

What the people of Eynsham said about the (almost finished) Neighbourhood Plan

Analysis of comments by 88 respondents

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Where we are now

In November last year, the Eynsham Futures Steering Group held their last public consultation in the Village Hall for residents and people who work in Eynsham to shape the final Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan (ENP). We present here a brief description of how we gathered what you think, what you said and *what we did with it (presented in italics)*. As we write, the Steering Group is putting the finishing touches to the Plan and will submit it to West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) for approval. Hopefully, we won't need to make too many changes before we can send it to the Government Inspector for final approval. Then it will have a legal status and must be taken into account by the Local Authorities, i.e., WODC and Oxfordshire County Council when they make planning decisions that will affect Eynsham Parish. It must be said though that, in some cases, these authorities are allowed to rationalise why they can't meet a particular bit of our plan for a particular reason. However, in such cases, our plan at least gives us some purchase in the conversation with the planners.

Public consultation – November 19th 2016 (7.30-9.30pm)



Over Sixty people (see photos) attended this meeting in the village hall to examine and comment specifically on each of the 18 policies in the Plan. Posters of each policy and the reasons for it and the recommendations were set out on a number of conversation tables. Around the room on the walls, additional information was provided and Steering Group members and volunteers from GreenTEA were available to answer any queries and explain the site maps, for example. This time, people were invited to fill in a questionnaire for each policy (see [ENP polices.v1.3](#)) that they wished to comment on at the meeting (quiet tables were provided) or at home/online by the end of January 2017. Ninety-eight responses were received either on the paper or electronically on Eynsham Online website or on Eynsham Futures facebook on nearly everyone of the 18 policies in the plan, i.e., housing, design, community facilities and healthcare, green infrastructure, sustainability and climate change, education, transport, connected place, parking, economy, retail, local green spaces, trees, sustainable growth, village centre, development to the north, west and south industrial estate.



What people said

ENP1 – Housing

Overall, there were not many comments on ENP1 that would suggest that we have got this policy nearly right. Residents who did comment emphasised having a realistic vision for housing and the need for an extended range of housing. Their evidence strengthened the need to pay more attention to age demographic needs by expanding the types of housing mentioned. This would include a care home and sheltered housing. Other types of housing that should be promoted more strongly, given current demographic and housing situations are: single and group/community self-build which will also ensure a well-designed variety of homes, social housing for local people and; multiple occupancy, bedsits and houses for rent. One resident considered our energy policy already obsolete and not in keeping with international developments. More eco, self-builds and solar tiles were recommended to improve this weakness. Another resident was fearful that too many houses are proposed and that Eynsham is in danger of losing its village feel and becoming a town.



New development at Merton Close, Eynsham

We have always stressed the need for all types of housing in the various stages of the plan developed, but we have included more emphasis now on the types of houses mentioned by residents. We share the fear that there are too many houses proposed, but this is something the ENP has absolutely no control over. We have been at pains to point out the reasons why the 3,200 number accepted by WODC is disproportionate to the size of Eynsham and the view that the A40 will need a great deal more improvement than is

currently planned and funded.

ENP2 - Design

Developing a master plan for all proposed sites in Eynsham Parish was recommended. In relation to the Garden Village north of the A40 (see ENP16), a comment was made suggesting that a unified concept is required with a single architect design. A national competition to find an architect who can deliver an Ebenezer Howard-inspired Garden Village is suggested. The danger of urban sprawl is felt keenly by residents should two Garden Villages (to the north and the newly proposed site south of A40¹ at Barnard Gate) go ahead. They fear that this will open the door to continuous development in the future between the Oxford Green Belt and Witney.

A masterplan is required for any site allocated over 100 units where it is quite likely that the build will be undertaken by multiple contractors; smaller sites will be developed as one site anyway. These are technical issues which are statutory requirements and the ENP does not need to duplicate national requirements. A recommendation to encourage design quality and innovation and a competition for the design of the Garden Village north of the A40 has been added. Avoiding the danger of urban sprawl flows through the plan as we are trying to maintain the current compact design of Eynsham surrounded by green spaces and open access to the countryside on the west (i.e., no new road to cross when walking out along Chilbridge Lane or on the old railway line towards Twelve Acre Farm).

ENP3 - Community facilities and healthcare

Comments strengthen previous evidence from residents over the nearly two years of our community engagement. With the recent publication of the Draft WODC Local Plan, there is an even stronger feeling that “Eynsham's infrastructure will not cope” with the size of the developments proposed. Infrastructure mentioned includes local services, shops, businesses, schools, health centre, burial ground and activity spaces for young people.

Apart from activity spaces for teenagers which will be added, all these aspects of infrastructure are already throughout the ENP, but because people seemed to have missed it in the explicit ENP3 plans, we have created electronic links that take people to the relevant places, i.e. health (medical centre outposts ENP17), shops



Drawing by children at a community engagement event

¹ The new Barnard Gate Garden Village site is not in Eynsham Parish except to a small area on its eastern boundary. Thus, we are unable to include this site in our ENP.

(ie, small supermarket on west and enlarged Co-op in centre (ENP17), businesses (ENP18), burial ground (on west) (ENP17), museum provision (Village Improvements and pubs (ENP11), allotments (ENP 2,3,4,6 (Appendix A). Residents call also for proper evaluation of all infrastructure hard and green to provide these community facilities which is what we are doing

There is a call for “infrastructure before development” in all new development sites. There is a cynicism that sufficient infrastructure will be forthcoming for size of the WODC proposed developments. One resident cited the current problems that the Bicester Garden Village development is currently having getting promised infrastructure. For example, 1,000 of the 2000+ homes are already built and there are no additional medical facilities yet. This cynicism has created a call by residents for "Infrastructure first" and "no development without infrastructure".

We have attended to this call through out the policy document stating that necessary infrastructure has to be ready for residents when they move in. If, in very rare occasions, it cannot be ready, then provision has to made through temporary measures.

ENP4 – Green Infrastructure

Proper evaluation for green infrastructure was recommended.

This suggestion has been emphasised in the plan. Also, given that preservation of wildlife had not been given much prominence in the ENP and is only mentioned in relation to hedgerows, a new policy ‘Enhancing biodiversity’ has been included to pull together the hedgerows, the Eynsham swifts and the old railway line wildlife identified by residents. Recently we have become aware of the City Farm field studies by experienced botanists using a rigorous scientific protocol and recognised by Plantlife, a national and international organisation that works to protect the world's flora. City Farm has European recognition for arable wildflowers, so this land is very special and an increasing number of residents on facebook are urging us to protect it in the ENP. We have done this in ENP4a and in ENP16 by pointing out the biodiversity assets on the Garden Village (north) site.



Six Spot Burnett Moth on old railway line

ENP5 - Sustainability/Climate Change

Residents are clearly still very worried about flood risk. One comment concerns the underpass from the GV, it is pointed out that it could flood because the water table is so high in the winter here. Residents are also concerned about an increase in traffic pollution.

Concerns about flooding and traffic pollution (and what should be done about it) have been made much stronger in the plan by cross-referencing. It is clearly stated that measures should be taken to reduce traffic and noise pollution and improve air quality when the A40 development takes place. Surveys assessing potential rises in flooding and traffic pollution are carried out by Local Authorities, by law, before developments take place.

It is suggested that in consultation with the community and work with local partners, innovative integrated and de-centralised renewable energy (heat and power) schemes and community renewable installations are developed wherever possible.

This idea has been included in the Plan with a recognition that Eynsham's Transition Town Group, GreenTEA, has already collaborated with Low Carbon Hub, Oxford, in community energy generation in the village.

ENP6 - Education

There is a strengthening of previous evidence of community support for new primary schools and added provision for secondary school. One person suggests a new secondary school will be necessary for north and west development. Residents suggest that **interim plans** for school places should be made if the new schools are not ready in time for new residents. One person asks whether the Children's Centre, if it closes, will be used by the Primary school for additional accommodation. Adult learning and education for an increasingly aging population vocational skills and apprenticeships geared to support local businesses/enterprises.



Eynsham Primary School May Day Parade

This policy in relation to schools has been discussed with representatives of the Eynsham Partnership Academy who sit on the Eynsham Futures Steering Group. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) have a statutory duty to provide education and it is not in

the ENP remit to develop policy about education provision, but we can consider possible sites which we have done by suggesting a possible site for a small primary school on the west of Eynsham. We have recommended that opportunities for developing vocational skills and apprenticeships could be considered in existing premises and the new Science Park (if it goes ahead).

ENP7 – Sustainable Transport

Unsurprisingly, in the light of the recent Garden Village proposal north of the A40, there are a large number of comments on Transport, many featuring the A40. None of the respondents support the OCC's current proposal for the A40, rather they see it as “inadequate for resolving the currently unsustainable A40 transport difficulties”, as well as the huge increase in A40 use created by the West Oxfordshire Local Plan developments on the north and west of Eynsham and further west in West Oxfordshire. People are unconvinced that the proposed Park & Ride will solve the traffic problems (especially considering Witney and Carterton extensions). It is reported that people are now park and riding in Eynsham at the entrances to the A40 (near the bus stops). Some consider the buslane to be a ‘total waste of time and money’.



Congestion in the village centre

*The above has been included in a critique that summarises Eynsham's views on issues **not** within the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan.*

Residents are also concerned about increased congestion on village roads, due to the cumulative effect of the newly approved development sites in the village. Traffic within Eynsham is expected to increase due to the approved smaller sites within Eynsham. Traffic congestion on Witney Road and Acre End Streets was noted. There is very strong feeling that these developments will put an intolerable strain on Eynsham and on all those who use the A40, as well as increasing accident risk. The 20 mph speed limit in village is supported (*already in our Plan*). Access to the village for new development should ensure no increase in traffic going through the village.

These points have been acted on and additions made to the plan including the need for Traffic Assessments to take account of all developments approved (and not yet built), assessing the cumulative effect of all developments, rather than proposed developments in isolation, which happens as developments come forward at different times.

Residents have a number of ideas for reducing traffic in the village centre, including a Shuttle bus for Eynsham to P&R and Hanborough Station, B4044 car free route, bikes/walkers (already in the NP)/small buses provision, cycle track provision by widening roads where possible, a traffic free village centre and serious restriction on private car use. Also suggested are affordable public transport and North Oxford-bound buses along the A40 coming into the village to the many people work in the hospitals and Brookes but who won't/can't walk all the way to the A40. Several residents promoted the advantage of a western link road to keep traffic out of village and link to the underused industrial site. At the same time, one respondent thought, "This could be combined with keeping land south of Chilbrook open for walking. This link road would need a sensible speed limit and be would be noisy". Linked with the western link road is the idea that access to village should only be from connecting ring roads - which in turn connect with A roads.

These suggestions confirm much of what we have already in the ENP, but did result in a re-think of our suggestion not to complete the western road with the southern link road for the purpose of protecting walking south of the Chilbrook. It was concluded that having open access to the countryside on the west for the health and wellbeing of Eynsham people had to take precedence. Other measures have been recommended to reduce traffic in the village centre.

Residents ideas include a new bridge over Thames towards Oxford (aspirational)/Put a weight restriction on the Toll Bridge, crossing points over the Thames needed on other roads too. Dangers/risks of accident in village could be avoided by: adding bollards round the pavements at Harris's Corner, traffic lights by bus stop in Witney Road school crossing (also needs press button system) and resolving concerns about pedestrian safety in Church Street, as parked cars and Co-op delivery lorries leave no safe walkway on pavement, so people walk in middle of road. A resident living in Church Street proposes that there should be paving and marking the pedestrian area directly in front of houses to discourage parking.

Many residents consider that a transport system from Witney to Oxford has to be resolved before development on a large scale can take place. Innovative ideas for transport in GV include: tunnel and electric trains running from P&R to Hanborough Station, linking with Oxford Parkway. Line of tunnel above ground could become a biodiversity / landmark corridor to offset loss of habitat by development. A roof over P&R could be used for solar

panels. A number of residents support a WO transport policy based on tram and rail. There is support for dualling and diverting A40, although a few advise not dualling because it will encourage more cars on the road and we end up back in the same situation. One resident suggested that the A40 should be dual carriageway up to Wolvercote roundabout with motorway style interchange. Leaving the Toll Bridge as it is, was suggested to restrict traffic. Resident support for new development companies supporting transport infrastructure development.

Many of these suggestions are outside our remit to make policy on, but we have included some of them in the Public Realm village improvement part of the plan.

ENP8 - Connectivity

For good connectivity within the village, as well as with countryside and surrounding settlements, the problems with the A40 and village roads need to be addressed. The NP supports the idea of Eynsham being a cycling, walking village, with access to facilities and countryside, but residents feel that there are insufficient foot and cycle paths in Eynsham. To address the current and increased traffic congestion on Witney Road, bicycle tracks could be created by widening the road). The new developments were seen as a good opportunity to build cycles routes to Stanton Harcourt and the GV. More green spaces for walking and cycling close to village are also called for (ref to ENP12).

Perhaps residents missed the cycle path plans in ENP8, so these have been referenced elsewhere in the plan for emphasis.

ENP9 - Parking

Parking in the village is a hazard, especially in Acre End Street and at the Primary school parental drop off point. These should be addressed (see below). Resident suggestions: Create small village parking area for residents to rent out extra space, each family allocated 2 plus cars. This is to minimise cars parked on the street, by either visitors and commuters into Oxford. Spaces would be reserved. Many residents support parking restrictions in the village right now and they think they will be necessary even more with the new developments. They point out need to reduce park and riding near the A40 eg, in Old Witney and Cassington Roads. Additionally, a comment has been made with regards to school drop off and parking.

Residents-only and limited parking recommendations have been included in the plan. In addition, some of these ideas could be considered by the EPC for Public Realm (spaces) projects using funding provided by developers. Indicative projects are included as illustrations in the plan and would be subject to consultation with residents and businesses).

ENP 10 – Economy

People are asking, “Why new employment for people concerned with Oxford unmet need?” and “Why create new opportunities and then we need more houses to be built to accommodate workers? There is a view that the South-East has high employment already and other areas with low employment should be offered new opportunities.

It has been re-emphasised in the plan that the new employment opportunities are included to provide local employment for existing and new residents in Eynsham Parish in order to reduce commuting and road use.

ENP11 – Retail

Comments about retail referred to new retail in the Garden Village (north of A40) and the possible impact it might have on Eynsham's current retail. Residents advised no big supermarkets to be built in the Garden Village. Other views are that people are time short and won't go to two places, so if a big supermarket was built there, some people in Eynsham would go there to do all their shopping. One facebook respondent welcomes a supermarket



Eynsham's independent retailers here and overleaf



there and sees it as a new opportunity and not having to travel to Witney or Oxford.

There is a view that a retail park is unneeded as there are facilities in Witney and Botley. There is also a concern that "If the village doubles in size, we will become a target for a big supermarket. Shifting the A40 a bit north to make the existing A40 into a new high street has certain appeal, but I would hate to think that Eynsham ended up looking like Kidlington, Bicester ... centres."

*The ENP has already covered this eventuality in ENP11. The only thing that we need to look at again is that a large % of residents said they wanted retail outlets in the Garden Village "to provide semi-skilled work", but "retail outlets" (the wording in the questionnaire sent out last year) could be interpreted in different ways, so it is difficult to be clear whether 77% want huge retail sheds (as in Witney and Botley) or small shops or what? **We will pose a question on Eynsham Futures facebook page to ask people what they think.***



ENP 12 – Local Green Space

There was only one comment, "Keep rural feel, being able to go for a walk in countryside without using car for access". *This popular view has been voiced at every community engagement event and potential sites are included in the ENP.*

ENP13 - Trees

Trees along the A40, as well as a woodland belt to separate the Garden Village (to north)

from Eynsham are suggested. With regards to new development, street trees are a required feature. *This is already included in the ENP.*

ENP14 – Sustainable Growth

There are strong themes of preservation of our village feel and community, any archeological remains, e.g., around Tar's Grave as well as, "Infrastructure first" which resonate with earlier evidence from residents. In addition a view was expressed that 'the scale of developments proposed in and around Eynsham are totally disproportionate to the size of the existing settlements and with proposals for the rest of West Oxon', but there is agreement in the data that a larger Garden Village (north) to limit the western integrated extension of Eynsham is a good option.



Local Green Space: Old railway line to the west of Eynsham

These themes are incorporated into the ENP. The disproportionate scale of houses proposed by WODC's Local Plan has been noted in the ENP although it is not within our remit to propose a more suitable number.

Residents suggested that alternative sites for large development should be explored in Oxford and West Oxfordshire and that brownfield sites should take more precedence. Residents think that the Science Park would be best built on the Southern Industrial Estate and not north of the A40 on land that should be left as natural countryside. Also, one resident asks, 'Is there any reason the GV has to be north of Eynsham? If it is to be self-sufficient, is there any reason why it cannot be built either further east or west along the A40?' Another stated, 'Landscape and countryside to the North is much more appealing than the flat featureless plains of the Thames Valley to west. Destroying countryside to the North would be mindless vandalism when there are much better opportunities to the west'. Other suggested alternative sites are: houses for Oxford City between Botley and Farmoor to save cars going over Toll Bridge; WODC to buy the two farms for sale on the A40 nearing Witney - one with the flyover would enable cars to go both ways and; Oxford City should take full responsibility for their housing requirements and use brown field sites in the City. Perhaps the policy should state that WODC should continue seeking alternative sites in case their preferred site does not cut the mustard.

Suggesting alternative sites is outside the ENP remit.

ENP15 – Village Centre

There is one view that the walking distances that older people can manage is over-estimated because it doesn't take into account having to carry heavy shopping items. School children will have friends at each end of village and that is too long for them to walk.

ENP states that homes specifically for this group should be within this shortened distance from the shops and that seating along footpaths should be provided for people to rest on. New paths will also be wide enough and safe for motorised buggy use.

ENP16 – Development to the North

A range of views is expressed here, but mostly in favour of the Garden Village (GV). Comments state that it needs to be separate from Eynsham, in terms of own infrastructure, as well as location. People consider that it is too close to Eynsham and are very concerned that it will feel 'tacked on'. They want the GV to be entirely separate from Eynsham and all surrounding villages by, for example, a woodland belt. They see this as one of the requirements of a GV. Moreover, ensuring a GV ethos and community engagement/governance in its development is recommended.



Site of the Garden Village north of A40

Many residents suggest that the GV needs to take all proposed development for Eynsham, i.e., excluding further integrated expansion to the west. Given that 'affordable housing' in Oxfordshire and Eynsham is well beyond the reach of local young people, residents want social housing for local people in the GV, as well as genuinely affordable housing for anyone who chooses to buy here. Finally, confusion/surprise was also expressed, in relation to the possibility that both north and west GVs might be developed.

The GV is also seen as a good opportunity for a high standard development, in addition to bringing its own infrastructure, but it is suggested that the total housing number should be limited. The need for some of the houses to be for Eynsham people is made. Residents agree that links from the GV to Eynsham should only be made by pedestrian/cycle crossings and no road bridges.

Adherence to genuine GV principles has been included in the ENP to ensure a high standard of design. This includes involving current residents on the GV site, as well as those of Eynsham in developing and implementing WODC and OCC plans. Regarding sites, residents' preference for all new development to go in the GV (north), rather than 1,000 houses in an integrated western extension of Eynsham strengthens the ENP proposal for all new houses to go in the north and keep the west in reserve. This is not an option relished by a current resident who lives on the GV site and we would suspect any others who also live there who would be much more affected by this development than Eynsham residents. As Neighbourhood Plans have no jurisdiction over the actual choice of sites or number of houses, they can express where they would like houses to be built, as we have done, based on our own judgement and that of the majority of residents in the Parish. This is a very painful decision to make, but it seems better to at least have some say in development to the north of our Parish than have no say at all. Every attempt at ensuring that the biodiversity and heritage gains on this site are preserved to lessen the negative impact on development of this most beautiful and cherished countryside in our Parish.

In relation to the possibility of north and/or west GVs, the ENP notes that where a GV might be located will be made entirely by WODC when their planners have considered the merits and disadvantages of both sites.

In relation to the proposed Science Park, in the earlier survey data, 69% of residents considered that it was acceptable, but contrasting views are now emerging. There is a

concern that no evidence has been presented to support another science park. One resident stated 'I think it is quite difficult to get the critical mass of businesses for a science park and suspect that the ones in and around Oxford already aren't actually full! I'd want to see a lot more thought and research go into this before anyone commits to trashing a lovely bit of countryside'. Another considered that if a clear identified need was eventually demonstrated, a more appropriate site would be the 'underused, existing industrial site to the south of the village'.

Other concerns are summarised by one resident, 'Surely the GV is supposed to be being built to meet Oxford City's unmet housing need, so you would expect the majority of people should be working in Oxford. A science park will only create more jobs and lead to increased housing need. Plus more building on green field land.' Another view is that people coming to live in the GV because they have a job in the Science Park would push the price of 'so-called' affordable housing up in the GV. A more positive view was that a science park would provide 'jobs for today's youngsters', but only if the GV offered 'proper affordable housing' and the A40 was sorted out. Considering two interpretations that residents might be making of what the GV is intended by WODC to be, a resident responded, "I agree [that the Science Park will provide employment for the people who come to live in the GV], but from what I can gather, most people are assuming [an overspill estate for people who all work, but can't afford to live, in Oxford, rather than another village with a good mix of ages and skills and local employment, much like Eynsham]. This is not because they agree with an overspill estate, but because West Oxfordshire are proposing that the new developments are designed to meet "Oxford's unmet need'.

There is a division in the views of members of the Steering Group on this issue, but it is a fact that a Science Park on the scale envisaged by WODC would not fit into the vacant space on the Southern Industrial Estate. Should the WODC plans be scaled down, perhaps because of the post-Brexit era, then a more modest Science development could be supported on Eynsham's existing brownfield site. In this case, countryside adjacent to the A40 could be preserved to provide greater separation between the two communities

Should a GV not go ahead to the north, the ENP suggested northern shift of the A40 was welcomed by respondents who strongly state that the A40 must be sorted out first.

ENP17 – Development to the West

Largely, development to the west of Eynsham is not favoured, but if it happens, residents prefer that land south of Chilbridge Road stay open for walking and recreational use because Eynsham has no park or green spaces. It is also the only route out of Eynsham that connects directly with the countryside without a busy road barrier and which helps Eynsham to retain its rural feel. Residents recognise the tension between wanting to keep the fields south of the Chilbridge Road undeveloped, at the same time as seeing the



Field path south of Chilbridge Road (above) and the bridleway -Chilbridge Road below



value of a western link road (which would create a busy road barrier) to the Industrial Estate to keep traffic out of the village. If western development does ahead, then residents consider that it should be integrated with Eynsham. However, there is one strong comment, made before the announcement of a second GV proposal that favours west over north. This resident prefers a separate GV on the 'flat featureless plains of Thames Valley' over the 'more appealing landscape' of the development site proposed to the north. Destroying countryside to the North would be 'mindless vandalism' when there are much better opportunities further west.



We have taken all these viewpoints into account and have recommended, if development on the

west goes ahead, that development North of the Chil brook only is Eynsham's preferred option. This decision means loss of the western link road indicated in the Local Plan, but we have argued in ENP7 above why we think this compromise is best for Eynsham.

ENP18 – Development to the South

A resident wanting evidence of the need for a Science Park at Eynsham, suggests that if that evidence becomes available, then the brownfield site in the underused existing industrial site to the south of the village is more suitable.

See our conclusion about this issue in ENP16 above.

Evaluation of our community engagement

Our community engagement started by enabling people to participate in the origin and creation of the plan. As it evolved, we moved also into consultative mode to get feedback on what we had put together and then fed in any new ideas from the community back into the emerging plan. Throughout these processes, we have received very positive feedback from Eynsham residents and those who work in the village about the way this engagement has been conducted. Many have been impressed with the varied ways in which EFSG ensured they had 'their say' that contributed to growing the NP. People expressed thanks at meetings, workshops, in emails and on facebook, for example, "Thanks for all your hard

work” (May 10th, 2016), “It was an excellent meeting - thank you so much” and “I've got full trust in your guidance “ (Oct 6th 2016). One resident said, ‘Eynsham Futures has worked tirelessly over many months and has been highly consultative and collaborative in its work on the Neighbourhood Plan ensuring that the proposals were explained.’

At our last Public Consultation, 39 people filled in an evaluation of Eynsham Futures over the life of the plan development. The majority (35) felt that EFSG kept them adequately informed during the process, 24 agreed that EFSG had come to conclusions they agreed with and 27 felt EFSG had represented them adequately during the process. Only 4 felt that WODC had treated Eynsham fairly (27 felt that it had not). Twenty-seven thought that WODC had dumped all its problems on Eynsham, whilst 9 did not. The majority (29) considered that EFSG should take a more robust response to WODC plans, 29 agreed and 2 disagreed. The majority (24) wanted EFSG to ‘express the views of the village’. One resident informed WODC that ‘because our neighbourhood plan recognised the need for housing to meet local need we are now regarded as a soft touch’. This view has also been expressed at our public meetings since the announcement of the GV, including the advice of one resident that EFSG will have to put ‘as much pressure as possible for WODC to take the NP into account in considering all planning applications’. Another advised that a robust response with best legal advice should be supported and sought from residents. Finally, another resident answered, ‘I don’t know’, to all the evaluation questions because ‘I find it all too overwhelming’. This too has been a general theme about the WODC Local Plan for some residents at these latest public meetings.

How the ENP and the Local Plan relate

EFSG has worked hard on showing the community how the ENP and the Local Plan relate to each other legally and the limitations in our development of policies about development sites and transport (legal responsibilities of WODC and OCC respectively). We have also made clear at meetings, in Eynsham Online and News and facebook, that the GV proposal had been developed without our knowledge and that we had no input into the Expression of Interest. At this point, we were in danger of losing some residents’ trust and the development of a cynical attitude towards us, as well as towards local authorities and Government. However, Eynsham residents have demonstrated, on the whole, a very clear and reasoned understanding of the local, regional and national issues and have made many very sensible recommendations relevant to the wider context beyond the scope of the NP. Their critique of Eynsham within the wider context has been included in the NP Introduction.

[If you want find your comments, and what others said, look at the detailed analysis here](#)