

CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2040

Response by Middleton Stoney Parish Council

Summary

1. We welcome the commitments made to maintain Cherwell's rural character, and protect the natural and historic environment but do not think the Plan pays sufficient attention to ensuring the necessary infrastructure is in place to enable this.
2. Middleton Stoney has been particularly badly affected by the growth of Heyford Park and expansion of Bicester. As a result, the village is blighted by traffic gridlock, environmental degradation, noise and pollution. There is nothing in the draft Plan to tackle these issues.
3. We therefore want to see a holistic plan with Oxfordshire County Council to show how the traffic consequences of the new developments proposed will be mitigated.
4. Finally, we should record our disappointment at the very short 6-week consultation period given for comments given the length of time the Plan has been in gestation, and the time before the planned Regulation 19 consultation.

Detail

5. **Core Policy 35/Q22:** we support the policy for Middleton Stoney to be categorised as a smaller village.
6. **Core Policy 47:** we support the policy to promote walking and cycling but note there are no proposals to link up the developments at Heyford Park and Bicester with a dedicated cycle path which avoids the congested crossroads in Middleton Stoney.
7. **Core Policy 51:** we think it essential that any new development is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure. We think the Plan should make a clear commitment to involve Parish Councils in drawing up s 106 agreements, and together with OCC, CDC should commit to working with Parish Councils to ensure s 106 funding is spent. We note that the Plan says nothing about enforcing s 106 agreements, which we believe is a major omission. In short, the next iteration of the Plan should set out CDC's approach to negotiating and enforcing s 106 agreements.
8. **Core Policy 70/Question 31:** we welcome the reference to improving active travel routes between Bicester and surrounding villages and are

disappointed that the Plan provides no information on how this will be achieved.

9. **Question 32:** we are concerned at the proposals to build an extra 1000 homes in North-West Bicester given that the existing road infrastructure is already overloaded. We think it important that consideration be given to adopting a green belt around Bicester to prevent urban sprawl.
10. **Core Policy 71:** the statement in 5.18 that Bicester suffers from some congestion on its main routes is a massive understatement. There is clear evidence every day that the A34 and M40 (junctions 9 and 10) cannot cope with existing flows of traffic leading to widescale deviations of traffic, especially HGVs, through small villages which cannot cope.
11. **Core Policy 82/Question 55:** we do not support any future development at Heyford Park until the current serious traffic issues affecting neighbouring villages are resolved. There is nothing in this Plan to suggest how this will be done.
12. **Questions 57 and 59:** we do not support further development at Heyford Park for employment until the traffic issues caused by existing development are resolved.
13. **Core Policy 83:** as noted above we think there should be a priority to link Heyford Park and Bicester with a dedicated cycle path. We do not support upgrading the access road to the B430 to the east of Heyford Park unless this is part of a broader integrated transport strategy. If not, it will simply divert more traffic through the already above capacity crossroads in Middleton Stoney.
14. **Core Policy 85:** we do not support the reopening of Ardley Railway station for passenger purposes without a clear plan for mitigating the extra road traffic this will create.
15. **Question 61:** the aspirations for rural areas need to be underpinned by a clear strategy to reduce road traffic, especially HGVs coming through villages.
16. **Core Policy 87:** there should be a commitment in the Plan to regular engagement with Parish Councils on its implementation.