

Notes on a meeting of the Infrastructure Development Planning (IDP) Team held at Hayesfield, Hailey on Wednesday 17th July 2019

Present: Graham Knaggs (chair), Sue Ayres, Caryl Lansley, Judith Knaggs, Martyn Clark.

Apologies: Dawn Franklin, Ann Gibson, Monica Hester, Giles Doland, , Ann Evans

Bus Shelter

The Parish Council has contacted Oxfordshire County Council who have recommended a bus shelter supplier and have also provided guidance on gaps between the shelter and the road (sufficient for wheelchairs etc. to pass).

A consultation on the provisional bus shelter will be placed in the August edition of the Hailey Herald. It has been noted that the footpath area planned for the shelter is not flat. This will have to be resolved prior to installation.

Hailey Neighbourhood Plan

The referendum will be held on Thursday 29 August 2019 to decide the following question:

“Do you want West Oxfordshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Hailey to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

Every residents on the electoral register will be able to vote. If 50% plus one vote YES then the Plan will be adopted and WODC will the ‘make’ the plan. All of the policies in the NP will then have to be taken into account whenever any planning applications are considered by WODC.

North Witney Planning application for phase 1 (200 houses between Woodstock Road and New Yatt Road). Application Number: 14/01671/OUT

Address: Land North West of Woodstock Road Witney Oxfordshire

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of up to 200 residential dwellings and associated vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access, related highway works, drainage and landscape works including provision of public open space (Amended)

Request for S106 funding

Hailey Parish Council has a project to replace Hailey Village Hall and the Sports Pavilion, both located at the Recreation Ground, Hailey, OX29 9UA. A request for the following S106 funding has been submitted:

Village Hall - The total estimated costs of building a 324m² Village Hall is £749,694:

Sports pavilion - Estimate from Sports England for a 2 changing room plus officials sports pavilion (traditional construction) is £255,000

To date this application has not been considered by the WODC Planning committee,

East Witney

WODC have issued a consultation paper on issues to be considered in the preparation of the East Witney Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). It is in the form of a questionnaire. Later this year it is anticipated that a similar consultation document will be issued on North Witney so this exercise is regarded by Hailey PC as an opportunity to rehearse some of our arguments on developments around Witney.

The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 identifies East Witney for the development of around 450 new homes together with the supporting infrastructure including transport improvements and open space.

A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) helps to guide any future development of the site including the type and mix of new homes, what sort of open space is needed and where and how to encourage more walking and cycling including into Witney Town Centre.

To help inform the proposed SPD, the Council has prepared an initial 'issues' consultation paper to stimulate early debate and discussion about the East Witney site and how it should be taken forward.

Outlined below are Hailey PC's comments

Comments on East Witney SPD Issues paper by Hailey Parish Council

CONSULTATION QUESTION 1: Key Considerations

1a) Do you have any comments to make on the key considerations outlined above and how they might be addressed through the SPD?

We have only commented on Transport and Air Quality key considerations – see below

1b) Are there any other particularly important considerations not mentioned that you think need to be addressed through the SPD?

We would emphasise that full agreement of a masterplan including full up to date costings of all elements of the plan is required before any part of the development can proceed. A consistent, site-wide and robust assessment of the impact and infrastructure required that is agreed by all parties, is needed from the outset. Indeed we believe it is a prerequisite to both the East Witney AND North Witney developments. In other words if the improvements to Shore's Green are not secured then neither development should proceed.

CONSULTATION QUESTION 7: Vehicular access and highway infrastructure improvements

7b) Do you have any specific observations to make on the proposed improvements to the Shores Green A40 junction that are needed to bring the East Witney SDA forward?

Transport

WITI c) states that:

[development to be phased in accordance with the timing of provision of supporting infrastructure and facilities including the essential improvements to the Shore's Green junction onto the A40 and related highway measures.](#)

The developers will undoubtedly wish to see infrastructure spending occurring as late as possible in the process (if only for cash flow purposes). This should clearly be resisted. The above policy does not specifically detail the phasing requirements but we would argue that, as with the West Witney development, the Shore's Green improvements should be completed very early in the development. The actual timing should be detailed up front in the agreed masterplan. There should be a similar process as and when the North Witney masterplan is considered.

WITI d) then refers to '[appropriate financial contributions towards LTP4 transport schemes](#)'.

The cost of the Shore's Green slip roads was estimated in WODC's Infrastructure Development Plan (November 2016) as £5.6m. WODC Local Plan policy WITI East Witney c) requires the East Witney SDA to make a financial contribution to the SGSR which is in addition to the £1.16m financial contribution already made by the Burford road housing development.

Unfortunately this element of the policy is imprecise as we discovered in the recent planning application - 14/01671 – 200 houses on land north west of Woodstock road (Phase I of North Witney:

OCC provided a pre-application Scoping Response dated 27th December 2017 and identified the following S106 Contributions that are necessary to deliver the proposed development of 200 units at Woodstock Road:

Identified S106 Contributions Infrastructure from N Witney SDA

| | 200 houses | 1,400 houses |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|
| SI06 Contribution A40 / Shores Green Slip Roads (SGSR) | £883,238 | £6,182,666 |
| North Witney West End Link (WELR) | £2,521,429 | £17,650,000 |
| North-East Witney Public Transport Strategy | £200,000 | £1,400,000 |
| Bus Improvements A4094 Woodstock Road | £10,410 | £72,870 |
| Travel Plan Monitoring | £1,240 | £8,680 |
| Total | £3,616,207 | £25,313,450 |

So, in summary, the estimated cost of Shore's Green was £5.6m (needs an up to date costing – probably around £7m). The Local Plan identifies that the East Witney SDA is able to deliver the 'off-slip' through a planning obligation and that an appropriate financial contribution will be sought towards the 'on-slip' potentially as part of a wider strategic transport infrastructure fund/package for Witney. However if North Witney is to contribute £6.2m towards Shores Green it will become the largest contributor. There will be a (unintended?) consequential reduction in available funding for other infrastructure initiatives within the North Witney development. The first casualty is likely to be a reduction in the proportion allocated to affordable housing.

Hailey Parish Council strongly objects to this proposed S106 contribution to the SGSR by North Witney. It is critical that at a very early stage an updated set of costing for the SGSR is prepared along with full identification of how the project will be funded and the trigger point for the commencement of the construction of the SGSR (i.e. how many houses will be permitted to be constructed before the construction of the SGSR has to start).

CONSULTATION QUESTION 2: A Community Hub?

2a) Do you support the concept of a 'community hub' being provided at Cogges Triangle? Would this raise any concerns for you and if so, why?

We have no concerns about a community hub and would certainly support it.

2b) If a community hub were to be provided, do you support the site promoter's initial thoughts which include uses such as a farm shop, country pub, butchery, community centre and space for worship?

A community centre will certainly be required – see below. On commercial developments the issue will be viability. Will residents be attracted to a farm shop, butchers shop etc. or will they find Witney supermarkets more convenient. Our initial reaction to the country pub proposal is positive but again success will be dependent on being there be sufficient demand against a background where many pubs are closing every month.

2c) Do you have any other thoughts or comments on this issue?

Community facilities

Although WODC's policy WITI (East Witney) does not specifically define any required community facilities (apart from allotments) the WODC Infrastructure Development Plan (November 2016) refers to :

- Provision for new community facilities as part of large-scale development across the District
- Enhanced Library Provision
- Children's play areas

- New and/or enhanced cemetery provision across the District
- Informal open space – provision of and improvements to including accessible natural green space across the District
- Additional outdoor playing pitch provision and changing facilities in Witney
- Replacement of Windrush Leisure Centre, Witney.

Community Centre

Most of Witney's community facilities are too far away and primarily located on the other side of the river.

We support the idea of a new Community centre. We suggest it should include:

- main activity and assembly space
- entrance foyer
- equipment and furniture store
- kitchen
- toilets, including disabled facilities
- changing provision
- cleaner's store
- an office
- changing / dressing rooms and showers
- licensed bar
- permanent or collapsible stage
- meeting or club rooms available for hire
- grass pitch changing rooms
- fitness training room
- community health facilities
- daytime centre for the elderly
- shops / post office
- parking facilities.

Playing pitch provision

Section 7 of WODC's Playing Pitch Strategy¹ contains suggested standards for grass pitches:

*A new minimum standard 1.60 ha per 1000 people of dedicated grass pitch sport space is proposed both as a basis for a contribution from new housing and as a **minimum target** for provision across the local authority area. In practice, much pitch sport occurs on multifunctional space. As far as possible new outdoor sports space should be dedicated to that use, so avoiding some of the problems arising from multi use cited above. Inevitably, pitch sports will continue to be played in some parks and recreation grounds, and also on school sites. This minimum standard does not cover provision of synthetic turf pitches (STPs) and other relevant outdoor sports spaces.*

Once completed, the population of the East Witney Development will exceed 1,125 using a metric of 2.5 people per household. This equates to a minimum pitch area of 1.8 hectares, using the recommended WODC standards².

Play Spaces

There will clearly be a requirement for appropriate play spaces within the East Witney development and the community should be involved in its planning and development. We would suggest a single large play area, rather than several small play areas scattered in various phases of the development. This large play area should ideally be large enough to accommodate a Multi Use Games Area or MUGA.

Play Area provision

Development of East Witney community facilities should contribute towards the provision of high quality play and activity areas³ for children and young people, designed in consultation with the local community. There should be sufficient funding to ensure that the play spaces can be maintained to an appropriate standard. The location of any new play spaces should be such that access by the local community is maximised.

¹ <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/765284/Playing-Pitch-Strategy-2014.pdf>

² Based on Fields in Trust recommended benchmarks

³ Fields in Trust standards should be applied

CONSULTATION QUESTION 10: Green Infrastructure 10a) Do you agree that the East Witney SDA should include the provision of additional allotment space as part of the development?

Allotments

The requirement for the provision of allotments is established in policy WIT1 h):

[provision of appropriate green infrastructure, including allotments.](#)

Although there are allotments in Witney, they are at capacity and there is a long waiting list of residents seeking an allotment, so additional allotments will be required.

An allotment is traditionally measured in rods, perches or poles, an old measurement system dating back to Anglo-Saxon times. 10 poles is the accepted size of an allotment, the equivalent of 250 square metres. There is no legal national minimum provision standard, but councils do have to audit allotments, set standards of provision, and assess their actual provision. Most allotment strategies quote the 1969 Thorpe Report which recommends a minimum provision equivalent to 15 allotments per 1,000 households, but this is not legally binding. The standard adopted by WODC is 0.25 hectares (10 allotments) per 1,000 residents. This would result in the provision of 12 or 18 allotments in the East Witney development, depending on which standard was adopted.

Allotment provision

Development of East Witney community facilities should include the provision of sufficient land to provide for up to 18 allotments either on site or within easily accessible distance.

Burial Ground provision

Development of East Witney community facilities should include the provision of suitable Burial Ground capacity to accommodate the additional demand arising from the increase in the population.

Utilities

We suggest that all houses are fitted with three phase electrical supplies to enable **electric vehicle charging points** to be fitted.

We also suggest the installation of **Fibre to the premises (FTTP)** infrastructure – i.e. a pure fibre connection all the way from the exchange into the houses or business in the NW development.

Dark Night Skies

The Hailey Neighbourhood Plan contains the following policy on Dark Night Skies which we suggest is adopted by East Witney.

11.1 Although never previously articulated through a written policy Hailey Parish Council has always endeavoured to apply the principles of a dark skies policy. The Parish Council has managed to resist the installation of street lighting in all developments over the last 75 years. Whilst recognising the safety issues arising from a dark skies policy, past experience has persuaded the Council that, on balance, the environmental benefits outweigh the safety concerns.

11.2 The Neighbourhood Plan policy detailed below applies to any proposal which involves the installation of external lighting and where the design of developments may result in light spill from internal lighting. The Policy will also apply to specific lighting schemes which require planning permission or listed building consent, including installing:

- a lighting scheme of such nature and scale that it would represent an engineering operation (i.e. requiring a separate structure) and typically be undertaken by specialist lighting engineers;
- lighting such as the floodlighting of sports pitches, car parking or ménages; and
- a lighting scheme on a listed building that would significantly affect its character.

11.3 The Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance ⁴ sets out specific constraints for lighting within environmental zones – see table below. Within each zone, targets are applied for sky-glow, light intrusion, glare, luminaire intensity and building luminance. Any proposed lighting should meet the guidance.

Much of the rural landscape will be an E1 ‘Intrinsically Dark’ zone, but this should be checked prior to an application. The Authority will encourage further reductions, for example by removing below or near horizontal light paths from fixtures or adopting E1 specifications in an E3 zone, wherever feasible. Often this can be achieved with little further disruption.

| Zone | Surrounding | Lighting Environment | Descriptions |
|------|-------------|----------------------------|--|
| E0 | Protected | Dark ⁵ | UNESCO Starlight reserves, IDA Dark Sky Parks |
| E1 | Natural | Intrinsically Dark | Areas with intrinsically dark landscapes (roads usually unlit) |
| E2 | Rural | Low district brightness | Areas of low ambient brightness. Village or relatively dark outer suburban locations |
| E3 | Suburban | Medium district brightness | Areas of medium ambient brightness. Small town centres of suburban locations. |
| E4 | Urban | High district brightness | Areas of high ambient brightness. Town/city centres with high levels of night-time activity. |

We commend and recommend the adoption of a Dark Night Skies policy within the East Witney SDA.

Dark Night Skies Policy

1. Development proposals that conserve and enhance relative tranquillity, in relation to light pollution and dark night skies, and comply with other relevant policies will be permitted, provided it can be demonstrated that they meet or exceed the Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance and other relevant standards or guidance (CIE 150:2003 Guide on the Limitation of the Effects of Obtrusive Light from Outdoor Lighting Installations) for lighting within the Hailey Neighbourhood Plan Area, and have regard to the following hierarchy:

- a) The installation of lighting is avoided;
- b) If lighting is installed it is necessary for its intended purpose or use and any adverse impacts are avoided; and

⁴ The Institute of Lighting Professionals Report - Guidance Notes on the reduction of obtrusive light

⁵ To be considered a dark sky of sufficient quality by the International Dark-Sky Association, values of 20 magnitudes per arc second must be achieved.

- c) If it is demonstrated that (a) or (b) is not achievable, then adverse impacts are appropriately mitigated.
2. To be appropriate, lighting for development proposals should ensure that:
- a) The measured and observed sky quality in the surrounding area is not reduced;
 - b) Lighting is not unnecessarily visible in nearby designated and key habitats;
 - c) The visibility of lighting from the surrounding landscape is avoided; and
 - d) Building design that results in increased light spill from internal lighting is avoided, unless suitable mitigation measures are implemented.

G A L Knaggs
7th July 2019

Date of next meeting: 7.00 pm, Wednesday 11th September 2019 at Hayesfield
Note – this meeting has been rescheduled for 9th October 2019.