

**KIRTLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting**  
**held in the Church on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023 at 5 p.m.**

Present: Mrs K Chacksfield, Ms J Conway (Chair), Dr B Enser, D Grimshaw, Mrs R Powles (Clerk)  
 Mr Martin Lipson (Chairman, Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan), Ms Christine Marsh & Dr H Macbeth  
 (Kirtlington PC reps at the MCNP Forum)

In attendance: Mr Andrew Banks, Mrs A Banks

	Action
<p>1. <b>Apologies</b></p> <p>None.</p> <p>2. <b>Declarations of pecuniary interests / other conflicts of interest</b></p> <p>None.</p> <p>2. <b>The Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan (MCNP); MCNP Policy Review</b></p> <p><b>Background and the current situation</b></p> <p>Mr Lipson outlined the background to the establishment of the MCNP and the role of Dorchester Group as developers of the strategic development site at Heyford Park, at the centre of the NP area. The MCNP is a “complex” NP with twelve parishes. Member parishes nominate five reps to the Forum, of which two can attend a Forum meeting. The NP is now four years old and the Forum was obliged to commence a review of the effectiveness of its policies (to be subject to public consultation and Examination); this had started in September 2022 and task groups held monthly meetings. The MCNP’s Executive comprises 8 persons from 3 member parishes plus the Dorchester Group, and voting for the Executive takes place at the AGM.</p> <p>The MCNP Forum is a statutory consultee for planning applications and in almost all cases supports the position of member parishes. Mr Lipson considered that the NP had been able to influence Cherwell DC planning policy with beneficial effect and would continue to do so.</p> <p>Essential to development policies for both the NP and the Cherwell District Local Plan is the built up area of the villages in each member parish, defined in the NP as the Settlement Area. New housing development must be within or adjacent to / contiguous with the settlement area. The overall long term aim of the NP was to protect and maintain the rurality of the NP area as a whole, except Heyford Park.</p> <p>Cherwell DC’s Local Plan 2011 – 2031 apportioned 750 new homes across 13 Category A villages (larger villages deemed to be sustainable and capable of supporting some development); many of those had been built. MCNP’s Policy PD1 limited the number to be built in Kirtlington to 17. As the NP was a “made” plan its development policies, including Policy PD1, formed part of Cherwell DC’s development plan.</p> <p>Cherwell DC’s unpublished draft Local Plan to 2040, now paused for further internal review prior to public consultation, had been seen by Mr Lipson and it included draft Policy 31 which proposed an additional 500 new homes excluding windfalls (unplanned development of usually fewer than 5) across the District’s “larger villages”; Kirtlington and Steeple Aston were allocated 46 (an unexplained 11% increase) and 47 respectively; Fritwell as the third “larger village” in the NP area had no allocation (an unexplained decrease). The designation of some of the district’s rural villages as Category A had been dropped and was replaced with the designation “larger villages”.</p> <p>The basis for the draft Policy 31 numbers has not been divulged but will be when the public consultation papers are issued. The review of the draft 2040 Plan meant these numbers may change, however Mr Lipson considered Cherwell DC officers might still want to justify the same numbers. A NP facilitated identification of sites at the choice of the community, but a Local Planning Authority’s Local Plan would allocate sites. Mr Lipson considered that such an allocation by Cherwell DC would take place either at the first round of consultation or at the next round. The LPA would not consult parish councils on its allocation; an LPA allocation was the result of landowner expressed willingness in the LPA’s “call for sites”, which is a continuous process.</p> <p>The MCNP Forum recommended affected member parishes identify sites for inclusion in the MCNP Review (and provide the supporting evidence which would be required at Examination) in advance of the publication of the Cherwell draft 2040 Local Plan. In this way member parishes could ensure that the number of new homes was appropriate and in</p>	

locations supported by the community and this would become MCNP policy and therefore part of the 2040 Local Plan. Steeple Aston had started this process. A possible tool to assist implementation was a Community Land Trust, which also set the criteria for occupancy. Mr Lipson would visit the Hook Norton CLT in the near future.

Site identification would require site assessment by a team appointed by the member parish, and could rank sites in order of preference. Sites could include but were not limited to those in the last published Cherwell DC Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The criteria should be the same as for Steeple Aston, and could be used to justify why some sites were excluded. The assessment process was supported by the MCNP's consultant, Neil Homer of Oneill Homer. Oneill Homer advised assessment for the potential allocation (46 for Kirtlington) should be divided over several sites. Application of the criteria might show that it was only possible to accommodate a much lower number than that proposed in Cherwell DC's draft Local Plan 2040.

## Q&A

JC: Central government policy on local housing supply is unclear, where does this leave LPA planning policies?

ML: Local Plans are still being prepared and will take place regardless, i.e. housing growth will be identified and sites will be identified. South Oxfordshire DC attempted to avoid site allocation but were obliged to comply by central government.

JC: Will NP site allocations stymie Local Plan allocations?

ML: The NP Examination will set the NP new housing numbers according to locally specific preferences and pre-empt Local Plan allocations (i.e. not run counter to the Local Plan). After the local elections (4<sup>th</sup> May) the LP proposed 500 might be reviewed but the MCNP could tell officers the MCNP was undertaking its own site assessments.

CM: As the MCNP review was subject to Examination site assessments must have conformity, for compliance with the formal examination process, but if they were evidenced that should satisfy the Examiner.

BE: What happens if there is a big disparity between the large number suggested by Cherwell DC (46) and a NP allocation for only a few, e.g.10?

ML: If the sites are properly evaluated this should not be a problem. If Kirtlington PC determined to engage in the MCNP, there would be no obligation to identify sites for 46 dwellings. However, sites which have previously been refused permission can not be completely ruled out.

KC: Will a MNCP site allocation for Kirtlington raise expectations?

ML: Kirtlington will be in a stronger position if assessed.

DG: Time and resources might be a problem.

ML: The Parish Council could nominate a few individuals, who would be supported by the NP review team.

BE: Is there any basis for the current (Local Plan 2040) numbers?

ML: No.

JC: District Councillors claim a 5.4 housing land supply.

ML: That figure changes week to week. Cherwell DC is not the arbiter, the Secretary of State or the PINS Examiner will decide the figure.

BE: What is the impact of the Oxford City overflow?

ML: This is having a very negative impact on policy.

ML: The NP Forum hopes for an early decision by the Parish Council on engagement with the NP site allocation process. The list of sites would be put to the Parish Council for consideration. Site allocation as part of the Cherwell Local Plan 2040 review will probably continue. NP site allocation might create a slight risk (of raised expectations) but Kirtlington will be disadvantaged if it does not participate. Any policies formed in the MNCP review process can be omitted or changed before being incorporated in the consultation draft.

BE: How do we choose possible sites?

ML: Oneill Homer recommend assessing more, rather than less. Sites could include those from Cherwell's call for sites.

DG: How should parishioners be consulted?

ML: When the MCNP Review is published for consultation.

## Next steps:

Mr Lipson would forward the site assessment criteria and Cherwell DC's recent call for sites maps and any further information about the Community Land Trust from the Hook Norton visit.

The Clerk would circulate copies of the MCNP plan summary.

The Parish Council would consider engagement in the MCNP site assessment and allocation process at its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> May.

The meeting closed at 6.35 p.m.

Signed

*Jean Conway*

Chair

26/06/2023

Date