

# CROPREDY PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of a Cropredy Parish Council Public Meeting on the Cherwell Local Plan 2040 held in the Methodist Chapel on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 7pm

**Present:** Councillors Tania Johnson (Chairman), Bob Garland, Sheila Jones, Des Knight, David Best (Clerk) and 59 members of the public.

**Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Margaret Boscott, Karla Martin and Jacqui Smith.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Cllr Tania Johnson welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that this was the start of a long process of engagement with residents about planning but not just about housing development. Residents were encouraged to ask questions through the meeting. Information will be posted on the Parish Council Facebook page and the new parish website which will be launched shortly. Additionally, residents may email councillors and the clerk.

The Parish Council does not make decisions on planning applications, it is a consultee, and it endeavours to take a balanced view based on evidence and taking account of the range of opinions across the community. Cherwell District Council decide on planning applications in line with the policies in the Local Plan and consideration of consultation responses.

### **BACKGROUND TO CHERWELL CONSULTATION**

Cllr Bob Garland explained that Cherwell District Council (CDC) has commenced the process of updating its Local Plan to 2040 (the current plan runs to 2031). The local plan will endeavour to understand the development needs and social, environmental, and economic issues; establish a vision; identify objectives to meet that vision and establish planning policies for meeting those objectives. The current stage is consultation on the "Community Involvement Paper 2: Developing our Options" (Options Paper). The Options Paper and details on how to respond to it can be viewed at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/planningpolicyconsultation> If you have difficulty accessing the document online, you can contact Cherwell Planning Policy team on 01295 227985 or emailing [planning.policy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

Feedback on the Options Paper will be used to draft the Local Plan 2040 next summer. CDC will then consult on the draft Local Plan 2040. Members of the public and parish councils must submit their feedback by 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The feedback from residents at this meeting will be used to prepare the response from the Parish Council to the Options Paper. Further contributions to the Parish Council response can be emailed to [cropredypc.clerk@gmail.com](mailto:cropredypc.clerk@gmail.com) Parishioners are also encouraged to respond directly to Cherwell D.C.

The specific questions in the Options Paper affecting Cropredy are listed in the next section in bold type. Questions raised by residents begin with a "Q", parish council responses begin with an "A", statements made by residents begin with "RS" and statements made by the parish council begin with "PCS.

### **OPTIONS PAPER QUESTIONS AFFECTING CROPREDY**

#### **Options for Rural Areas**

**Housing in Rural Areas (Option 30) – If additional development is required should Cherwell 1. Limit development in rural areas to that required to meet local needs or 2. Direct proportionately more development to rural areas over the plan period to meet the wider district needs.**

Q - What is the local need?

A – Housing requirement and how much is needed in each local area up to 2040 have not yet been defined by CDC or OCC.

RS – The infrastructure is important. Believe Cropredy can only cope with small development. RS – Need to look at what is going to be brought into the area. If there is no infrastructure development then can't support much.

Q – Are there any hard and fast rules for housing requirement?

A – There are no figures yet for Cherwell for the next 20 years. The Oxfordshire 2050 Plan will set the Oxfordshire requirement. This will then be cascaded down to Districts and Parishes. In the CDC 2015 Plan the requirement was for 750 houses in villages the same size as Cropredy over 20 years of which about 700 have been built.

**Meeting Rural Housing Development Needs (Option 31) – Should Cherwell 1. Work with communities to allocate specific sites to meet identified housing needs or 2. provide a parish level figure to each area to allow flexibility for Neighbourhood Planning/ other community led plans or 3. Use a combination of the above.**

Q – What criteria are used for working out housing needs?

A – The Parish Council is considering undertaking a housing needs survey in the winter.

**Developing a Rural Settlement Hierarchy (Option 32) – Should Cherwell 1. Give additional weight to the availability of certain services and facilities (which do you think are most important) 2. Give additional weight to the accessibility of the settlement to our urban centres by public transport, walking and cycling?**

PCS – Previous CDC plans have categorised villages A, B or C dependent on the level of services and facilities with A having the most. Cropredy is currently Category A.

Q – Do CDC take into account that Cropredy has a high level of facilities due to Fairport?

A – No, but they take into account the current facilities including schools and health centres, regardless to how they are funded.

PCS – Our recommendation is to review the current categorisation system.

RS – I second that especially as Cropredy has no bus service.

PCS – Yes, CDC are considering a classification giving more weight to transport infrastructure.

RS – Lack of public transport leads to greater levels of car traffic

RS – The school is at capacity. RS – The school is not at capacity depending on child age.

PCS – Development needs to be proportionate to the infrastructure.

**Settlement Boundaries (Question) – Do you think Cherwell should define settlement boundaries, beyond which development would not normally be permitted?**

RS – Two of our boundaries are defined by the railway and the river

Q – If we define boundaries could building outside be prevented.

A – CDC has not followed this approach in the past but other local authorities have. Isolated buildings outside the boundary may be permitted but a 'boundary' policy could help prevent sprawl.

RS – Boundaries could constrain development and increase housing density within the boundary.

Q – Doesn't Cropredy have a conservation area?

A – Yes, but it doesn't cover the whole village. See <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/directory-record/1795/cropredy> The Oxford Canal is also covered by a separate conservation area.

Q – Can the Conservation Area be expanded?

A – Conservation Areas are reviewed regularly but a Conservation Area review is not part of this consultation

RS – There has been development and new housing in Cropredy in the past which has led to an influx of younger people. This has benefitted the village and village organisations as the younger residents have volunteered. There are a lot of older people in the village and younger people need to be attracted, so they can take over volunteer roles in village organisations. It is important to have a proportion of lower cost housing to attract younger people (applause to this indicated broad consensus).

**The Rural Economy (Option 33) – In support of the rural economy, including agriculture and tourism, should Cherwell 1. Apply criteria-based policies to assess development proposals 2. Allocate specific sites in the rural areas to meet the needs of the rural economy 3. A combination of 1 & 2?**

PCS – CDC do not currently allocate specific rural sites for employment.

Q – How much employment is there currently in Cropredy?

A – This is not known currently but the Parish Council plans to obtain that information over the winter.

Q – What about home working?

A – CDC is considering internet capability as providing a good alternative so as to reduce commuter traffic.

**Historic and Natural Environment (Option 34) – Should Cherwell 1. Retain the current approach of seeking to conserve and enhance the countryside and landscape character of the whole district 2. Define valued landscape /landscape features in the district which would be subject of additional policy guidance?**

PCS – Should Cherwell identify landscape areas or features which should be protected such as ridge and furrow although not subject to statutory designation?

### **Options for Banbury**

**Housing and Employment Growth at Banbury (Option 19) – If Banbury is identified as a location for growth should Cherwell 1. Consider further urban extensions into open countryside 2. Limit development at Banbury to protect its landscape setting and maintain separation between the town and surrounding villages 3. Focus development at an existing or new settlement well connected to Banbury?**

Q – Housing development in Banbury has been massive. How can it be constrained? Would prefer a middle of the road approach.

PCS – Development in Banbury could be constrained by linking it with another urban area and developing robust transport links between the two, or further development limited within a defined boundary.

RS – There must be brownfield sites ripe for development. The development in Banbury is focussed on industry. The industrial sites could have been developed for housing. There are better opportunities for social housing in towns.

RS – We are not going to stop development in Banbury so we should focus on how to protect the rural environment.

Q – There must be opportunities to convert vacant business premises in Banbury to housing such as Debenhams. Would such developments count as new housing?

A – Yes

RS – It is imperative to protect rural settlements. The new warehousing development on the A361 near the M40 J11 is increasing traffic through villages which are becoming rat runs.

### **Options for Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change**

**Sustainable Construction (Option 10) – Should Cherwell 1. Not set further standards in the Cherwell Local Plan leaving this for Building Regulations and the Oxfordshire Plan 2. Set sustainable design and construction standards for new residential and non-residential development that only meet standards set by Government 3. Set sustainable design and construction standards for residential and non-residential development in Cherwell above those required by Central Government?**

**Renewable Energy (Option 11) Should Cherwell 1. Identify and allocate specific sites for renewable energy generation 2. Use a criteria-based policy to assess the appropriateness of proposals for renewable energy generation?**

**Retrofitting of historic buildings (Question) – How should Cherwell address the challenge of retrofitting existing building stock balancing this against the need to protect historic buildings?**

RS – We should focus on low impact on the environment design.

### **Options for Natural Environment and Biodiversity**

**Sustainable Construction (Option 12) – Where biodiversity net gain or compensatory measures cannot be achieved on site should Cherwell 1. Secure as close to the site as possible 2. Prioritise within Conservation Target Areas/those parts of the Nature Recovery Network where habitat creation and restoration can be focused 3. Secure contributions to local environmental bodies undertaking biodiversity enhancement projects within the district?**

**Natural Capital (Option 13) – Should Cherwell 1. Include a policy in the Plan requiring major development proposals to be supported by a natural capital assessment to demonstrate the impact of the proposals 2. Include a policy in the Plan requiring major development proposals to a) be supported by a natural capital assessment to demonstrate the impact of the proposals and b) demonstrate environmental net gain 3. Not require major development proposals to be supported by natural capital assessment?**

### **Options for Transport**

**Transport and Connectivity (Question) – 1. Do you agree with the proposed transport and connectivity approach to support the local plan review? 2. Should the approach be different for rural areas, for example focusing on low carbon technology rather than a reduction on the need to travel? 3. What measures would help you drive less or use alternative transport modes with lower emissions?**

**Digital Infrastructure (Option 16) – Should Cherwell 1. Provide a policy with the requirements expected from new development to provide digital connections and be designed to accommodate future digital infrastructure needs (future proofing) 2. Provide a policy protecting existing telecommunications infrastructure 3. Provide a criteria-based policy on the location and mitigation requirements for telecommunications development?**

**Transport Policies (Question) – 1. Do you agree with the range of policies and documents Cherwell has identified? 2. Are there any transport-related policies that Cherwell should consider through the Local Plan review?**

### **CROPREDY PARISH COUNCIL: A Plan for Cropredy up to 2040**

Cropredy Parish Council will lead work over the next 6 months to prepare a Cropredy Plan up to 2040. This will enable a robust response to be provided to the draft Cherwell Local Plan 2040 (expected next summer) that is evidence based and draws on parishioners' views. The work will include:

- A detailed questionnaire on planning issues sent to every household
- Public meeting(s)
- Gathering information on issues, including on possible development sites
- Discussions with Cherwell District Council

- Draft Plan distributed to every household for comments
- Final Plan published on the Cropredy PC website

There needs to be a compromise to allow some development to bring in younger residents. An aging population is a risk to the long-term vitality and viability of the village.

RS – That’s why affordable housing is so important.

Q – Are you going to involve Brasenose College?

A – No, we can’t really do that as they are a landowner and entitled to submit planning applications.

RS – It is good to have a plan, but it shouldn’t be too limiting.

Q – Historic & natural areas – can these be defined as part of the plan?

A – Cropredy can put forward sites as Local Green Spaces which if accepted as such in Cherwell’s Local Plan would have special protection against development.

Q – Can the PC approach Brasenose College to ask them if they put land forward for development that trees are also planted?

A – Yes, it is possible to argue for conditions in any planning permissions to limit the number of houses and for example plant a wood.

RS – Brasenose had said that the land was going to be a wildflower meadow.

RS – Brasenose wanted to develop behind Springfields / Spring Lane

RS – The refusal of the appeal for development behind Springfields/ Spring Lane was based on reasons reasons that are still relevant today.

RS – A development adjacent to Springfields / Spring Lane shouldn’t be entertained [in any future plan]

A – The site adjacent to Springfields / Spring Lane (i.e. Land West of Station Road) will be discussed under ‘Call for Sites’ (see below).

Q – What is the financial status of Brasenose College?

### **CALL FOR SITES**

Cherwell invited agents and other organisations to submit sites that they considered would be suitable for development (housing, employment, or leisure) as well as other uses such as Local Green Spaces. **It is important to note that that these sites have not been evaluated for suitability.** A total of 245 sites were submitted across Cherwell, of which 3 are in Cropredy:

Site Name	Area (ha)	Promoter	Promoted Use
Land to the north and south of Cropredy Marina	10.9	Robert Love - Bidwells LLP / Brasenose College, Oxford	Housing/Mixed
Land West of Station Road	3.27	Robert Love - Bidwells LLP / Brasenose College, Oxford	Housing
Straw Barn, School Lane	1.5	Martin Leather – Haulix Developments Ltd.	Mixed

CDC will be assessing these sites for suitability. The PC and residents can help this by providing evidence from local knowledge.

Q – There have been 3 or 4 attempts to obtain permission for site adjacent to Springfields (‘Land to the West of Station Road’.) At what point do Cherwell say they will not consider further applications?

A – Current planning law does not restrict the number of applications that can be submitted. Anyone can submit an application for any piece of land even if they don't own it. CDC will assess applications based on the current policies in the local plan and evidence.

Q – Can Cropredy recommend any sites that are not suitable for development?

A- Cropredy could provide CDC with evidence why a site is not considered suitable for development.

RS – Climate is changing, and the amount of rain is increasing, therefore there is an increased risk of flooding.

A CDC will consider the relevant current evidence at the time of each planning application.

Q – The Options Paper identifies 3 sites in Cropredy. Are there anymore?

A – Cherwell is continuing to accept site proposals.

RS – I suggest that the land to the north and south of Cropredy Marina is most suitable for development.

Q – Shouldn't the PC put forward past evidence to Cherwell?

A –. Every application is considered on its merits at the time of the application. The PC can point to evidence in relation to previous applications, but each application is considered afresh. However, it is likely that past evidence may still be relevant.

Q – As Cherwell has not assessed the 3 sites, what criteria will they use?

A – CDC will assess the site in line with government and local planning policies and consultation. The PC is a statutory consultee and can feed in local knowledge.

Q – What does Housing/Mixed mean (promoted use of land to the north and south of Cropredy Marina)?

A- It could be, for example, housing and retail and/or housing and commercial. The uses would have to be detailed in the application.

Q – Could the reasons for refusal of the land adjacent to Springfield's appeal decision be used for this consultation?

A – Yes, if the evidence is still considered relevant.

RS – The Straw Barn site, School Lane could aggravate current traffic issues further.

RS – [With regards to the need for some housing development] We should take note of the previous statement by a resident about the need for volunteers to run village organisations and the current aging population. A lot of the current volunteers have not been in the village for many years.

RS – The school has attracted new residents to move into the village.

PCS - Each site will have advantages and disadvantages. CDC will assess which development sites should be included in the Local Plan, and any subsequent planning applications will be considered in relation to planning policy and evidence. CPC's role is to ensure that decisions are made on the best information. The Cropredy Plan which will be developed will assist Cherwell. We should be open minded. This is for the next 20 years so it is important to think of the challenges that Cropredy will face such as an aging population and the provision of services to the community.