR will be used to inform policy making, planning consultation responses and in decision making on planning applications. The AMR will be made publicly available but is not subject to consultation as it is a factual update.
- 2.5 The monitoring work undertaken to prepare the AMR has also informed the preparation of an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan for the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031, and the Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031 Partial Review – Oxford's Unmet Housing Need, and a 2021/22 update to the Council's Brownfield Land Register. These are presented at Appendices 2 and 3 to this report for approval.

3.0 Report Details

Annual Monitoring Report

- 3.1 The Annual Monitoring Report's main monitoring results are presented at its Section 5. Key findings are presented below.

Housing Delivery

 - 3.2 The AMR's key findings for housing delivery include:
 - i. a total of 1,175 (net) housing completions were recorded in 2021/22. Since 2015 the level of housing completions in the district remains high, with five of the last six years exceeding the annualised Local Plan requirement of 1,142 per annum. Total completions for 2011 to 2022 are 10,981 an average of 998 per annum. However, this includes a four-year period before adoption of the Local Plan. Completions from 2015 to 2022 have been 8,930, an average of 1,275 per annum;
 - ii. there were 178 net affordable housing completions during 2021/22;
 - iii. In 2021/22, 29% of completions were at Bicester, 43% at Banbury and 23% elsewhere. 32% of the 1,175 homes delivered during the monitoring year were on previously developed land. Of the 10,981 homes built since 2011, 37% have been at Banbury, 29% at Bicester and 33% elsewhere in the district.
 - 3.3 Unlike previous AMRs the 5-year land supply position is not reported within this AMR. The land supply position is presented separately on the agenda. This provides more flexibility to publish a land supply statement earlier in the year along with the annual housing completions, rather than waiting for the AMR in December. Further information is set out within the report accompanying the 5 Year Land Supply Statement.

Policy Villages 2 – Distributing Growth across the Rural Areas

- 3.4 Policy Villages 2 of the adopted Local Plan 2011-2031 provides for an additional 750 dwellings at Category A villages (2014-2031) in addition to the rural allowance for small site 'windfalls' and planning permissions as at 31 March 2014. New planning permissions at the Category A villages from 1 April 2014 and completions on those sites contribute to the requirement of 750 dwellings.
- 3.5 During the 2021/22 there were 184 dwellings completed at Category A Villages that contribute to the Policy Villages 2 requirement of 750 dwellings. Since 2014 there has now been a total of 703 completions with a further 165 under construction totalling 868 dwellings. A further 48 dwellings are likely to be built out which will mean the policy requirement has been met. However, rural sites are likely to continue to be an important source of supply in the district.

Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Partial Review – Oxford's Unmet Housing Need

- 3.6 The Partial Review allocates sites to deliver 4,400 homes to help meet Oxford's unmet housing needs and necessary supporting infrastructure by 2031.
- 3.7 This is the second AMR which reports on the monitoring framework. To date no homes have been delivered on the allocated sites. Nevertheless, members should be aware that work has been progressing. With the exception of PR8 the remaining development briefs have either been published or are at an advanced stage. Applications have also been submitted for PR9 and PR7a (which is a full application rather than an outline) and pre-application discussions are in progress for PR6a.

Travelling Communities

- 3.8 The 2017 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for Cherwell, Oxford, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Councils informed the examination and adoption of Local Plans covered by the study area and remains the most up-to-date assessment of need available.
- 3.9 The 2017 GTAA identifies a need for 7 additional pitches for households for Cherwell by 2032 where it is known that they meet the planning definition. It also highlights that there are many households where it is 'unknown' whether or not the new planning definition of Gypsies and Travellers is met. Should further information arise, it states that the overall need could increase by up to 12 pitches. Additionally, a potential need for 8 pitches is highlighted due to the closure of the Smiths Caravan Park in Bloxham.
- 3.10 For Travelling Showpeople, the 2017 GTAA identifies a known need for 12 plots from 2017-2032.
- 3.11 At 31 March 2022, there was a total of 65 gypsy and traveller pitches and 14 travelling showpeople plots in the district. There has been no change since the previous AMR. Specific sites need to be identified to meet identified needs in the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040.

Employment

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

- i. The district has seen a considerable gain in employment floorspace with over 117,000 sqm completed during 2021/22, following an increase of more than 70,000 sqm in the previous year. Key employment sites include:
 - at Banbury - Land South of Overthorpe Road, adjacent to the M40 and Employment Land North East of Junction 11
 - at Bicester - North West Bicester, Land North East of Skimmingdish Land, South Est of Bicester and adjacent to Oxford Road
 - at Kidlington and the Rural Areas – Heyford Park.
- ii. At 31 March 2022, there was over 411,000 sqm (net) of employment floorspace with planning permission that has yet to be built;
- iii. Overall, only 0.22 hectares of employment land (net) was lost to non-employment uses during 2020/21.

Natural Environment

- 3.13 The AMR's key findings for the natural environment for 2021/22 include:
- i. There were no planning applications granted permission contrary to Environment Agency's advice on flood risk or water quality grounds. This continues the trend from previous AMRs.
 - ii. 27 planning permissions were approved for renewable energy schemes including four for air source heat pumps, 19 for solar photovoltaics (PVs). This is a total increase of 10 schemes compared to the previous monitoring year.
 - iii. There has been a slight decrease in total area of priority habitats from 3,781 ha to 3,780 ha (decrease of 1 ha). But the priority habitat resource in identified Conservation Target Areas has risen from 2,328 ha in 2021 to 2,562 ha in 2022. It is understood that changes in the UK priority habitats largely represent an improved understanding of the habitat resource in Cherwell and confirmation of boundaries for habitat types, rather than the creation or loss of habitat.
 - iv. The area of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) has decreased slightly from 1,461 ha in 2021 to 1,458 h in 2022. This was the result of a re-definition of the boundary for the Horley Local Wildlife Site to remove an arable field.
 - v. 77.9% of the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) units are in "Favourable conditions". This means that the habitats and features are in a healthy state and are being conserved by appropriate management. Not all sites are surveyed annually so this figure can fluctuate.

Local Development Scheme

- 3.14 The AMR reports on progress in preparing the Council's planning policy documents as set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) approved by the Executive in September 2021. The LDS contains the overall programme for the Local Plan. The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Partial Review – Oxford's Unmet Housing

Need was adopted on 7 September 2020. Work has progressed on the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 with the Issues consultation undertaken in summer 2020 and a 'Developing Our Options' consultation in the autumn of 2021.

- 3.15 In August 2022 preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 ceased following an inability to reach agreement on the approach to planning for future housing needs. Since that time, work on a Cherwell Local Plan Review has accelerated with a significant amount of technical work completed including a new Housing and Economic Needs Assessment produced jointly with Oxford City Council. An updated Local Development Scheme with a revised programme for completing the Local Plan will be presented to the Executive at a future meeting.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 3.16 The AMR provides the updated position on Neighbourhood Planning in Cherwell. There continues to be five made Neighbourhood Plans in Cherwell. Since April 2022 further areas have been designated for Bletchingdon, Hampton Gay and Poyle and there is an application made for Milcombe. Deddington Parish Council continue to make progress and their pre-submission plan was published in late 2022.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)

- 3.17 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which supports the adopted Local Plan (2015) is maintained and monitored with the benefit of updates from infrastructure providers including the County Council. An updated 2022 IDP is presented at Appendix 2 and summary tables are included in the AMR. The IDP update also considers the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review - Oxford's Unmet Housing Need.

2022 Brownfield Land Register

- 3.18 The Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017 require local planning authorities to prepare and maintain a register of brownfield sites. Local planning authorities must review the register at least once within each register year. A Brownfield Land Register (BLR), the first to be produced under the new legislation, was published in December 2017. An updated Register, which is the sixth BLR prepared, is presented at Appendix 3.
- 3.19 The Register was reviewed alongside the AMR to include new qualifying sites and to remove sites that are being developed. The base date for planning permissions and completions is 31 March 2022.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Annual Monitoring Report provides important information to measure the effectiveness of planning policies and to assist policy making and development management decision making. It is the statutory mechanism for monitoring housing delivery.
- 4.2 Its most significant conclusions are that Cherwell is continuing to deliver homes and employment land despite the widely reported national pressures faced by the

industry such as disrupted supply chains and labour shortages. Completions are broadly following similar patterns and trends as previous years.

- 4.3 Unlike previous years, this AMR does not present the 5 Year Land Supply position for the district. This is reported separately in a Housing Land Supply Position Statement on this agenda.
- 4.2 It is recommended that all three documents be approved for publication.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 Councillor Colin Clarke – Portfolio Holder for Planning.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 Deferment to seek significant amendment of the: *2022 Annual Monitoring Report, Infrastructure Delivery Plan or Brownfield Land Register*.
Officers consider the documents to comprise robust factual reporting and updating against relevant indicators and requirements, supported by data and research.
Presentation of the documents to the Executive has been unavoidably delayed and Members are therefore asked to consider amendment through delegation and consultation with the Portfolio Holder should they consider significant changes to be necessary.
- 6.2 *Not to approve the documents for publication*
Production of an Authorities Monitoring Report is a statutory requirement and the AMR's wider information supports the Local Plan implementation and review.
Updating the Brownfield Land Register is also a statutory requirement. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is required to monitor and support delivery of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 and its Partial Review.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The work collecting data and preparing the AMR is met within existing budgets. There are risks of costs associated with unsuccessful refusals of planning permission upon appeal and this risk can be reduced through having a robust AMR.

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

- 7.2 The production of a monitoring report and Brownfield Land Register are statutory requirements. Their availability, and that of the IDP update, also assists the Council in making informed decisions.

Comments checked by:
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Risk Implications

- 7.3 There are no policy decisions or significant risks associated with this report. The data presented can have implications for assessing the effectiveness of the Council's planning policies and may be used in decision making. A Local Plan review is the primary means by which any such implications are considered and a review is in progress.

Comments checked by:
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Equality & Diversity Implications

- 7.4 This report in itself makes no recommendations for change in policy but recommends publication of the Annual Monitoring Report 2021. The recommendations do not raise equality implications. Equalities Impact Assessments will be undertaken as an integral part of the preparation of the Local Plan Review 2040.

Comments checked by:
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8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision:

Financial Threshold Met No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

This report directly links to the strategic priorities from the Business Plan 2021/22:

- Housing that meets your needs
- Leading on environmental sustainability
- An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres
- Healthy, resilient and engaged communities

Lead Councillor

Councillor Colin Clarke – Portfolio Holder for Planning

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1 Draft Annual Monitoring Report 2022
- Appendix 2 Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update 2021/22
- Appendix 3 Brownfield Land Register 2021/22

Background papers

None

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