

The following is the response by Kidlington Parish Council to the draft local plan at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/12526/cherwell-local-plan-review-2040.pdf>

GENERAL

1. Kidlington's Public Realm requires re-shaping, adapting and investment in order to maintain its role locally. The redevelopment of Exeter Close will bring change to the urban centre of our village and we look forward to re-envisaging our public realm in the village centre in collaboration with CDC. It is imperative that developer funds relating to public realm and public art are spent in coordination with the Parish Council.
2. Climate Change and Sustainability are noted as strategic objectives in this local plan, but we would suggest that energy efficiency and individual decentralised energy generation (solar panels), especially on commercial buildings, should not just be promoted but should be an essential part of this plan.
3. Chapter 3 (Development in Cherwell) suggests that there is a will to strengthen Kidlington's role as a local service centre. This is generally welcomed: KPC are ready to engage with Cherwell on the redevelopment and re-shaping of our urban centre, ensuring the developer funds meet local needs and requirements and fit our local strategy.
4. **Core Policy 1** states that Oxfordshire needs a 5x increase in solar electricity generation. The base level is not clear, and it is therefore not clear what the envisaged increase should be and how it will be measured.
5. **Core Policy 2** proposes that non-residential developments over 1000m² should deliver zero and low carbon energy technologies on-site, however there is no reasoning given for this measure; it is an arbitrary figure. As Cherwell have acknowledged a climate crisis, all non-residential development should be expected to deliver these technologies. The feasibility clause allows for easy opt-out; it should be tightened and be non-negotiable.
6. **Core Policy 7:** Flooding is an issue locally; this has been exacerbated by development creep and lack of sewer capacity now resulting in surface-water and sewer-water flooding. KPC looks forward to having active engagement with the relevant statutory bodies associated with planning applications to ensure appropriate management and infrastructure provision.
7. **Core Policy 16:** Kidlington is within an AQMA (Air Quality Management Area) with nitrogen dioxide being a particular concern. This suggests that where significant development is proposed air quality assessment will be required: we would therefore request that all monitoring in the Kidlington area should be maintained and checked until all development is complete.
8. Connectivity between the villages is vital. As previously raised in the Masterplan SPD the proposed cycle link parallel to the canal will form an essential link between the villages and a north/south link from the Technology Park through the village and onto Stratfield Brake, connecting to Oxford Parkway. This will make both cycling and walking much safer and more appealing and will add to the quality of life within our village. This is also covered by Core Policy 47: Active Travel and should be supported through developer contributions, and Core Policy 60: The Oxford Canal, which suggests the canal corridor should be used as a green transport route. As the Parish Council plans to promote related uses of the Canal and accessible long-distance trails, we look forward to working with Cherwell and other bodies to bring the vision to reality.
9. KPC would welcome the opportunity to work collectively and actively alongside Cherwell planners to ensure that local connectivity is maintained throughout the villages. We continue to regard the Sandy

Lane link between our villages as indispensable to maintain connectivity between Kidlington, Yarnton and Begbroke.

10. **Development Policy 5: Hot Food Takeaways.** As Kidlington has a high level of childhood obesity, and the link with fast food is now well documented, it is our view that Local Plan planning policy should not permit change of use to sui generis hot food takeaways (formerly A5) within the village centre as designated in the Local Plan. This type of development causes significant harm to health.

QUESTION 19: Do you have comments on the *Housing and Economic Needs Assessment*?

1. We find the Scenario 3 basis of the housing needs calculation unconvincing: it is out of line with calculations of the other district councils, rests on debatable assumptions about growth, and does not take sufficient account of post-Covid work practices. There are not sufficiently strong reasons for departing from the government's standard method in order to produce substantially inflated estimates of housing need.
2. There are strong reasons for doubting Oxford's calculation of its unmet housing need, given that it is not based on the government's standard method and depends on questionable policy decisions about land use within the city boundaries. Cherwell should be challenging whether Oxford's estimate of its needs is sound, rather than accepting them as given.
3. On the supply side, the non-completion of the planned 3,000 houses in Bicester is too easily accepted and should not be taken as a given or as a reason for proposing new sites for development.
4. We understand that the expected over-delivery of 10% or more of the 4,400 Partial Review dwellings has not been included in the housing supply calculations. Allowance should be made for this in the calculation of net needs. At the very least it should be set against the possible under-delivery in Bicester.
5. There is certainly a need for more affordable and particularly social-rented housing to meet needs within Cherwell, but we contest the calculation of the need for market housing.

QUESTION 20: Do you have comments on our *emerging housing distribution*?

1. We strongly agree that Oxford's needs should not be ring-fenced.

QUESTION 23: What are your views on our *suggested policy for affordable housing*?

1. We do not comprehend the justification for a 30% affordable housing requirement, as against the current 50% for Oxford's unmet need and the proposed 40% within the Oxford Local Plan Draft. As far as we are concerned, the overwhelming need is for affordable housing. A 50% requirement ought to be the minimum across Cherwell, given the problem of high house prices in our area and the lack of provision of new affordable housing, especially social-rented housing. At the very least there should be a staggered increase to a higher proportion on the assumption that market conditions for developers improve.
2. We request that all affordable housing provision over the Partial Review 4,400 and any future allocations should be made available to local parishioners, and we call for nomination rights.
3. Within the affordable housing category, we believe social-rented housing should be maximized, in view of the very significant and quantifiable need.

QUESTION 24: *Would you support maximising the delivery of affordable housing, and in particular the delivery of more social rented housing, if sacrifices were made in respect of other requirements?*

1. Yes, but not at the cost of sustainability.

QUESTION 42: *What are your views on our aspirations for the Kidlington area?*

1. For the most part we strongly agree, with a number of important exceptions as detailed in our answers to other questions. It is vital that Cherwell works alongside KPC to ensure that local needs are understood.
2. The 2040 Plan should be supported by a Kidlington Masterplan/SPD attached to it, that will deal in detail with key local issues, notably village centre development and transport infrastructure. There is also need for a detailed Masterplan/SPD covering issues common to Kidlington and the three adjacent parishes of Yarnton, Begbroke and Gosford and Water Eaton, addressing in particular the problems resulting from an overall population increase of 50% (from 20k to 30k) resulting from the 4,400 Partial Review dwellings.
3. Development of a Neighbourhood Plan is a potential course the Parish Council will consider providing a strategy for the area and a greater level of control of future development.
4. Given the significant erosion of the Green Belt around Kidlington as a result of the 4,400 Partial Review dwellings, we think it important to retain what remains of the Green Belt ring around the village, as a fundamental part of its identity as well as a vital facility for recreation and well-being.

QUESTION 43: *Do you think these sites in the Kidlington area should be explored further for potential allocation for housing?*

1. Exceptional circumstances have not been demonstrated to justify further revisions/incursions of Green Belt land for residential development in Kidlington. A major revision was made for the Partial Review of the current Local Plan, where the new Green Belt boundaries established were expected to endure beyond the plan's lifetime.
2. There is strong opposition in the immediate locality to the proposed development off The Moors. The following are our reasons for objecting to this further incursion into the Kidlington Green Belt.
3. As far as the need for market housing is concerned, we do not accept the housing need and housing supply calculations on which this proposal is based (see above).
4. In the supply calculation, more account should be taken of the fact that the Partial Review's 4,400 minimum is currently expected to be exceeded by at least 10%. While only a small proportion of all these dwellings will be within Kidlington proper, they will increase very substantially the availability of market housing in our immediate area. We would also expect the affordable component of the excess to be allocated to local needs, not Oxford's.
5. More account should also be taken of the rapid pace of conversion of existing dwellings within Kidlington into multi-unit sites.
6. The Partial Review developments will also have a profound and wide-ranging impact on the Village through the resulting increase in the population of the adjacent parishes, whose joint population with Kidlington will rise by 50% from 20K to 30K. The resulting problems of congestion and pressure on infrastructure and services will be considerable, and will be compounded by the proposed stadium development. They should not be further compounded by still more development in the area.

7. As well as adding to general congestion, the proposed development north of The Moors would create an unacceptable level of traffic congestion in what has been, up to now, a quiet residential area.
8. The Partial Review developments will also remove a large area of Green Belt in and around Kidlington, including virtually all the green gap between Kidlington and Oxford which is fundamental to the village's identity. The surrounding Green Belt plays a large part in making Kidlington an attractive place for residents and visitors.
9. Recently the Parish Council strongly supported the proposal to designate the site of the proposed development north of The Moors as a Local Green Space. The arguments put forward for retaining this piece of Green Belt are as strong as ever, and we refer the District Council to them.
10. The Parish Council strongly supports the call for more provision of affordable and particularly social-rented housing in the area. However, the way to meet this is not to put a large amount of unneeded market housing on the Green Belt. We call on CDC to pursue other less damaging options.
11. The site South-East of Woodstock is not actually in Kidlington and does not affect us much directly, except that it would potentially add to an already unacceptable level of traffic congestion in the village, as a result of knock-on consequences for the A4260 from the A44.
12. An issue has been identified over the sub-division of existing dwellings, typically into flats, with a consequent detriment to the residential amenity of adjoining residential properties. Although the question does not deal with this, it is an issue that should be considered with a policy in the Local Plan (see Core Policy 41).
13. The Parish Council does not oppose the demolition of properties on large plots where a greater number of dwellings can be accommodated. However, the Parish Council would like to see greater planning control included to deal with the onward impact on the surrounding area and particularly the resulting impact of increasing parking problems.

QUESTION 44: Are there any alternative housing sites for the Kidlington area you wish to suggest?

1. We see considerable capacity for high-density mixed development in the village centre, including along the High Street and also Oxford Road, in tandem with the pedestrianisation and redevelopment of the village centre—all in addition to infill elsewhere. Flats could be built in place of the current Library Building (if the library is to move to Exeter Close) and the site immediately South of it, and houses in the disused care home at Glebe House.
2. Major brownfield sites that might become available in the future are the Thames Valley Police HQ and the BT phone exchange site off Yarnton Road, and the sorting office on Sterling Road Approach. The Skoda garage site could be all flats or mixed development. Future changes in government policy may also make the Home Office facility at Campsfield House available, though this should only be developed residentially if it can meet other sustainability objectives, especially in relation to other developments that may come forward for housing in that area.
3. The possibility of Rural Exception Sites specifically for social-rented accommodation needs of Kidlington residents should be further explored.

QUESTION 45: Do you agree with the employment sites we have selected at Kidlington to accommodate new employment development?

1. In general, we agree with the concentration of employment land along the Innovation Corridor (Langford Lane). If the Campsfield House site becomes available, it could be better served by mixed use.

QUESTION 46: Are there any alternative sites to accommodate housing and employment needs that you think are more suitable?

1. See Question 44 above.

QUESTION 47: Should this Plan adjust Green Belt boundaries in the Langford Lane area in response to recently developed land?

1. No objection.

QUESTION 48: Should land for employment use be identified at London Oxford Airport?

1. This should be addressed in the framework of a comprehensive planning brief for the area, to include eco/green issues.

QUESTION 49: Do you have any comments on the transport schemes proposed for the Kidlington area?

1. The draft is unduly optimistic about the impending transport problems for our area, with the 4,400 new homes in the pipeline plus the potential football stadium by the Kidlington roundabout. Further substantial measures of mitigation will be required.
2. Substantial improvements are needed in the bus services to and in the village, also for interconnectivity between Kidlington and the adjacent parishes, to create a user modal shift.
3. CDC and OCC should work in partnership with the Parish Council in order to establish suitable transport schemes for the area. Interconnectivity between the four adjacent parishes is vital, given the village's envisaged role as a Service Centre, and the Sandy Lane link is indispensable. We support the proposal for a road bridge for light traffic to replace the level crossing.
4. Prioritization of the A44 will not prevent additional congestion on the A4260. The planned improvements to the public realm through the centre of Kidlington (it is not clear what the "(d) above" refers to) need to be detailed in a Masterplan/SPD.

QUESTION 50: Are there any other areas of land that you think should be safeguarded for transport schemes in the Kidlington area?

1. Provision needs to be made for a canalside path for pedestrians and cyclists from Kidlington into Oxford. This will need to be parallel to and separate from the existing towpath.

QUESTION 51: Do you have any comments on the green and blue infrastructure proposed for the Kidlington area?

1. We would like to see more emphasis given to the scheme for a Green Ring of interconnected green spaces around Kidlington, for access and recreation, ecology and well-being. We will want to have a say in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan to which reference is made.

2. If the development north of The Moors is withdrawn, we would like to see the proposal to designate the site as a Local Green Space reassessed.
3. Improvements and enhancements to the Oxford Canal are much needed, including more ambitious canal-side leisure developments.

QUESTION 52: Do you have any views on the proposed changes to the village centre?

1. Kidlington is a prime economic asset and investment in the area should reflect this. Regeneration of our village centre is generally welcomed with public realm and pedestrianisation needing particular attention.
2. We would like to see more emphasis on the development of the west side of the Oxford Road, North of a new Exeter Close civic hub. The stretch of the Oxford Road in the centre, from Exeter Close to Benmead Road, should have more of a High Street character on both sides, including new mixed developments. The speed limit has recently been reduced to 20 mph on this stretch, and we would like to see further traffic-calming measures here, particularly a traffic platform.
3. The parade of shops with a layby on the east of the Oxford Road immediately south of the Red Lion is crying out for mixed redevelopment with associated landscaping and possibly bus stops to replace the car-parking. This should extend to the County Council library site if the library is moved across the road to a redeveloped Exeter Close, and the currently empty site immediately to the south of the library. All of this should be addressed in a revised Masterplan/SPD.
4. We are not arguing for more shops in the village centre, but for a planned and more visually attractive mix of housing, shops, cafes, restaurants and mixed development.

QUESTION 53: Do you have any views on the areas of change identified?

1. The village centre plan needs extending in the draft to take the above points into account.

QUESTION 54: Are there any other opportunity areas or sites that we should be including?

1. The backs of the shops and the adjacent lane on the north-west side of the High Street are an eyesore that detracts from the appearance of the Piazza and the general area. The lane needs to be upgraded to create parking provision at the back of the shops, replacing the parking spaces currently in front of them and thereby removing excess traffic from the pedestrianized part of the High Street. Consideration should also be given to extending the lane into an access road to take traffic directly from the Oxford/Banbury Road to the Piazza and the adjacent carparks.

Kidlington Parish Council

3 November 2023