



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name and date of Committee	ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2019
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM No. 5
Subject	OXFORDSHIRE COTSWOLDS GARDEN VILLAGE PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION PAPER
Wards affected	All
Accountable members	Jeff Haine Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Strategic Housing and Planning jeff.haine@westoxon.gov.uk
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Summary/Purpose	To consider submitting a response on the Oxfordshire Garden Village Preferred Options Paper
Annexes	Annex 1 – Oxfordshire Garden Village Preferred Options Consultation Paper
Recommendation	That the Committee agrees a response to the above consultation.
Corporate priorities	To maintain and enhance West Oxfordshire as one of the best places to live, work and visit in Great Britain and to meet the current and future needs of residents.
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

I. BACKGROUND

- I.1. The Committee previously expressed a desire to consider this consultation, and the deadline for responses is 11 October 2019. A copy of the preferred options paper published for consultation is included at Annex I.
- I.2. Members will be aware that the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 allocates land to the north of the A40 near Eynsham for a new garden village of around 2,200 homes together with the provision of additional business land, a new park and ride site and other supporting infrastructure including education, transport, drainage and open space. The proposal also has government backing with the site being awarded garden village status in 2017.
- I.3. In accordance with the Local Plan, the development of the garden village will be led by an Area Action Plan (AAP) which, as a statutory planning document, must go through the same process as the Local Plan, including independent examination and once adopted will carry the same weight.
- I.4. As a first step in the AAP process, the Council published an initial 'issues paper' for consultation in summer 2018. The paper sought views on a broad range of issues and opportunities for the site and generated over 200 responses from a variety of individuals and organisations.
- I.5. Since then, Officers have been further analysing the responses received and have also commissioned a range of supporting technical evidence to help inform the AAP as it progresses. These include studies on landscape, heritage and green infrastructure, housing, ecology, employment, transport, infrastructure, flood risk and drainage.
- I.6. Officers have also sought to engage with the local community on an ongoing basis through the garden village community forum which has met a number of times including several study tours, most recently coming together as part of a broader 3-day design event held in May 2018.
- I.7. Alongside this process, the garden village site promoters – Grosvenor Developments – have themselves begun the process of working up a planning application and have met regularly with Officers to discuss progress. Their intention is to submit an outline planning application in early 2020.
- I.8. To further progress the AAP, Officers are undertaking a further period of informal public consultation, the purpose of which is to set out the current 'direction of travel' and preferred thinking in terms of how the garden village should be taken forward.
- I.9. Following this further period of informal consultation, Officers will look to take into account the responses received together with any further supporting evidence and feed those into a final 'pre-submission draft' AAP to be published for a statutory 6-week period of public consultation later in the year and submitted for independent examination thereafter.
- I.10. The AAP preferred options consultation paper is attached at Annex I and is divided into three main parts.
- I.11. **Part I** provides an introduction and relevant background information to set the proposals in context. It covers the purpose of the consultation and the role of the

AAP more generally, what a garden village is and how the site was identified together with information on the site itself in terms of where it is and what's already there.

I.12. It also highlights a number of key considerations for taking the site forward drawn from the previous consultation responses, the draft Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan and the Council's emerging technical evidence. These include:

- Traffic congestion including the A40 in particular;
- The relationship of the development to Eynsham and its potential impact e.g. infrastructure capacity;
- The importance of wildlife and plants including the need to safeguard the mature trees and hedgerows that characterise the site;
- The need to protect good quality agricultural land;
- The importance of providing green space including opportunities for growing food locally;
- Ensuring that development is not at risk of flooding and doesn't increase the risk of flooding elsewhere;
- The importance of climate change;
- Landscape and visual impact of development taking account of the topography of the site;
- The importance of safeguarding heritage assets;
- Housing affordability;
- The need for distinctive, high-quality design;
- The importance of social interaction and vibrancy;
- Community engagement, ownership and stewardship;
- The importance of considering the inter-relationship between the garden village and the West Eynsham SDA

I.13. **Part 2** sets out a draft vision for the garden village, supported by a number of draft objectives under seven core themes:

- 1) Building a strong, vibrant and sustainable community;
- 2) Healthy place shaping;
- 3) Protecting and enhancing environmental assets;
- 4) Meeting current and future housing needs;
- 5) Enterprise, innovation and productivity;
- 6) Transport, movement and connectivity; and
- 7) Climate change and resilience

I.14. These seven themes form the basis of Part 3 which sets out the overall strategy for the garden village site in the form of a series of proposed policy approaches on various topics such as housing mix, green space provision, health, active travel, infrastructure provision and long-term maintenance and stewardship.

- 1.15. Members will note that this includes a number of options regarding the spatial arrangement of different land uses across the garden village site. These have been drawn from the stakeholder design event that took place in May 2019.
- 1.16. The intention is that following consultation feedback the proposed policy approaches will be refined and worked up into draft policies and included in the final pre-submission draft AAP later in the year.
- 1.17. The Committee is invited to consider its response to the consultation.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. None

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1. Not applicable

5. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

- 5.1. The Committee may make such comments as it considers appropriate.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1. None