

KIRTLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
Meeting, Monday 27th November 2023

MCNP Presentation of site assessment recommendations and Parish Council decisions

Transcript of Agenda Items 6 and 7:

- **Agenda Item 6: Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Presentation (MCNP)**
- **Agenda Item 7: Vote of councillors for recommendation MCNP**

(NB. This transcript is taken from a recording made in the village church. Some details were unclear owing to the church acoustic and the enthusiastic participation of a large audience).

0.54. Jean Conway

Just to say first of all that the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood plan, I don't know how many of you know a lot about MCNP, but there are 12 parishes in the MCNP, one of these is Kirtlington so we signed up to the Cherwell for them to actually help us put together a housing needs assessment and site assessments. The 4 people that have been working on the site assessments in detail are Christine Marsh, Helen Macbeth, Briony and Kay. They are the people who have worked consistently on that for the last few months and put in a lot of hard work. So, to hand over to Kay now.

2.30. Kay Chacksfield

Can everyone hear me alright? Good evening, everyone. I am Kay Chacksfield. I am one of the Kirtlington parish councillors. Thank you, Jean, for your introduction.

I would like to invite Christine and Helen who are part of the core site assessment team to come up to the table. And just to mention, we are recording the meeting so that we can make a transcript afterwards just because there is likely to be a lot of discussion and we do not want to miss anybody's contributions.

I'd like to start by thanking the whole team who have contributed to the development of Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan (MCNP) recommendations. In particular I would like to thank the core site assessment team – in addition to Briony and I from KPC, I would also like to thank Helen Macbeth, and Christine Marsh who have been KPC's nominated MCNP reps for Kirtlington for many years. And of course, there was the wider site assessment team as well, consisting of current and past members of KPC and its planning subcommittee. They were – Alex Charlesworth, Jean Conway, Paul Kurgo and David Richardson It has been a huge amount of work and we have learnt a lot along the way.

It is also important to stress that this is just the first step in the process – which will culminate in a referendum where everyone can vote either for or against the proposals. To clarify what is the purpose of this meeting tonight. It is for counsellors to take a vote on the proposals, which everyone has had opportunity to view on the website, over the last 2 weeks. It is probably equally important to explain what this meeting is not for. We will not be discussing the current active planning applications for developments at Corner Farm and Jersey Cottages. We will be referring to these SITES, as these sites have been put forward for

consideration for development, but that is distinct from the planning applications for specific houses which are currently being considered by Cherwell District Council.

The process of MCNP site assessment has previously been outlined, in the public meeting on Oct 5th, which was held in the village hall and which many of you, in fact more than 75 people, attended, and all the sites under consideration were presented there. The email address for comments has been open since then and remains open.

5.14.

The recommendations of the assessment team being considered this evening have been available to view for the last 2 weeks. There are 4 points for KPC to vote upon in order for the recommendations to go forward to the next stage of public consultation –

- i. How many homes is it reasonable to accommodate in Kirtlington – the proposal is 35.
- ii. Whether or not to agree the recommended allocation of sites KT7 and 8, Jersey Cottages south and north.
- iii. Whether or not to agree that sites KT1,2,3 and 4 (Corner Farm east and west and Rye Furlong east and west) should *not* be recommended for allocation.
- iv. Whether or not to support the ranking of sites – this is a requirement of the MCNP, because the recommended sites may fall away, in which case the next most suitable sites would be considered. The ranking is proposed in order as follows – sites KT7 and 8 followed by 1,2,3 and 4. i.e. the 2 sites at Jersey Cottages, followed by the 2 at Corner Farm, and then 2 at Rye Furlong

6.30.

Everyone has had the opportunity to read not only the recommendations, but the data, which was collected for each site, from which those recommendations have been developed. I will read the outline of the report.

We essentially have 3 pairs of sites to report on – 2 at Corner Farm, on Lince Lane, 2 adjacent to Mill Lane, Rye Furlong east and west sites, and 2 off the Heyford Rd, Jersey Cottages. These were considered as 6 individual sites in line with the previous planning history but in fact, the 2 sites at Corner Farm, KT1 & 2 are physically one large field, and the 2 sites at Rye Furlong, KT3 & 4 are also one large field. Briony, Christine and Helen will outline the recommendations for each of the sites. Without getting ahead of ourselves, one thing which has been reassuring about the whole process is the fact that the outcomes of these analyses have closely matched the views expressed by the village about different sites in their planning history.

There will be an opportunity for questions from the floor at the end of the presentation. As you will have seen, the Chair has stated on the agenda that in order to keep things manageable, and to allow everyone the opportunity to be heard, there will be 3 minutes maximum allowed per person for questions and a short time to reply.

8.05.

A vote will then be taken by council, regarding the 4 main recommendations in the report. A reminder that this is only the first step in the process, and the start of an involved process of public consultation in which everybody will be entitled to put forward their views on the

sites, either at one of the public consultation meetings, or via email to the email address which has been published on the Kirtlington village website for the last two months - mcnpsites@gmail.com. Whilst you are welcome to put forward your views now, the principal opportunity you have to put forward specific points is at the MCNP's public consultation stage in the Spring, where these views will be taken into account and given appropriate weight.

In terms of next steps, today's recommendation from KPC will be put forward to the MCNP Forum, which meets in December, and that will then go forward to a Regulation 14 consultation, in the New Year. Following Regulation 14, the proposal will be presented to Cherwell District Council, and followed by a further round of consultation (Regulation 16), before submission to the independent examiner and finally to a referendum in which all residents in all villages within the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan can vote, including Kirtlington.

I would like to provide some detail on the assessment teams. The core site assessment team consisted of – Briony and I from KPC, and the 2 nominated MCNP reps for Kirtlington, Christine Marsh and Helen Macbeth, who were nominated by KPC many years ago, and whose appointment was reconfirmed by KPC as recently as May 2023.

As the team wished to bring in more skills and widen the input to the site assessments, a wider consultation group was formed which contributed at key points during the process. The wider team included the 2 current and immediate past chairs of KPC, and the 2 current and past planning reps for KPC. Those in the wider group were:
Alex Charlesworth, (past planning rep on KPC),
Jean Conway (KPC chair and CDC councillor who sits on the Cherwell planning committee)
Paul Kurgo (planning rep for KPC for many years)
David Richardson (immediate past chair of KPC)

10.42.

Moving on to the number of homes recommended in the report –

The District Council's Local Plan proposes a figure of 500 homes divided between the 11 larger villages of mid Cherwell, and in January It was suggested (although subsequently withdrawn) that Kirtlington may be expected to provide 46 homes – an increase of 10.2% on current numbers. The figure of 46 dwellings initially suggested by Cherwell had no evidence to support it, so far as we are aware.

The local community has expressed a view that some limited additional housing would be beneficial, particularly smaller homes for young families and older people, but that this should be in proportion to the size of the village and informed by the current difficulties with traffic volumes through the village, and by concerns about infrastructure – most notably the capacity of the drainage system.

Existing MCNP policy supports an indicative number of 17 additional dwellings for the village in the period 2018-2031 none of which have yet been built (this represents an increase of 3.7%). The proposal for 35 new dwellings over the period 2023 – 2040 would represent an increase of 7.8% in the number of dwellings in Kirtlington.

We will now present the key site descriptions, and the planning balance for each site. All of this information is available on the website.

Christine Marsh will present sites 1&2 – Corner Farm

Helen Macbeth will present sites 3&4 - Rye Furlong

Briony Enser will present sites 7&8 – Jersey Cottages

A reminder that questions will be taken at the end of the presentation, with questions from KPC first and then from the floor.

12.45. **Christine Marsh**

I am going to go through the key points of the site assessment as they are presented on the KT1 and KT 2 forms. I am going to do them both together because they were originally in the SLA as one site and the comments are quite generic for both of them.

- Gateway site in a prominent position to the southwest of the village
- Both sites are adjacent to the village settlement area, particularly site 1 which is adjacent to the 9 bungalows in Oxford Close.
- And site 2 adjoins just to the north of site 1, a small slither where the footpath comes out of Hatch Way
- They are both greenfield sites currently in agricultural use for grazing sheep and cattle.
- They are generally flat sites rising above the road – the A4095 and adjacent to housing at the southern end.
- They both lie west of the established historic western boundary of the village.
- That is defined by the public footpath (27/10/30?) the former route of the Woodstock Way. That runs on a north-south orientation in between the site and the settlement area.
- Both sites protrude west into open countryside beyond the settlement area.
- A narrow south section abuts Station Road (A4095) on outer bend of the road.
- Limited vehicle access to A4095 via site KT2 and using the farm gate to the south – current access to Corner Farm.
- At the moment there is no adequate existing pedestrian access to the rest of the village (would require stretch of new pavement along the A4095).

15.46.

Just running through the assessment team views. KPC and many residents objected to the withdrawn application for 8 dwellings, withdrawn on 21st August, and the previous applications and appeals for this site which were for 95 and 75 dwellings respectively on KT1 and KT2. Development of both sites would set a precedent for much larger development not only encompassing KT1 and 2 but also extending to KT3 and 4. And then potentially land to the north of Mill Lane. If this was to occur it would result in excessive over development of the village. As far as access, it has extremely limited sight lines for access on a blind bend on the A4095 at the brow of a hill, although the most recent OCC Transport report raises concerns regarding the safety of the access, we know this is being challenged. Development would extend beyond the historic western village boundary and protrude in open countryside. We do consider it to be a visually prominent site at the top of a hill and on the southern gateway to the village. We consider it to be damaging to the open rural setting and amenity of the public right of way footpath. It would impact on the amenity of at least 15

houses that would be adjacent to the site, and the development would result in the loss of productive farmland. (And then there are comments on the planning applications as they stand but I won't go into that).

Planning balance. In summary the key concerns over this site are:

- Safety of access on to A4095
- Site protrudes into open countryside.
- Development would set precedent for further development of Sites KT2, KT3 and KT4, causing excessive growth of historic village and encroaching upon the Cherwell Valley
- An arbitrary boundary between Sites KT1 and KT2
- Visually prominent site at entrance to village
- Site visible from the south for a considerable distance.
- Strong representation from village against development of site.

One advantage it does have is that it has frontage onto the A4095.

Recommendation

- Site not supported for development.

19.00. **Helen Macbeth**

To most of us site KT3 and KT4 are one field of green pasture for cattle and sheep beside the Bridleway Mill Lane on the way to the Cherwell valley and beyond as part of the Oxfordshire Way. The land rises slightly uphill away from the western boundary of Kirtlington making it visually prominent to the many who walk, ride or cycle on this public right of way, bridleway and cycle route, as well of course to us, as it protrudes into open countryside. In 2014 CDC declined it for development in that year.

The reason that in the current survey KT3 is separated from KT4 is that it was the subject of a planning application for 10 houses against which over 50 written objections were sent to CDC and to which our PC objected in 2016/7. In 2017 that application was refused by CDC and the appeal that followed failed because so many harms were listed and no benefits to the village. It would have been another of those developments lacking social housing. Those of you who know me know of my concern for social housing and affordable small homes in this village and the village needs them to keep local families together.

Well, that is the past and our survey is a study for the future up to 2040. But the same harms exist. Any development on sites KT3 and KT4 (Rye Furlong) would extend our traditionally linear village beyond its historic western boundary shown clearly on maps since 1750 and named Woodstock Way on the map of 1805 and still shown clearly as the limit of buildings on today's satellite map. There is one small exception, the houses built within the old quarry, then site of engineering works and a small brownfield site, was allowed. Buildings on that field of KT3 and KT4 would have a negative effect on the visual amenities of a much-used public right of way and there are several planning rules which protect those visual amenities of a public right of way. Another problem for KT4 is that it is right beside the SSSI of the quarry – something else protected.

There are excess problems for both sites KT3 and KT4.

1. The legal aspects of vehicle access via a bridleway
2. The width of the tarmacked road at the western end of North Green right beside the listed building / thatched cottage
3. Access from the site depends on access via KT1 or KT2 which currently, as far as KT1 is concerned, OCC has suggested access is not safe. With the lack of access, KT3 would be difficult to develop and is described as having its back to the village. As for KT4 it is not currently adjacent to the village envelope and will only become so if KT3 were developed. Together such developments would result in excessive growth of the village. We already have infrastructure problems with sewerage issues, no public transport to a GP practice, small narrow surrounding rural roads and excessive traffic funnelled through narrow parts of our conservation village. I would ask you also not to forget the impact on our villagers living in Hatch Way and Woodbank if there were buildings uphill to the west, for example, think of winter afternoon sun.
4. Finally, should either of these sites be developed and the western boundary breached I ask where next? Will development on the west cross Mill Lane northward and proceed along the western side of Crowcastle Lane, another bridleway.

Key points of site description

- Visually prominent site for bridleway users, as the site fronts on to the highest section of the Mill Lane bridleway (270/11/70).
- Greenfield site currently in agricultural use for grazing sheep and cattle.
- Lies west of the established historic western boundary of the village.
- Adjacent to the village settlement area, west of existing housing.
- Gently sloping site, rising up westward from the settlement area.
- Protrudes westwards into open countryside beyond the settlement area.
- Existing pedestrian access from the site to the village via The Pound and Mill Lane.
- No existing vehicle access to the site as it lies on the Mill Lane bridleway.

Planning Balance

Concerns over this site, namely:

- Doubts over vehicle access – bridleway and pinch point of North Green
- Visually prominent site impacting on recreational walkers and riders.
- Protrudes into open countryside.
- Site lies immediately west of established historic Woodstock Way, the westerly limit of the settlement area.
- Arbitrary boundary between sites KT3 and KT4.
- Development would set precedent for further development of Sites KT1, KT2, KT3 and KT4, causing excessive growth of historic village, encroaching upon the Cherwell Valley.
- Strong representation from village against development of site.

The above outweigh the advantages of:

- Good pedestrian access providing proximity to some village amenities.

Recommendation

- Site not supported for development.

27.00. Briony Enser

I am going to do the two sites to the north of the village. I am going to do them separately because although there are similarities between there are also some significant differences.

The first one is KT7, Jersey Cottages south

Key points of site description

- This is a visually enclosed site in the northern part of the village on the eastern side of Heyford Road (A4095).
- Adjacent to the village settlement area, it lies east and south of existing housing.
- In view of some listed buildings and in the village conservation area.
- It is also in a registered park and garden area.
- The site is currently in use as a paddock for grazing horses.
- It is a flat site dipping away slightly towards deciduous woodland to the southeast.
- There is village housing to the west on the opposite side of Heyford Road the A4095, and also housing at Jersey Cottages immediately north of the site.
- Partially screened from Heyford Road by a wall and a line of deciduous trees.
- Also, partially screened by a bank of deciduous trees to the south and east.
- It has existing vehicle access in current use by Jersey Cottages housing, and existing pedestrian access also in current use by the housing at Jersey Cottages.

In terms of the planning balance:

- It has good existing access, which would need widening, but is the access which is there currently for Jersey Cottages and is in use.
- It goes straight on to a section of the A4095, which is in the 20mph zone with good vision splays in both directions.
- It is also a visually-discrete, enclosed frontage location with good screening around it.
- Its location suits the linear pattern of village.
- Mitigations will be required for the conservation area and other considerations and would require a high level of design in any proposed development for it.

It is now clarified that concerns over the local conservation area will require sympathetic design because of the impact on listed properties nearby and opposite in Heyford Road. There was a previous concern from Historic England about the site being in a historic Capability Brown parkland. However, it has now been clarified that the site has been within the Town Green common land in the past, and was never included in the park of Capability Brown. There is now map evidence to underpin that.

Conclusion

The benefits outweigh the concerns of the location in the Conservation Area and the impact on the listed farmhouse and the properties opposite.

Recommendation

- Site supported for development.

Going on to site KT 8, Jersey Cottages North

- The site is further north, right at the far end of the village.
- A gateway site in an open prominent position at the northern end of the village.
- It is adjacent to the village settlement area, east and north of existing housing.

- It has village housing to the west along the opposite side of the Heyford Road.
- The site is currently in use as a paddock for grazing horses.
- It is a flat site with low walls along Heyford Road and Akeman Street.
- Open countryside lies beyond Akeman Street and deciduous woodland to the east.
- It currently has no existing vehicle or pedestrian access to the site, apart from a small gate to the north on to Akeman Street.
- New access would be required directly on to the A4095 or via the access at Jersey Cottages which exists for site 7.
- There is a listed building at Home Farm about 80 metres to the south of the site.

On planning balance:

- It is a flat frontage site with good road access, within the 20mph zone.
- It is not affected by any questions about heritage assets and is not in the conservation area.
- It would impact on very few neighbours.

It does have visual prominence as a gateway site at the entrance to the village, which is an important consideration and which would need to be mitigated. There is also a potentially important archaeological site at the far north of the site along Akeman Street where there may be Roman remains. This could be dealt with by a reduction of the amount of developable land permitted here, which we may come on to later.

Recommendation

- Site supported for development.

Kay Chacksfield

CONCLUSION

I would like to conclude by summarising the proposal brought before KPC – and which our Parish Council is asked to vote upon in order for these recommendations to go forward to the next stage of public consultation –

- i. How many homes it would be reasonable to accommodate in Kirtlington – the proposal is for 35
- ii. Whether or not to agree the recommended allocation of sites KT7 and 8, Jersey Cottages south and north
- iii. Whether or not to agree that sites KT1,2,3,4 (Corner Farm east and west and Rye Furlong east and west) should not be recommended for allocation.
- iv. Whether or not to support the ranking of sites – this is a requirement of the MCNP, because the recommended sites may fall away, in which case the next most suitable sites would be considered.

The ranking is proposed in order as follows – sites KT7, 8, 1, 2, 3, 4.

35.00. Barry Wood

For those who do not know me, my name is Barry Wood. I'm a CDC Councillor for this village. I have been on the DC for, many say, too long. All that means is that I have been here

before. I have some background knowledge of the planning process and I will be very pleased to answer any questions about process, if that comes up this evening.

I guess there are a number of things to say that have been more or less said, I may as well reinforce them – the first thing is land use planning in this country is consultation bound. It is like an ever-going factory on consultations and rounds and rounds of it, because that is what the statute says has to happen, so that is what happens. There are levels of planning - the neighbourhood plan, the MCNP, which carries, I guess, in the parlance of planning, limited weight. It has to be in line with the Local Plan.

The LP is being revised, reviewed, refreshed. It is undergoing right now a Regulation 18 consultation which is about to finish. And then it takes months to read the consultations and analyse them and the planning officers say 'good point' or 'what a load of rubbish'. I summarise, they do not actually use those two phrases. And then that process is presented back to the council and then after they have taken account of all that they go to a Regulation 19 consultation, and when that has been done the plan proceeds to another consultation when people can have a chop at it, and then it goes to be adopted by the council and then it goes to a public enquiry.

And people pop up at the PA and very often repeat what they said at the public consultation in case it wasn't paid any attention to. And then the independent inspector says words to the effect – 'yeah okay you can adopt that plan', or 'you've got to make some minor changes to it because I'm telling you to make some minor changes', or they can say 'what a complete load of old rubbish this is. Start again son'. The latter phrase is rare because it just is. But the middle phrase, that you have to tinker with it, quite often happens. Then when the tinkered with plan is adopted then it holds weight in the planning process. It's a right old rigmarole this. Many a slip between cup and lip.

38.00. There is a further complication, which came to me this weekend that you need to know about ... hot off the press. That is that Heyford Park Parish Council (in my mind's eye HP is a new town it is a big development, it's a different beast to rural villages that we know of) and HPPC has resolved to leave the MCNP. I don't know the whys; I just know they want out, and this may upset the applecart completely of the MCNP because it is one of its main *raison d'être*s was to manage the impact of HP on all the settlements around it. How they all connect up together, you need to plan properly all this stuff together. I think that it is possible that this latest schism may throw the time frames for MCNP backwards because I just think it probably will, but I have been wrong before.

Christine Marsh

To respond, Middleton Stoney ducked out and have come back into the MCNP without any effect.

Barry Wood

All I'm saying is there is a potential for the timeframe of the MCNP to be adversely affected by that, but I accept it may not come true. So, there is that, I suppose, added minor complication to what is already a complex thing. What ends up in the LP, the NP has to mesh with it, they cannot be at odds with each other because otherwise confusion would reign. I guess Chair that was the last point I wanted to make. I can field questions.

Kay Chacksfield

Can we do questions at the end?

Jean Conway

I think it would be better to do the floor first actually then the Council can come back in.

David Richardson

We can now move on to questions from the floor. For the record, please state your name and whether you are a parishioner or a representative of one of the site owners.

41.22. Neil Clarke

I am Neil Clarke, I live in the village. Thank you, Barry, for outlining that and for describing the community led process that is just beginning. I am trying to understand how to reconcile that with the fact that next week CDC planning committee will be determining a planning application with respect to Jersey Cottages. I'm trying to understand how those 2 things align because when you were beginning to talk it sounds like we are at the beginning of the process rather than that the process will be concluded next Tuesday night. I don't know if you can talk about that.

Kay Chacksfield

Would you like me to answer that, Barry? Neil - thanks for your question. I think I made clear we are here to discuss sites not planning applications, they are different.

Jan Shackleton

I live in the village. Just supposing any planning application goes through (CDC) before this process is finished do those numbers which may be approved have an impact on the numbers planned for the number of properties planned for Kirtlington up to 2040.

Barry Wood

I think it goes like this but if members know differently, they can correct me. There is a process for agreeing NPs which refresh themselves every 'N' years. There is a process for refreshing the local plan at district level. We at the district level are obliged to do so because if you don't refresh it everything becomes very difficult. Meanwhile planning applications continue on the old regime. So, it keeps going on the extant LP and the implications of the national planning framework. All planning applications now live in the extant environment and all the stuff about a new regime doesn't apply until it applies.

Neil Clarke

I am still trying to reconcile the bottom-up community led process. We have got a process that we are going through which is great and I really want to engage with that process, but it could all be over next week. Is that correct or am I misunderstanding?

Barry Wood

I guess the answer is if the planning application next week in effect jumps the gun on all the other ramifications, then it will jump the gun. The key thing you need to remember is when any application is considered at the district council level, the main considerations are 'what does the existing LP say?', 'what does the national planning application framework say?' and

it's all to do with the 5-year land supply, and what the council's planning officers recommend to the elected members.

47.00. Kay Chacksfield

Can I just point out we have a current MCNP. In the same way that Cherwell is updating its plan, this is an update of the existing NP. We already have a guideline that is 17 houses between now and 2030. So, I think what you are saying is that the planning applications that are going through at the moment are being judged on the pre-existing both LP and NP.

Barry Wood

Yes, that is what I am saying.

Kay Chacksfield

Christine, do you want to...?

Jean Conway

Do you want to say something Simon?

47.50. Simon Holland

I am a resident here. I also sit on the District Council. I used to be the district councillor for Kirtlington until they redrew the boundaries. I was shifted to Launton and Otmoor, not by choice. I sit on the planning committee of the district council. I don't want to talk about sites but I do want to talk about misinformation. It is terribly important - you asked a question, and it is a very good question. If we pass planning, is that going to give us any protection - that's what I understood from that - does that give us any protection from further development? And the simple answer is no it doesn't.

Villager

Why do you say that? Does it alter the number?

Simon Holland

Let's talk about numbers. We were told about 500 houses need to be built. There are two plans that have an effect on that. There is the Cherwell District plan and Cherwell has allocated a certain amount of houses between all of the villages. Not that each village has to build a certain amount of houses, it is collective responsibility. And in fact, those numbers have almost been built, so the liability now to build any houses in any of the villages is very small.

So, the only responsibility we've got is under the MCNP, and under the neighbourhood plan we have identified the need for 17 which I think reflected what the district plan said, but what it did not do was change when the district plan changed. Now, for instance, this MCNP is actually up for renewal again. Now we as a village could say we don't want any houses at all, and the MCNP should then reflect it, unless CDC tells us we have to have more, but at the moment they don't and at the moment there is a 5-year land supply and the housing need for the villages has been used mostly by Upper Heyford. One of the critical parts of the MCNP, I remember when it was formed, I was a councillor here and I remember it in some detail and it was originally formed....

50.40. Zoe Kyte

Point of order please. Zoe Kyte. resident. What's the question? I thought the purpose of this meeting was to ask questions.

Simon Holland

Well, it was more a point of information.

Zoe Kyte

It sounded more like a speech rather than a question.

Simon Holland

What is your question or is it a point of information? I only mention it because I think it is important the village understands what the numbers are for.

Kay Chacksfield

Simon, where does the number of 46 that was published in January come from?

Simon Holland

I have no idea. Barry, you can probably answer.

51.28. Kay Chacksfield

Does anyone else from the floor have a question?

51.36. Libby Russell

Troy Lane so we are not near any of the sites. The argument given for development in our village is that Kirtlington is one of the largest villages in the area and therefore we can grow more. I'm a little bit confused. Since 1950 the UK's population has grown 36% and according to the 1951 census and the 2021 census Kirtlington's population has grown by 55%.

Therefore, we are one of the villages that has contributed far more than our fair share of the UK's population growth. Therefore, in my opinion, any more development apart from small infill will be to the detriment of the community and spirit of the place. The question is why, given that we have already grown greater than the national average while other villages have grown far less are we being told we have to develop even further?

Barry Wood

I can give a generic answer.

Libby Russell

Can we have an answer specific to Kirtlington?

Barry Wood

Well, it applies to all what we used to call category A villages. Big villages. Why do we have to grow more or at all really? The reason is that the existing local plan seeks to locate most of the housing that we have to have at Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington. The logic is that these villages are sustainable - it means they've got the shops, they've got the doctors, the buses, the schools. But some larger villages are also deemed to be sustainable.

Neil Clarke

We don't have a shop. We barely have a bus service.

Barry Wood

Where is sustainable? It's like a concertina; it closes in on itself. A few years ago, there were a number of villages that had a pub, or 2 pubs, they had a little shop, they had a school, a bus service, and so they were deemed to be more sustainable than a hamlet that had none of those things. That's the reason some villages are categorised as able to have some growth.

Libby Russell

We shouldn't be growing too much more, given how much we have grown since the 50s 60s and 70s.

55.35. Stephanie Hilborne.

Resident Troy Lane. First of all, I want to thank the Parish Council who have done a heck of a lot of work as volunteers to try and help the community. [Applause]

This is a really complex and difficult issue. I grew up in an area of Surrey that basically ended up being the confluence of the M25 and A3. I completely understand what you are saying Libby as well. It strikes me that the essence of what the team has been doing is to try to take not some not quite power but local leadership on a problem something that otherwise will be taken completely out of our hands. So, it feels to me that if we say we don't need any more houses because we have grown xxx% we will still be given houses where developers want them and the council approves them. Whereas, if we engage constructively in the plan that the team has thought through, we will be given fewer houses in places suggested by a team that has put a great deal of time into the process. I feel I will trust the people who have got involved and put a lot of time into it.

My instinct is to say we will have less houses than we would otherwise have imposed on us, they have thought through where they would be well positioned, and I would be in full support of them for all the work put in, rather than random developers who are all about profit.

[Applause]

Nick Fry

Resident of Troy Lane. For transparency, I have applied for one of the vacant positions on the Parish Council. Firstly, I would like to applaud the work that has been done, it has been absolutely superb. These people give their time for free, not only the parish councillors but also people like Alex Charlesworth. It must be a thankless task, so thank you very much indeed.

Chair, my question is one of process, the process that was outlined was that we would hear the questions from the Parish Council followed by our questions. Can I confirm that is the process, and, if it is, can we follow the process and hear what the PC has to say before we add our own?

Jean Conway

I thought it would be useful for us to hear what the floor says so we can answer your questions.

Nick Fry

Can I just respond to that? I think we have to face the facts that are in front of us. What Heyford decide to do is not particularly relevant. We have a lot of facts, we have heard some great presentations, we should now hear your questions and then we can add our own questions. [Applause]

Jean Conway

I think Heyford Park leaving MCNP is a significant issue actually because they contribute most of the funds and they also take a lot of housing from the villages, so I do think that fact is an issue and I don't know where that is going. What I do know is that Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood have already responded to the two planning applications that are in without it actually being approved through Mid Cherwell, so my concern is has Mid Cherwell got too much power and are they telling us, allowing us to have 30 odd houses when actually we don't need those at all? So, I am slightly concerned that Mid Cherwell is driving us to have houses that we actually don't need. I think that is a big issue.

Christine Marsh

We are one of 11 large villages at the moment. We looked at the completions between 2015 and 2021, we have had 4. Bloxham have had 232 and 5 more in planning permission. That's the top, then it goes Ambrosden 201, Bletchingdon 80, Bodicote 153, Deddington 107 Hook Norton 155, Launton 27, Steeple Aston 5 and Yarnton 17. (Yarnton won't take any more because they are Green Belt).

If we don't allocate sites, they will be forced upon us and it might not be the numbers that we like because the rest of these villages are not going to take the 500 allocated and we have a process here where we can decide how much housing we think is right for us. If we think it is zero, then let's say that, if we think it is 35 then that's what we are recommending at this stage. Bloxham are not going to take any more if they have already had 232!

So we thought we would try look at this process from the bottom up and try to dictate it back to Cherwell. I hear what Barry is saying that we need to be in line with the LP, but there also has to be a lot of cognisance placed on what the local people want and that's where you come in. [Applause]

1.03.30. Kate Buckingham Fry.

In response to what Christine says, as a former parish councillor here I think we are fortunate that we have been a part of the MCNP because that is a much larger group that gives us a much larger punching weight above our 600+ houses.

I think it absolutely critical that we are part of MCNP because if the worst-case scenario happens and they target us for a much larger development of 200 houses then we are on our own. And we are fortunate to have some very clever people in our village, but they are busy. And we are asking for big favours.

We lived in Woodstock prior to this, and Berkeley homes ran us down – we had Simon Bird QC from the Appellate Court and we lost. There are still massive parking issues, there are GP issues. I don't want to see that happen in Kirtlington and I think it is dangerous. I'm not a

nimby. We do need affordable houses in the village. However, I certainly do not want 150 houses.

Villager

Can we hear from the Parish Council please?

Jan Harwell

My name is Jan Harwell- I have been on the Parish Council since July and I have not been involved in this process. But I have done an enormous amount of reading to get up to speed on what these good people have done and I am hugely impressed. I think the rationale that underpins this process is very sound and the objectivity of what they have done is exceptional. I don't have a vested interest in any sites, where I live it will not make any real difference to me, but I am hugely impressed with my colleagues here. [Applause]

Jean Conway

I think I have said what I want to say about MCNP I am concerned about it, I also don't believe we will be forced to have 100 houses. I work on the planning committee with Simon and Barry and actually we are very cognisant about what we are doing building in villages. I don't know where the thought has come from that Cherwell will just say well you have to have 100 -150 houses and this is the site we are going to build on - that just isn't the case. I work with Cherwell and I know that's not true. I don't know if Barry wants to say anything about that?

My concern is that we are rushing into this. There isn't a need to rush we are going very fast, and I don't think we need to go so quickly I think it would be really nice to get the village involved, or more involved in a transparent process so they can all have a say. At the moment you are responding to just what we have said, what 4 assessors have said, and I think you should be more involved than that. So, I do have a concern and I do think we are rushing into it and we are a long way away from the local plan. What is it, 2 years Barry? So, we don't have to rush into this. We can take our time.

Briony Enser

I would like to say something about the five-year plan and the housing supply at the moment. I know there is currently a 5-year housing supply, but CDC's plan is up to 2040 and not just the next 5 years. We have to plan for the whole period and what might be needed in that period up to 2040, not just for 5 years.

Their original plan had 46 houses for Kirtlington and they withdrew it because they were concerned about being that specific about what houses had to go to what villages. They have now said there would be 500 houses between the 11 large villages. Make no mistake about it, Kirtlington is a large village. We might like to think that we don't have enough amenities to support any more growth, and it's true that we've got a shaky bus service, we've got no shop and there are fewer amenities here than there used to be, but that doesn't stop the District Council determining that we are a large village, and that large villages take housing. That's the bottom line of it really.

If this Neighbourhood Plan does not identify sites for housing and the number of houses the village would like to take, the District Council and developers will be the ones who are free

to decide how many houses the village should take and where they will all go. Neither CDC, with respect, nor the developers have the village and the villagers at the heart of their concerns in these matters. What we are trying to do is put the village at the heart of what happens next with housing in the village. [Applause]

1.11.06. **Kay Chacksfield**

Can I just talk about transparency and democracy. I really disagree that there has been any lack of transparency, or that this is an undemocratic process. It is important to look at the whole process.

- First, the reason that Kirtlington is part of MCNP is because there was a village referendum on the subject back in 2019. So that decision was completely public and is the epitome of local democracy in action.
- Second, the members of the core group consisted of two people who were democratically elected members of current KPC – again open and publicly democratic. The other two members of the core group were previously selected by KPC, as the democratic representatives of the village, to represent the village in MCNP. That was a KPC decision, reviewed and reappointed in May 2023 after public discussion in a public meeting in the normal way. So that too was completely open and democratic.
- The wider group was selected from former members of KPC or its planning subcommittee who have particular experience in planning matters from their involvement with KPC.
- Third, the whole purpose of *this* meeting is to start a process of public consultation. That is why we are here. And it is followed by the MCNP public consultation process, which will end in another public referendum.

So, to summarise, a public group made of democratically selected volunteers is presenting a proposal for the purpose of entering it into a public consultation, with a final public referendum. That is not ‘not transparent’. [Applause]

David Richardson

If that is all from the PC so far, are you happy to go back to the floor?

Jean Conway

Yes, OK.

Andrew Russell also from Troy Lane

My question is – it seems to me there are these bigger villages, and they are targeted for proportionally a higher amount of houses, but what happens if permission is granted, then you get a bus and you get bigger drains, it’s like a snowball. So, when it comes round to the next round then they will say, ‘well they have more amenities, they are more sustainable’. Any of us that want to say that we want to stay as a quite small community, you’re not there Barry, which is worrying me.

1.15. **Barry Wood**

There is an element of truth in that, but it is not the absolute truth. Big villages in the LP, they are big villages so they should take more, they ought to. And then the development

industry picks on them and a good example is Chesterton. It has turned into more of a suburb. They were category A and one lot got through so there is an element of the next lot saying what was good enough for them is good enough for us. So, you are right in one way.

There is also an aspect of the sewers weren't good enough, so a developer says don't worry about that, I'll put in a new pipe, and the next one says, well you have not got a sewage problem because he put in a new pipe. So, you are right, there is this build on build on syndrome. But the downside to what I have just said is that, when you say you cannot come here because there are no sewers, the developer says 'I will put in a new sewer, but I cannot give you any affordable houses - I have got you over a barrel. What are you going to do now?'

Usually, we say we are not playing along with that game, that emotional blackmail. Then the developer rushes straight off to appeal because democracy ends at Cherwell and bureaucracy takes over. This stuff about what does the national planning framework say, what does your NP say, all of those things become building blocks on the legalistic side. But you are right if you are not careful.

Celia Hawksworth also Troy Lane

One of things that hasn't been mentioned, when we are talking about a sustainable community, buses and other amenities are important but the school is surely at the core of what it means to be a proper community otherwise we don't have young families. And so, when we say no growth, we have to be conscious that the school is struggling now.

But I wanted to say in response to the Chair's point, I thought that at the meeting in October where we were all invited to participate, and we all had the opportunity to participate, and I believe a large number of people did participate. It doesn't strike me that this process has been rushed. On the other hand, the fact that there is a bottom-up process that seems to me to be mightily desirable. So, thank you for all for all you have done. [Applause]

1.20. **Peter Kyte.**

I've been in this village for 10 years and very much enjoyed it. I'm less pleased by the horrible increase in the volume of traffic and I read the reports this morning, some of the matters that have been raised here are a bit complex. I think the report is a masterpiece.

The question I have is whether or not it is appropriate for the council to take the pulse of the congregation here to find out in general terms whether we are in favour, if it is in support of the recommendations of this report? I certainly am myself and I am not unique in that I have in no doubt.

David Richardson

Chair, do you want to respond to the question?

Jean Conway

No.

Peter Kyte

Are you ready to ask us whether we approve of the recommendations in this report or not?

Jean Conway

Well, I think that actually the village should be consulted. I don't think it's just down to the council to vote on it. I think you should be consulted.

Villager

Then why are we here, if not to be consulted? [Several indistinct voices]

1.12. Jean Conway

I think it was to share with you the assessors' work and then it was for the PC to vote on it. But I do think actually it is about the village voting on it. Not the PC. Because we are here to support you. That is our remit. It's not to do what we think necessarily.

Kay Chacksfield

You will get to vote – that is the referendum.

Villager

My understanding is we elected you. Can we ask you to Chair the meeting and take us back to the conversation, what we should be doing now; listening to you guys talking about the proposals.

Jean Conway

It doesn't actually say that on my agenda. It actually says questions from the floor. So, we're listening to you. That is what this meeting is really about to listen to you.

David Richardson

Any more questions from the floor then?

Jake Collinge

I am happy to ask a question if you will take questions from a non-villager. The question, if I may, is about some of the details of the report, particularly in respect of KT7, which is Jersey Cottages planning application history, which includes in 2015 an application which was objected to by CDC's conservation officer and national heritage bodies and a subsequent pre application inquiry that included KT8 as well was objected to by CDC's heritage officers and a current application, which is objected to by CDC's heritage officers and also national heritage bodies.

The recommendation you have in front of you is contingent upon the heritage concerns being addressed. There is quite clearly a track record of those heritage concerns not being addressed. So, in the event that they cannot be addressed and the caveat fulfilled, does one assume that it comes down to the other sites in the order that is being expressed today? And what is the confidence level of overcoming the heritage objections?

Villager

What is your role here?

Jake Collinge

I am acting for Corner Farm.

Villager

So, you are working for Corner Farm? You were asked to say who you are.

Jake Collinge

I've been to these meetings before. I think I am known. Yes, Corner Farm is my interest.

Jean Conway

Well, I think that is a good point actually.

Christine Marsh

Shall we respond? We did say we would not talk about planning applications. It will go to committee on 7th December and we can see the officer's recommendations a week beforehand. Is the applicant here? I don't wish to... Do you want me to talk on your behalf on heritage, or do you wish to defend on heritage?

Will Twiddy

Hello everyone, my name is Will Twiddy. I am the Agent for Jersey Cottages, KT7 and KT8. Just to confirm that Historic England have made no comment on the current planning application. But I defer to the Chair's wish that we do not discuss that.

1.26.29. David Richardson

Before any further questions, I'd appreciate saying if you have an external interest, and please be precise.

Dan Moore

My name is Dan Moore. I run Manorwood Homes and I have an interest in Corner Farm. I have two questions, maybe three actually. I just want to confirm that the site assessments team all actually walked over all of the sites and seen them on foot themselves?

My next question is in relation to the Strategic Environmental Assessment that you said aligns with the report. Mr Lipson, who is the Chairman of Mid Cherwell confirmed that no SEA assessment has been carried out and it will be carried out in the coming weeks. I have the evidence in an email. And Mr Lipson also confirmed that on your RAG scoring, any anomalies he found, they would be reassessed on that. Can you just confirm that the vote will be delayed following further assessment?

Jean Conway

Well, I think we need to understand whether there are any inconsistencies and whether there have been site visits. Briony, Kay, Helen and Christine were doing site visits, site assessments, so I have no idea if they walked round the sites or not.

Christine Marsh

We did. We did.

Dan Moore

You confirmed to me that you walked them from the public footpath. I want to know... If I was doing a site assessment, I would want to stand on the ground I was assessing. You are deciding the next hundred, two hundred years of the village but you haven't walked on the sites.

Kay Chacksfield

They were all visible from a road, a public footpath, or a bridleway.

Dan Moore

You have made lots of errors in your assessments.

Kay Chacksfield

In your opinion.

Dan Moore

Let me give you an example. KT7. We are here to...

1.28.48. Several villagers.

Please shut up and sit down. Sit down.

Villager

This is not a planning enquiry. This is the sort of detail that would be sent into a planning application enquiry, this is not the purpose of this meeting. This is simply to assess the sites. So, I would ask that we invite the council to vote according to the purpose of this meeting. [Applause]

Jean Conway

OK. Just a last bit of last-minute news that I have had today that Locality – who are the people who actually work with all the NPs. They have said to me that they are reviewing the MCNP, and the sites that have been put forward from Kirtlington are actually being reassessed, as we speak by AECOM.

Kay Chacksfield and Christine Marsh

That is the process. That is the next step in the process. What we have recommended goes forward and will be assessed by external assessors.

Several villagers

Can you vote please. Take a vote.

Kay Chacksfield

Sorry, for those that could not hear, that is the next step in the process, that what we have put forward will be assessed by external assessors. That is another layer of scrutiny.

Villager

Can we go to the vote now? Now I've been given the microphone, I would like to propose two things:

Firstly, that the PC calls for an indicative raising of hands in this room as to whether or not we support this proposal.

And, secondly, I would like the PC to take a vote and show us what they are thinking.

1.31.29. Villager

Hear! Hear! [Applause]

Jean Conway

OK. Can we have an indicative show of hands then please for voting for the recommendations of the PC?

1.31.50. Kay Chacksfield

An indicative show of hands, voting to support the proposals as available in the report on the web site and described tonight?

Jean Conway

We're voting for the recommendations of the PC in their order of ranking.

Dan Moore

Jean, this is only a small percentage of the people in the village.

David Richardson

This is possibly the highest turnout I have ever seen from the village.

Jean Conway

Can we have those who don't want to vote for it as well please, so we can see what show of hands there is for that.

David Richardson

At the start of this meeting there were four distinct proposals to be voted on.

1.33.47. Kay Chacksfield

- i. How many homes it would be reasonable to accommodate in Kirtlington? – the proposal is for 35 [Votes counted: For 25. Against 4]
- ii. To agree the recommended allocation of sites KT7 and 8, i.e., Jersey Cottages south and north [Votes counted: For 33. Against 3]
- iii. To agree that sites KT1, 2, 3 and 4 (Corner Farm east and west and Rye Furlong east and west) should not be recommended for allocation. [Votes counted: For / agreeing 33. Against 3]
- iv. And finally, whether or not to support the ranking of sites in the order: sites KT7, 8, 1, 2, 3, 4. [Votes counted: For 33. Against 2]

[Applause]

Jean Conway

Council vote then. Votes for?

Villager

That is for the whole thing?

1.36.45. Kay Chacksfield

We should do them separately.

- i. So, number of houses – the proposal is for 35
For 3. Jean, are you against?

Jean Conway

Yes. Against. I don't think we know yet the number we need.

Kay Chacksfield

- ii. Recommendation of sites KT7 and KT8, Jersey Cottages south and north.
For 3. Against 1

- iii. To agree *not* to put forward sites KT1, 2, 3, 4 for allocation.
For 3. Against 1

- iv. The ranking of sites in order: KT7, 8, 1, 2, 3, 4.
For 3. Against 1

[Applause]

1.37.56. Jean Conway

Thank you very much everybody for coming.