



EYNESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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West Oxfordshire District Council

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15 March 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

Statement to WODC Cabinet 16 March 2022 on West Eynsham Masterplan

Eynsham Parish Council (EPC) requests the Cabinet **reject** the proposed Masterplan for West Eynsham and instead give the community the opportunity to comment on the Masterplan to allow a revised version to be brought forward.

We are dismayed at the very short time to consider the Masterplan when published, giving residents little time to contact their elected representatives nor for EPC to fully consider the document.

We believe the document is flawed for a number of reasons:-

1. The Sustainability Charter in the document is particularly weak and does not address the Climate and Ecological Emergency. It makes absolutely no sense for the properties constructed before 2025 perhaps up to 25%, to be fitted with gas boilers that will need to be scheduled for retrofit. The developers have at least a moral duty to meet the 'Future Home Standard'¹ from the very first build to spare those initial purchasers future retrofit liabilities. We would encourage the developers to work with Eynsham's innovative energy project 'Smart and Fair Futures'² which could benefit the scheme.
2. The document is weak on biodiversity net gain and only 'seeks' a net gain. The Masterplan should show better integration with the local community by committing to work with Eynsham's Nature Recovery Network (NRN)³ to achieve at least a 10% increase in biodiversity net gain in line with the Environment Act (2021).

If the local community did have a chance to comment on a draft of the Masterplan before it was published, it would also have also made the following points:-

¹ MHCLG (2021) *Rigorous new targets for green building revolution*. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/rigorous-new-targets-for-green-building-revolution> (Accessed 15.03.2022).

² Local Energy Oxfordshire (undated) *Eynsham Smart and Fair Futures: Smart and Fair Neighbourhood Trial*. Available at: <https://project-leo.co.uk/case-studies/eynsham-smart-and-fair-futures/#:~:text=The%20Eynsham%20Smart%20and%20Fair%20Futures%20project%20aims,to%20create%20an%20Eynsham%20Area%20Energy%20Action%20Plan.>

(Accessed 15.03.2022).

³ Nature Recovery Network (undated) *Welcome to the Nature Recovery Network's website*. Available at: <https://www.nature-recovery-network.org/welcome/> (Accessed 15.03.2022).

3. Access to the development site via Eynsham Village and Thornbury Green is unacceptable and throws into question the whole phasing section of the plan which is lacking in detail on how infrastructure (which is the collective responsibility of all developers) will be built. Access via Thornbury Green will be unsafe due to the size of the vehicles required to be used and in such close proximity to Bartholomew School. The Council fully supports Oxfordshire County Council's comments in this respect.
4. The majority of local infrastructure will not be delivered until phase 5, leaving the new community without access to utilities and putting undue pressure on existing facilities. This and point 5 below, are examples of poor place-shaping and design.
5. The Community Centre is in the wrong place and should be co-located with the site of the primary school. The current plan appears to suit developer needs rather than the strategic solution of a one-stop centre for the West Eynsham community.
6. We would have liked the plan to consider options for a Burial Ground in West Eynsham rather than the longer wait for this to happen in the Garden Village. There are currently only 18 burial plots remaining in the churchyard.
7. There is no explicit commitment to 5% custom and self build.
8. Appendix 1 S106 agreements is weak and has no indicative figures for the sums available, only percentages. There is little strategic planning on show here. Eynsham Parish Council has not been consulted on this or the 'Eynsham Area Infrastructure Delivery Plan' (May 2019) document and therefore Appendix A does not provide a full account of requirements.
9. The plan is silent on how the sewage system will cope with an additional 1000 homes. A cumulative assessment of flood risk and drainage is required for all of the development impacts in Eynsham.

This Masterplan could be so much better if Eynsham Parish Council had been allowed to engage more fully along with its stakeholders such as EPIC, Green TEA and NRN. We lament the lost opportunity. The Council remains concerned that West Eynsham will be the 'poorer cousin' to Salt Cross Garden Village.

Finally, it should be born in mind this Masterplan will set a benchmark and precedent for other Strategic Development Areas in West Oxfordshire. It is therefore imperative that it is fit-for-purpose at the outset which regrettably, it is currently not.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Katherine Doughty
Clerk to the Council