



CHIPPING NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

THE GUILDHALL, CHIPPING NORTON, OXFORDSHIRE OX7 5NJ

TEL: 01608 642341 Fax: 01608 645206

Email: cntc@btconnect.com

Office Hours: Mon – Fri 9am – 1pm

TOWN CLERK: Mrs V Oliveri

15th June 2017

WEST OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2031

EXAMINATION BY THE INSPECTOR MR MALCOLM RIVETT BA (HONS) MSc MRTPI

Stage 3 Hearings 11th July 2017 onwards

PARTICIPATION IN STAGE 3 HEARING SESSIONS

BRIEF HEARING STATEMENTS FROM CHIPPING NORTON CROSS-PARTY OBJECTORS representing the TOWN of Chipping Norton.

Dear Sirs,

We represent the Town of Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire either individually or as a group all being elected District Councillors and elected Town Councillors - for the purposes of these hearings we have named ourselves **The Chipping Norton Cross-Party Objectors (CNCPO)** ie representing the Town but avoiding any political allegiance.

Having advised the Programme Officer of our intention to attend the Hearing Sessions specifically on July 13th and July 20th we now give brief Hearing Statements concerning the following Matters with the intention of expanding our comments during the hearings.

As a general comment the Inspector might query why we did not comment about the previous Local Plan - unfortunately increasing the new houses in the Chipping Norton Tank Farm SDA from 600 houses to 1400 houses is a complete and utter change of plan and therefore we feel strongly enough to query the current makeup of the Local Plan.

Matter 13 - Chipping Norton Sub-Area - Policies CN1 and CN2

13.1 is the Chipping Norton Sub-Area Strategy (policy CN2) positively prepared, justified and effective?

As a general comment throughout CN2 the descriptor Chipping Norton Sub-Area is used many times - if the table 9.3 is closely analysed it will be seen that the entire development of 2400 new homes is concentrated within the footprint of 'Greater' Chipping Norton - there are no specific policies as regarding the outlying villages where there is considerably more space available (geographically) than there is in Chippy. We strongly feel that some of this increased development should be directed towards the villages which are slowly dying with pubs/schools and village shops closing. It is also interesting to note that in WODC's latest information sheet for the 5 year housing land supply, land in Enstone (30 houses promoted by Rosconn) is erroneously placed in the Burford-Charlbury Sub Area and not the Chipping Norton Sub-Area.

For the Inspectors information Chippy town **occupies about 550-600 ha compared to the total sub area of just over 15,000 ha** - it shows how completely unbalanced the Local Plan for Chippy is with 100% of the new housing being placed into less than 5% of the total sub area - one presumes this is solely because of land ownership!

Working through Policy CN2 we have to comment as follows:-

1. NUMBER OF HOUSES - Naturally we maintain that the figures of 2400 and 1400 should be returned to their original values throughout .
2. TYPE OF HOUSES NEEDED - We have been inundated with homes for the older person - the current tally is about 262 either built or with planning permission with a lot of vacant spaces due the non-affordability of the accommodation - a lot of the recently sold accommodation has actually been sold to 'incomers' due to the prices being asked by the developers - not to local born and bred in Chippy retired persons. More accommodation of the elderly is not currently required.

What is desperately needed is really affordable houses for the younger adult generation - ie really good accommodation at really reasonable rents ie old-fashioned council houses where a security of tenure is given - giving the opportunity for the local workforce to stay and work in this town.

3. BUSINESS PREMISES - the content is great but we query the action plan - the plan does not specify how this will be put into action. We are at a loss to know what business premises will be modified unless it is buildings at Greystones which are owned by WODC and have been left to rot for years - new land does not total 9 hectares (22.25 acres) - about 8.9 acres of that land is not available for purchase for use as a light industrial site. We have seen promises of industrial development promised for decades but little or no action - the latest being the Parker Knoll site which has stood empty since January 2000 and which has now been sold for yet another old peoples accommodation.
4. AONB - Chippy has a very strange AONB footprint - interestingly the Tank Farm site is regarded as being one of the best areas of farmland in the area - beautiful pasture land with a good bio-diversity but it is outside the AONB - there are pockets of land within the AONB, some of which are little better than scrubland, which are available for development but WODC seem to be frightened of permitting development there.
5. IMPROVEMENTS TO THE TOWN -The last parts of this Policy we have heard before - the Town Council has an embryonic plan for the centre of town which has already been totally rejected by our local County Councillor - this plan would cover better areas for pedestrians / cyclists etc. Bus services subsidies have been reduced considerably (although one recent planning permission has been granted with a S106 payment of £100,000 for improvement of bus services) / our town centre seems to thrive even if car-parking is 105% full (WODC's figures) with one of the only sensible remedial options being an added second tier in the New Street Car Park - everyone knows this but nothing is done.

So in our opinion CN2 is NOT positively prepared, justified and effective.

13.2 Is the Land East of Chipping Norton Strategic Development Area soundly-based; are the criteria set out in policy CN1 justified and effective; and are the assumptions relating to viability and housing delivery within the next five years and across the plan period as a whole realistic?

Again we have to comment that the original figures must be reinserted and some of the comments that we have made for CN2 above will be relevant here - we will try not to duplicate.

Using WODC's lettering:-

a1) MASTERPLAN - There is no agreed masterplan - several have been tabled over the years and commented on / rejected - CNTC insist that we must be involved in the final masterplan. At the last tabling by OCC/Carillion the first thing we were told was that Tank Farm could only accommodate 1200 houses and not the 1400 envisaged by WODC - that is still too many!

As will be fairly obvious when reading these Hearing Statements there are two central and critical themes to our objections and comments concerning numbers and suitability of the site by specifically questioning:

- 1 Whether the Chipping Norton SDA site has been properly assessed against the other available options at Witney and Carterton (to properly examine if the proposed increase in numbers at Tank Farm does in fact represent the best and most sustainable option in West Oxfordshire for meeting the District's increased housing requirement compared to other sites in the District); and
- 2 Whether the proposed increase in the number of houses is deliverable bearing in mind the usual density criteria and the fact that the area of the site intended for residential dwellings has not been increased significantly in size.

b) LAND FOR LIGHT INDUSTRIAL USE - As per CN2 (Para 3) this amount of land is NOT available - unless it is by using a CPO.

d) TRANSPORT / ROADS - We do not agree that there has been a robust Transport Assessment - we strongly challenge that the Eastern Relief Road will be of any use to anyone - in fact we feel it is somewhere between a White Elephant and a Trojan Horse ! We hope we will be given the opportunity to expand on these comments on July 13th

e) SCHOOLS - A new primary school is only needed with a new housing development of more than 600 Houses (assuming these houses are not for older people) however we have heard rumours that a large amount of money is being promised under S106 agreements to St Mary's Primary School - with some good designs of upgraded pathways etc this primary school should be easily accessible on foot or cycles even for Tank Farm residents.

g) SHOPPING etc - Local convenience shopping could lead to the destruction of an active High Street - we do have some 'out of town' stores but would be very reluctant to agree to more. We also take issue with the creation of more local centres and leisure facilities - currently Chippy has a cricket club/ rugby club / junior football club /one indoor and one outdoor swimming pool / rifle club /leisure centre etc etc - some of these are run on a shoestring budget and others are doing ok because of good membership and improved facilities - we at CNTC are trying to centralise most of the sports activities in one general area and are working with the clubs to improve all aspects - any more clubs etc would probably be unsustainable unless they are heavily subsidised.

h) CONSERVATION AREA - We totally reject this paragraph - from the outline map available of the Glyme and Dorm Conservation Target Area it would seem that WODC/OCC

are actually trying to build on the extremities of this site - please see attached map - it would also seem that the Relief Road might also impinge on this CTA - we are trying to obtain a clearer map.

hi) ARCHAEOLOGY - there have been several artefacts recovered from this area - they are available for viewing at the Towns museum (a visit could be arranged)

j) INFRASTRUCTURE - specifically foul water/ sewage the current system is overloaded already - we do not believe that sufficient investigations have been undertaken to investigate this - we think a rebuild of a lot of the sewage system will need to be undertaken.

k) WATER - Our drinking water is currently pumped from Farmoor Reservoir, Eynsham - the houses at the top of the hill already suffer from very low pressure - we have to ask whether WODC have thought about the pressure that will be brought on Farmoor if all the development around Eynsham / Carterton area happens - we have our suspicions that hose bans will be a matter of norm during hot summers. Would it not be a good idea to build another reservoir to help Farmoor ?

l) AQMA - the Chippy AQMA has been known about for at least 15 years - nothing has ever been done about it - we are beginning to think that nothing ever will ... the relief road will NOT help!

m) RENEWABLE ENERGY - we do not think that this goes far enough - if the development of tank farm goes ahead there is plenty of time and room to ensure that every house has a south facing roof and PV panels should be fitted accordingly. Indeed, with modern technology it is feasible, and economically viable, to build to zero carbon standards, otherwise known as Passiv House"

o) DARK SKIES - this needs to be taken into due consideration

So our answers to 'Is the Land East of Chipping Norton Strategic Development Area soundly-based; are the criteria set out in policy CN1 justified and effective; and are the assumptions relating to viability and housing delivery within the next five years and across the plan period as a whole realistic?' have to be that NO they are not !

We look forward to discussing the above points and maybe others during the hearings due to take place on 13th July 2017 onwards.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Mike Tysoe
Mayor of Chipping Norton
for and on behalf of all members of The Chipping Norton Cross-Party Objectors