

## Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031

### Response to Consultation Representation by Sustainable Charlbury

We acknowledge the representation made on behalf of Sustainable Charlbury. We thank Sustainable Charlbury for their engagement with the Regulation 14 consultation process and for the matters raised which have been given careful consideration during the revision of the draft Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031, ahead of submission to West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC).

The comments made were welcomed and read with interest. In particular the comments assisted in making revisions to the plan to stress the importance of addressing the challenges of the declared climate emergency, the importance of environmental measures and the need to ensure sustainable development. Changes were made as appropriate throughout the plan to highlight the importance of these issues and to reflect the Town Council's declaration of a climate emergency.

Responses to specific comments and suggestions for revision are given below:

#### *Overview*

Vision Statement – this was amended to acknowledge Town Council's recent decision to declare a climate emergency.

#### *Housing*

The need for housing to meet the highest environmental standards is recognised and this should be considered in all planning applications. Policy NE9 has been strengthened in this regard in response to these and other comments. There is no intention that affordable housing has to be cheap to build but rather that they should be of high standard but at a price within the reach of those on average incomes.

#### *Introduction and Context*

It is now made clear that the imperative to tackle climate emergency should be addressed in all developments.

#### *The Town of Charlbury*

Appropriate reference to Southill Community Energy has now been added to this section. A new section 2.3 has also been added explaining the town council's declaration of a climate emergency and establishment of an Environment Working Group. This section also endorses the WODC commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030

#### *Section 3 Aims and Objectives*

The importance of limiting pollution and carbon emissions is covered in Aim 2 as is the promotion of safe cycling and walking. It is felt that Aim 3 adequately covers sustainable development.

### *Section 5 Housing*

The comments on the need for climate change considerations to be considered is noted and agreed but it is felt this is adequately covered in other sections of the plan.

### *Section 6 Economy movement and transport*

The need to minimise the use of cars around the town is recognised and the need to ensure safe walking and cycling routes into the Town Centre acknowledged. Consideration of transport-related and environmental concerns are already strongly addressed in this section. The new Community Aspiration 8 supports projects designed to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users and reflects recommendations from the separate Community Action Plan (CAP). Recommendations from the CAP have been incorporated into the Town Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which is included as Appendix B to the Neighbourhood Plan. The IDP is a "living" document for the Town Council indicating priorities for action and for the use of developer contributions from future developments. Items in the IDP will require further studies from which detailed proposals can emerge such as those mentioned in your comments. The provision of electric vehicle charging points is covered in Policy ECT12 and in the supporting information.

### *Section 7 Natural Environment and Green Space*

Considerable revision to this section has been made to address the climate emergency and other concerns raised. The need to mitigate the effects of climate change is a prime consideration and the importance of environmental protection in this is reflected throughout. In particular the importance of wildlife corridors in terms of biodiversity and blue/green infrastructure is highlighted in Policy NE6. Policy NE5 provides strong protection for biodiversity and trees. Policy NE8 deals with flood risk and has been strengthened to cover water quality issues. Policy NE9 has been strengthened with regard to environmental design standards within the constraints of compliance with national and local policy and it also now recognises the need for home to be made zero carbon.

### *Section 8 Historic Environment and Locally appropriate Design*

The comments made here seem to indicate a misunderstanding of this section. It looks to conserve or enhance the quality of the built environment and provides detailed design guidance in Appendix C of the plan. Its intention is to conserve the features which form the unique character of the town whilst recognising that it is a living working town. This should be recognised when considering all development proposals whether for new build or alterations to existing buildings. The guidance also makes clear distinctions between the various parts of the town. The detailed Charlbury Parish Character Assessment showed the heritage significance of many buildings and areas of the Town are recognised as important to many residents as explained in the introduction to this section. There is nothing to preclude improvements to energy efficiency but the design guidance requests that the advice of "Historic England" is followed for historic buildings.

### *Appendix C – Design Guidance*

This is felt to provide comprehensive guidance and sits alongside the West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016. Comments made on this are noted but it is felt that guidance is consistent with the rest of the plan and covers the need to preserve the character of the historic environment to be taken into account in alterations which may include improvements in energy efficiency. Changes have been included in the design guidance to recognise the climate emergency.

### *Appendix D – Proposed Local List*

Firstly, the figure of over 100 listed buildings included within the Overview relates to existing statutorily listed buildings and NOT to those proposed for the local list. Statutory listing is outside the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Secondly, local listing, which is recommended by national and local policies, does not impose planning restrictions, it merely flags up points of significance about a building to assist if a planning application is made. On the advice of WODC, all reference to the proposed Article 4 Direction, which would have sought to remove some permitted development rights, has now been removed from the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

Thirdly, full descriptions explaining the reasons behind local listing proposals and the criteria for these have now been provided in a new section D 3 of this appendix.