

Proposed development of 450/500 homes at land east of Park View; Woodstock

Representation in respect of scoping for Environmental Impact Assessment from Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp Parish Council

Submitted on behalf of Ms Sarah Kearney, Parish Clerk
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Cherwell Local Plan Part 2 – Meeting Oxford’s Unmet Need Inspector’s comments on this site:

‘It is too far away from Oxford to make travelling into the city by means other than the private car sufficiently attractive ... Woodstock is well-defined. It’s further extension in a south easterly direction would appear incongruous and damage the character and appearance of the area’ (IR 54).

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Introduction

We will reserve our assessment of the planning policy implications for this until a planning application is received, but we note the Inspector's Report finding reproduced on our cover page in respect of the suitability of this location as a means of meeting Oxford's unmet housing need, and note that the applicant's scoping report explicitly states that the post construction impact on local employment will be 'small' (6.8). This means that there would be extensive out commuting.

The applicant's scoping report lists a series of potential areas for consideration: transport, water, waste, noise, and so on. It then provides a preliminary assessment over whether these features should be included within the scope of the EIA.

The site itself comprises 48.6 hectares, so the two options put forward are 450 houses plus school or 500 houses (unlikely as the capacity in local primary schools is limited). The density of housing proposed is notionally then 9.2 per hectare, which is extremely low. We question whether such a number would be the final outcome during the development phase, and whether to expect subsequent densification.

Study area

The 2km study area within the report includes the A4260/A4095 road junction but excludes Yarnton, Kidlington and the Northern Gateway area around Peartree. We view the incremental traffic impacts on these hotspots as being an essential element of the transport impact assessment.

Traffic

The applicant describes (6.8) 'the small number of jobs that will be created locally'. The assumption is therefore that the bulk of employment will be out commuting to Oxford and London. It is therefore important that the traffic impact, particularly the cumulative impact on the A4260 corridor and the A44 corridors is adequately assessed. Traffic from the Upper Heyford development should be taken into account in respect of the likely increase in traffic on the A4260 corridor to Oxford. The cumulative impact from Park View (300 homes) together with the new homes at Yarnton (1,950 and 540) should also be assessed for their impact on the A44 corridor at Loop Farm and Peartree roundabouts. We strongly suspect that journey times from the site into Oxford would be adversely impacted on both corridors, making it highly likely that rat-running through unsuitable routes (such as Straight Mile Road) would increase.

As stated above, we note that the Planning Inspector for the Cherwell Local Plan Part 2 – Meeting Oxford's unmet need, found that *'It is too far away from Oxford to make travelling*

into the city by means other than the private car sufficiently attractive ... Woodstock is well-defined. It's further extension in a south easterly direction would appear incongruous and damage the character and appearance of the area' (IR 54).

We would also welcome, either in the EIA or the TIA an assessment of the likely leisure and retail travel impacts. The nearest major supermarket is at Kidlington as is the nearest leisure centre (the seasonal open air pool at Woodstock is the only local public provision.) Traffic for leisure and retail purposes would likely to be diverted via the minor Straight Mile Road to Kidlington or via the A44.

The 'school run' is also likely to be complicated. The proposed route to Marlborough School is through the yet to be constructed Cowells Road, which links to Shipton Road at a sharp bend. Accessing Cowells Road, which is a quiet residential road within Park View would either necessitate unsuitable residential routes via Carter Crescent and Parsons Drive, or via the A44 turning right across peak hour traffic. We would like this to be properly assessed alongside the alternative route turning left onto the A4195 and turning left again onto Shipton Road.

The journey to the local rail station is, in our view, more likely to be to Oxford Parkway rather than to Hanborough as suggested by the applicant. Hanborough is less well served by trains, and direct public transport to Woostock is not great for London commuters (see Figure 1). The traffic impact must therefore be robust.

	Hanborough	Oxford Parkway
Distance from site entrance	2.6 miles	4.8 miles
Annual Season Ticket Cost to London	£5,932	£5,432
Monthly Season Ticket Cost to London	£569	£521.50
Number of trains to/from London 06.30-10.30 a.m. / 4.30-8 p.m.	6 (a.m. peak) 5 (p.m. peak)	10 (a.m. peak) 7 (p.m. peak)
Daily parking charge	£3.50	£2.00
Outward and return buses, first, last	06.45-19.42	06.27-19.18
Journey times (average)	64 minutes	69 minutes

Figure 1: comparison figures for Hanborough and Oxford Parkway stations

Noise

The scoping document mentions that noise from Oxford Airport is audible. However, the proximity to both fixed wing and helicopter flight paths and the impact of noise from those sources on the intended residents should be assessed.

Water

The report suggests that 'no significant effects are predicted on treatment capacity in the area' (16.9). However, the existing Thames Water treatment also involves a significant

number of discharges into the Thames near Oxford Meadows. We feel this assessment is optimistic and therefore needs further assessment.

Education

The statement that in the Marlborough Pupil Plan the school is 'investigating options to expand by 1 form entry' (6.4) is vague and unsatisfactory. The capacity should be adequately assessed as should routes to the school, given that there is a suggested reliance on a minor route through via Park View and Cowells Road to Shipton Road, which, in any case has limited road capacity (see traffic section).

Health

The increase in population of Woodstock would be significant. The current population of Woodstock is 3,100 (which excludes the yet to be completed Park View development). A development of this scale and on this level of housing density (i.e. predominantly large family homes) is likely to increase the local population by at least 1,500. We would want an assessment of the capacity of Woodstock surgery to incorporate this additional population and whether Woodstock would require a second surgery. The average patient to GP ratio is approximately 1 to 2,000.

Waste

The waste arrangements should be scoped within the EIA. This area is within Cherwell, but the main local recycling facilities are in West Oxfordshire and Oxford City. There would need to be agreed cross boundary arrangements such that Park View and Park View East had comparable levels of service.

Air quality and lighting

We would seek to include the construction traffic air quality to be assessed in respect of proximity to Park View, and a lighting assessment in respect of impact on the adjacent Green Belt.

Other

We would like to know how the site would be governed. It logically fits with Woodstock, though it is removed from it. It is an entirely new settlement that currently sits with Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp Parish. This is not ideal.

Andrew Hornsby-Smith for Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp Parish Council, January 2022