

September 16, 2015



Deddington

Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Guidance to Cherwell District Council

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A. INTRODUCTION

A Neighbourhood Plan is being developed for the Parish of Deddington, which will cover the villages of Deddington, Clifton and Hempton.

This report is being submitted to aid Cherwell District Council in its development of the Local Plan Part 2, given it is anticipated that the pre-submission version of the Deddington Neighbourhood Plan will not be completed until early 2016.

Key points in the emerging Deddington Neighbourhood Plan are set out in the Executive Summary below. See Section F for details of the emerging policies and the corresponding evidence base.

B. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

* **Housing growth:** The maximum number of new homes to be permitted in the period 2015-2031 should be 50. The maximum number of houses on any one site should be no more than 20.

* **Location:** Building should largely be outside the Conservation Area but within the village boundaries. There is a strong preference to preserve the Conservation Area and the green spaces within and around it.

* **Brownfield:** Development which makes use of previously developed land and buildings will generally be preferred to greenfield locations.

* **Distance:** Distance from the centre of the village and the health centre should be taken into account in providing suitable homes for older residents to downsize.

* **Housing need:** Priority should be given to 2 and 3 bedroom houses, affordable homes and provision for older residents wishing to downsize. The Neighbourhood Plan survey indicated 55 people wish to downsize now, and 183 think they may do in future. 53 would like a starter home.

* **Affordable housing:** Any new development of 10 homes or more will include 35% affordable homes¹. Of these affordable homes the maximum number permitted by Cherwell District Council will be available for shared ownership. People with strong Deddington connections should be given priority.

* **Infrastructure:** Given the known problems within the parish, no development should go ahead without adequate infrastructure providing water and, in particular, sewerage.

¹ Or any development of *three* homes or more if the July 31 2015 High Court ruling on the West Berkshire and Reading Borough Councils case is not successfully appealed.

C. PARISH PROFILE

Until recent times Deddington has always been predominantly an agricultural community. Its compact historic core is still laid out much as it was in the middle ages, centred on a market place and village greens. Housing in the old part of the village dates from the 13th century onwards and comprises terraced houses and cottages, interspersed with more substantial houses (including former farmhouses), mostly in local stone.

In recent years, apart from infilling, there have been a number of small developments in and around the Conservation Area, including The Beeches, The Leyes, Pound Court, The Mullions, The Maunds and older people's accommodation at Grove Court and Hudson Court. Otherwise the larger modern housing developments lie westward along the Hempton Road. Aside from the social housing, nearly all the new developments consist of detached houses with garages.

Points of historical interest include the parish church, its pinnacled tower visible for miles around, the remains of a Norman motte-and-bailey castle and earthworks, and ridge and furrow north of Earls Lane. The Deddington Conservation Area covers the old village to the east of the Oxford Road and the west side of High Street/New Street.

The parish profile based on the 2011 national census suggests that Deddington is a prosperous place with pockets of under-privilege. The population was 2,146, with 876 households. Of these, 683 lived in owner-occupied homes (78% compared with 64.1% in England as a whole). Seventy-five households lived in social rented housing. The total number of people on DWP benefits of one kind or another was at least 130.

The 2011 census indicates that Deddington has a relatively high percentage of older inhabitants – 497 over 65 (23.2% of the parish population compared with 16.3% in England as a whole). The percentage of under 16's (19.6%) is also higher than the national average (18.9%).

D. CHRONOLOGY OF THE PLAN

The Neighbourhood planning process began in May 2013. A formal request to Cherwell District Council was submitted in July 2013 and formal authorisation of the development of the Plan by the Council was given in December 2013.

The following key stages in the development of the Plan have been completed:

- Establishment by the Parish Council of a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and five Topic Groups - Housing, Environment, Community, Movement & Transport and Business & Economy.
- Identification of issues through a three-day “drop-in” event in November 2013.
- A comprehensive parish survey in autumn 2014.
- Consultation with stakeholders and landowners.
- Consultation on goals and objectives through a second “drop-in” in April 2015
- Development of draft policies.

- Strategic Guidance document submitted to the Parish Council for consideration at its meeting on 16 September 2015.
- Submission of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report to the three statutory consultees in September 2015.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has resolved that the Neighbourhood Plan should reflect the key findings of the consultation with the community.

E. SURVEY OUTCOMES

The parish survey comprised an adult questionnaire with 81 (mostly multi-part) questions, which was completed by 914 respondents (a 58.8% response rate), and a youth version. The key findings reinforce the guidance from the “drop-ins”, village meetings etc. and give confidence that the findings reflect accurately the views of the residents of the Parish.

Based on these findings the following key policies have been developed by the Topic Groups and the Steering Group. They will be subject to further community consultation at a third “drop-in” event. However, given the clear direction set by the residents of the Parish, the Steering Group believes these emerging policies will form the basis of the final Submission Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group therefore requests that Cherwell District Council takes this information into account in its work on Local Plan Part 2 in respect of any policies affecting the parish of Deddington.

F. EMERGING POLICIES

1. HOUSING GROWTH:

- A) **Developments.** The maximum number of new homes to be permitted in the period 2015-2031 will be 50. Large scale developments are not acceptable to the community. The maximum number of houses on any one site should be no more than 20. In all cases housing growth must comply with all relevant policies in this plan.
- B) **Windfall.** Contribution to the windfall element required by CDC’s Local Plan should be achieved by incremental conversions and infilling and minor development (i.e. of 9 dwellings or fewer).

Survey findings: a) 50% of respondents (272) believe that the parish should accommodate between 21 and 50 new homes in the period up to 2031; 23% (124) suggest 10 to 20 homes; 19% (105) suggest more than 50; 7% (38) suggest less than 10.
b) 71% of respondents (374) say 20 or fewer on any one site.

2. HOUSING LOCATION:

- A) There is a strong preference within the community to preserve the Conservation Area and particularly the green spaces within it. Building should largely be outside the Conservation Area but within the village boundaries. Locally important views and vistas should be maintained or enhanced. Individual applications will be considered against these criteria.

- B) Development which make use of previously developed land and buildings will generally be preferred to greenfield locations.
- C) Distance from the centre of the village and the health centre should be taken into account in providing suitable homes for older residents to downsize.

Survey findings: 66% of respondents (394) do not want housing development within the Conservation Area; 88% (740) say the green spaces in and around the Conservation Area should be protected to preserve the rural setting of the historic village; 58% (373) think development should be within the built-up area of Deddington; 68% of respondents (571) consider it important to preserve views of the church, Deddington castle, and the surrounding countryside.
79% of respondents (646) felt the limited scope to improve parking facilities in the centre of Deddington should be a planning consideration.

3. INFRASTRUCTURE:

Given the known problems within the parish, no development should go ahead without adequate infrastructure providing water and, in particular, sewerage.

Survey findings: 37% of respondents (305) said they had problems with water pressure; 20% (152) with foul drainage; 18% (142) with storm drainage. 87% of respondents (607) thought improvements to infrastructure should be a condition of future developments.

4. HOUSING MIX:

The parish has identified a strong need for 2 and 3 bedroom houses, affordable homes and the ability for older residents to downsize and remain in the community. Developments that provide the following will be favoured:

- * a significant proportion of 2-3 bedroom houses
- * medium-sized homes with manageable gardens suitable for older people
- * bungalows
- * flats, if included, should be accessible
- * where appropriate, homes should be built to Lifetime Standards

Survey findings: 70% of respondents (466) would like to see 2 bedroom properties built and 77% (513) favour 3 bedroom properties

55 people wish to downsize now, and 183 think they may do in future;

53 people would like a starter home.

50% of respondents (337) wanted housing to be elderly-friendly

5. HOUSING DESIGN:

- A) Deddington is predominantly an ironstone village. Respondents to the questionnaire generally preferred stone-built houses. Traditional brick that is a current feature in the Conservation Area will be considered. In any case, housing should reflect the vernacular of its surroundings.
- B) All new developments will be built to high standards of design and construction, mindful of the Building For Life guidelines laid down by the Design Council.
- C) Energy efficiency will be a priority.

Survey findings: 80% of respondents (656) favoured stone as a material of construction, 37% (300) brick. 78% (670) considered low energy a priority.

6. ESTATE CHARACTER:

- A) The design, layout, style and density of developments should be compatible with neighbouring properties and the overall character of the village. This means that “off-the-peg” plans that could be replicated in any town or village in the country will not be acceptable. The maintenance of local character has a higher significance than achieving a maximum housing density figure.
- B) All new developments will observe Secured By Design guidelines, so as to make them as crime-free as possible.
- C) All new developments should have parking space to meet or exceed OCC standards. It will not be permitted for garages in new developments to be converted into living accommodation in the interests of retaining the character of the development and to avoid creating parking problems.
- D) Developments should retain open spaces, stone walls, ditches, hedgerows and trees to enhance local character and protect wildlife habitats; and developments should be landscaped with wild flowers and native trees.

Survey findings: 64% of respondents (507) preferred a style of building in sympathy with the Conservation Area, and 59% (467) in keeping with immediate surroundings 78% (656) considered the retention of stone walls and other features of the landscape important 79% of respondents (646) felt the limited scope to improve parking facilities in the centre of Deddington should be a planning consideration.

7. AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

- A) Any new development of 10 homes or more will include 35% affordable homes².
- B) Of these affordable homes the maximum number permitted by Cherwell District Council will be available for shared ownership.
- C) Whether rental or shared ownership, people with a strong Deddington connection will be given priority for at least 50% of the affordable homes in line with CDC policy.
- D) The obligation to maintain availability of affordable housing for people with Deddington connections will have permanent effect unless it can be demonstrated that there is no longer any requirement for the affordable housing.

Survey findings: 74% of respondent (344) think there is a need for affordable housing. The survey suggests that there are Deddington people who may not qualify to go on CDC's housing register, but are nonetheless in need of affordable housing. 18 people identified themselves as already on the housing register or likely to qualify. A further 68 expressed the wish for either shared ownership or Help To Buy

² Or any development of more than three homes if the July 31 2015 High Court ruling on the West Berkshire and Reading Borough Councils case is not successfully appealed.

8. INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES:

Developments should help to promote social integration and create inclusive communities by providing mixed, safe and accessible homes and environments. Services and facilities such as the Windmill Centre should be maintained to a standard where they contribute to the quality of life and community cohesion.

Survey findings: *82% of respondents (680) rated the Windmill Centre as important or essential. However a substantial number thought the Centre needed a thoroughgoing refurbishment and expansion.*

9. INTEGRATED APPROACH:

In order to meet community needs identified in the Neighbourhood Plan, an integrated approach is essential when considering the location of housing and use of community facilities. These needs include improved and new areas for play and recreation, and sustainable sports, educational and cultural services.

Survey findings: *71% of respondents (591) rated the parish playgrounds as important or essential, but there were also many who thought they needed substantial upgrading and modernising – and that new ones were needed. 82% (689) thought the library essential or important.*

10. IMPROVED CYCLEWAYS AND FOOTWAYS:

Any new development must consider the needs of pedestrians and cyclists ahead of those of vehicles and must provide convenient and safe connectivity on foot and by cycle to local facilities and amenities, including bus services. Existing public rights of way will be protected. Where re-routing is essential to accommodate sustainable development, a replacement right of way between the same points shall be created.

Survey findings: *Half of respondents said they had road-worthy bicycles. 42% of respondents (345 people) would like to see improvements in the facilities for cycling around the parish, and made 355 suggestions as to where cycle routes might be created or improved.*