Neighbourhood Plan

The Hearing on the focussed examination of the NP was held virtually on May 19th, 2020. The result of that hearing and the examiner’s report was published on June 8th, 2020. This document can be found on the CDC website under Neighbourhood Plans and on the PC website. The Examiner has recommended that Policy E1 which states “Development should provide a positive contribution to the locally distinctive character of WOTG and conserve the setting of the village”. The statement by the NP about how this would be delivered supports the creation of new areas of open space, to preserve the rural feel of the village, preservation of important views, achieve a biodiversity net gain for the parish and implement a policy which delivers this. Resisting development along the B430 is also a key element of maintaining a ‘locally distinctive character”. However, the examiner did not accept (and the PC agreed) that re-allocating the schoolfield to a “potential grassland habitat” was acceptable.

We have been contacted by the Policy Lead at CDC and informed that they would accept this examination decision and are proceeding with a recommendation to the Executive Committee of Cherwell District Council on July 6th, 2020 that this NP now be accepted. If agreed, the status of the Plan will be a serious consideration in planning decisions that affect the parish. Sadly, due to Covid19 elections and referenda are put off until May 2021. Hence the central government has made it clear that Neighbourhood Plan’s ‘in waiting’ will be important considerations.

The recommendations of the Examiner are acceptable to the Schoolfield Group, WF2.

There is some immediate work to do in relation to protecting the field as much as possible. We are advised to apply to have the field designated as a Local Green Space or possibly a non-designated Heritage Asset and to include this is a future review of the plan. This will happen sooner that expected as Cherwell’s Local Plan Review will be in place in 2022.

There is work to be done to create a 2- 4 year plan for implementing aspects of the NP once accepted in referendum. This should be in process during the current year.

There is also a piece of work to be done to revitalise the NP in the eyes of the village and to introduce it to those new to the village. This work should be done soon so that layers of info can occur during the current year.

DBohm July 2020