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# **Report on Cassington Neighbourhood Development Plan 2021- 2041**

**An Examination undertaken for West Oxfordshire District Council with the support of Cassington Parish Council on the September 2022 submission version of the Plan.**

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## **Main Findings - Executive Summary**

From my examination of the Cassington Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan/CNP) and its supporting documentation including the representations made, I have concluded that subject to the policy modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- The Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body: Cassington Parish Council;
- The Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – the Designated Area as identified on Plan A on page 9;
- The Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect – 2021 – 2041; and
- The policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

I have considered whether the referendum area should extend beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates and have concluded that it should not.

## **1. Introduction and Background**

### *Cassington Neighbourhood Plan 2021—2041*

- 1.1 The Parish of Cassington lies to the north-west of Oxford and lies entirely within the green belt. The southern boundary of the Parish follows the River Thames and much of the land around the village is arable in nature. Much of the land between the village and the river is particularly important for its biodiversity value. There are approximately 300 households in the Parish and they have local access to a range of facilities, including a Primary School, the Village Hall, the Parish Church, recreational areas, allotment gardens and two public houses.
- 1.2 I saw on my visit that there has been relatively recent development and infilling in the village, for example along Eynsham Road. Nevertheless, the core of the village (which is designated a conservation area) retains an attractive character.
- 1.3 The Consultation Statement (June 2022) confirms that the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan commenced in November 2020, with the first significant announcement being in April 2021 when residents were informed about the process via an article in the Cassington and Worton News. Questionnaires were distributed, workshops were arranged, and surveys were undertaken.

### *The Independent Examiner*

- 1.4 As the Plan has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed as the examiner of the CNP by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC), with the agreement of the Cassington Parish Council (CPC).
- 1.5 I am a chartered town planner and former government Planning Inspector, with extensive experience in the preparation, examination and implementation of development plans and other planning policy documents. I am an independent examiner, and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the draft Plan.

### *The Scope of the Examination*

- 1.6 As the independent examiner I am required to produce this report and recommend either:
- (a) that the neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum without changes; or
  - (b) that modifications are made and that the modified neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum; or
  - (c) that the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to a referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.
- 1.7 The scope of the examination is set out in Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) ('the 1990 Act'). The examiner must consider:
- Whether the plan meets the Basic Conditions;
  - Whether the plan complies with provisions under s.38A and s.38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ('the 2004 Act'). These are:
    - it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the local planning authority;
    - it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land;
    - it specifies the period during which it has effect;
    - it does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development'; and
    - it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area.
  - Whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the plan proceed to referendum.

- Such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)('the 2012 Regulations').
- 1.8 I have considered only matters that fall within Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act, with one exception. That is the requirement that the Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention.

### *The Basic Conditions*

- 1.9 The 'Basic Conditions' are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the neighbourhood plan must:
- Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
  - Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
  - Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area;
  - Be compatible with and not breach European Union (EU) obligations (under retained EU law)<sup>1</sup>; and
  - Meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.
- 1.10 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.<sup>2</sup>

## **2. Approach to the Examination**

### *Planning Policy Context*

- 2.1 The Development Plan for this part of West Oxfordshire District Council, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, is the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031. Work has commenced on a revised Local Plan with consultation having taken place between August and October 2022 seeking early views on potential 'areas of focus' for the new Local Plan. It is anticipated by the Council that the revised Local Plan will be adopted during 2024. I note that work had

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<sup>1</sup> The existing body of environmental regulation is retained in UK law.

<sup>2</sup> This revised Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.

started on an Oxfordshire-wide Local Plan but that this process has been abandoned.

- 2.2 Planning policy for England is set out principally, although not exclusively, in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) offers guidance on how this policy should be implemented. All references in this report are to the July 2021 NPPF and the accompanying PPG.

### *Submitted Documents*

- 2.3 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents I consider relevant to the examination, including those submitted which comprise:
- the submission draft of the Cassington Neighbourhood Plan (dated September 2022);
  - the Map on page 9 of the Plan which identifies the area to which the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan relates;
  - the Consultation Statement, dated June 2022;
  - the Basic Conditions Statement, dated July 2022;
  - all the representations that have been made in accordance with the Regulation 16 consultation;
  - the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report prepared by enfusion on behalf of West Oxfordshire District Council (November 2021); and
  - the clarifications received from CPC and WODC (6 January 2023) to my correspondence (15 November 2022).<sup>3</sup>

### *Site Visit*

- 2.4 I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 29 November 2022 to familiarise myself with the locality, and visit relevant sites and areas referenced in the Plan and evidential documents.

### *Written Representations with or without Public Hearing*

- 2.5 This examination has been dealt with by written representations. I considered hearing sessions to be unnecessary as the consultation responses clearly articulated the objections to the Plan and presented arguments for and against the Plan's suitability to proceed to a referendum.

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<sup>3</sup> View at: <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/cassington-neighbourhood-plan/>

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## *Modifications*

- 2.6 Where necessary, I have recommended modifications to the Plan (**PMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. For ease of reference, I have listed these modifications separately in the Appendix.

## **3. Procedural Compliance and Human Rights**

### *Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area*

- 3.1 The CNP has been prepared and submitted for examination by CPC as the qualifying body for an area that was originally designated by WODC in December 2020.
- 3.2 It is the only Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish and does not relate to land outside the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

### *Plan Period*

- 3.3 The Plan specifies (on the front cover) the period to which it is to take effect, which is from 2021 to 2041<sup>4</sup>. However, in the interests of accuracy the correct end-date of 2041 (not 2040) should be referred to in paragraph 1.2 (**PM1**).

### *Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation*

- 3.4 The Consultation Statement summarises the approach to consultation undertaken by the Parish Council. Following the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee in 2020, a Planning Consultancy was appointed to oversee the consultation process. Work was undertaken on both the CNP and a Green Infrastructure Plan. Questionnaires were sent out; workshops were held; surveys were undertaken; appropriate articles were included in the Cassington and Worton News; regular steering group meetings were held; and full use was made of a range of social media channels.
- 3.5 I am able to conclude that opportunities to contribute towards the preparation of the CNP have been available to all interested parties at the relevant stages, including at both the Regulation 14 stage (10 January 2022 – 28 February 2022) and the Regulation 16 stage (20 September 2022 – 1 November 2022). I also consider that, overall, the approach towards the preparation of the CNP has been conducted in a fair and inclusive manner, especially bearing in mind the limitations imposed by the Covid pandemic.

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<sup>4</sup> See response from the Parish Council to my question 1 for CPC.



### *Development and Use of Land*

3.6 The Plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with s.38A of the 2004 Act.

### *Excluded Development*

3.7 The Plan does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development'.

### *Human Rights*

3.8 I have seen no evidence that the Plan breaches Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998), and it is not a matter that has been raised by any of the respondents. From my own independent assessment, I am satisfied that the CNP is compliant in this regard.

## **4. Compliance with the Basic Conditions**

### *EU Obligations*

4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan was screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment (November 2021) and subject to consultation with the statutory environmental bodies (Natural England, Historic England and Environmental Agency) as set out in section 7.0 of the Screening Report.<sup>5</sup> The conclusion reached was that the CNP does not require a full SEA or HRA to be undertaken. Having read the document, I support this conclusion.

### *Main Issues*

4.2 I have approached the assessment of compliance with the Basic Conditions of the Cassington Neighbourhood Plan as two main matters:

- General issues of compliance of the Plan, as a whole; and
- Specific issues of compliance of the Plan policies.

### *General Issues of Compliance of the Plan*

### [National Policy, Sustainable Development and the Development Plan](#)

4.3 There are six chapters in the CNP, which are Introduction and Background; The Neighbourhood Area; Planning Policy Context;

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<sup>5</sup> Cassington Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) 2031: Pre-Submission Draft (October 2021) Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report. View at: [SEA HRA Screening Report Cassington Neighbourhood Plan \(westoxon.gov.uk\)](https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/SEA-HRA-Screening-Report-Cassington-Neighbourhood-Plan)

Community Views on Planning Issues; Vision, Objectives and Land Use Policies; and Implementation. There are also three Appendices – The Cassington Green Infrastructure Plan; the Cassington Design Code; and Zero Carbon Buildings. These provide valuable background information and advice.

4.4 It is clear to me that WODC and CPC have co-operated in the preparation of the CNP and subject to the detailed comments that I set out below, I conclude that the CNP has had proper regard to national policy and guidance. I also conclude that subject to the recommendations that I make:

- the CNP is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Development Plan for the area, and that overall, the document provides an appropriate framework that will enable Cassington to grow as a community whilst ensuring that the rural character of the village will be retained and enhanced; and
- that the policies, as modified, are supported by appropriate evidence, are sufficiently clear and unambiguous and that they can be applied with confidence (PPG Reference ID: 41-041-20140306).

### *Specific Issues of Compliance of the Plan's Policies*

#### [Introduction and Background \(page 6\)](#)

4.5 The Introduction succinctly explains the purpose of the CNP and introduces the reader to the Levelling-up white paper. This would benefit from a factual update to refer to the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill and the proposed reforms to national planning policy (published December 2022)<sup>6</sup>, which may be undertaken as a minor non-material modification (see paragraph 4.36 below). It also confirms that no SEA or HRA are required.

#### [The Neighbourhood Area \(page 10\)](#)

4.6 Chapter 2 describes the characteristics of the Parish, making reference to, for example, demographic statistics, the history of the village, employment opportunities, biodiversity, flood risk and transport. It provides an appropriate background to the policies that follow.

#### [Planning Policy Context \(page 17\)](#)

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<sup>6</sup> Progress on the consideration of the Bill can be viewed on the UK Parliament website: [Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#) View the proposed planning policy reforms at: [Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- 4.7 This section of the CNP summarises National and Strategic Planning Policy and includes paragraphs on Neighbourhood Planning Policy and the Cassington Conservation Area.
- 4.8 The words 'defaults' and 'defaulting' are used in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6 (first and fourth points). This is in relation to potential development in the Green Belt. I agree with the District Council<sup>7</sup> that these words imply that other Local Plan policies may be set aside. I therefore recommend modifications to the second sentence of paragraph 3.5 and the first and fourth bullet points in paragraph 3.6 (**PM2** and **PM3**).
- 4.9 I agree with the Parish Council that the list of Local Plan policies in paragraph 3.6 should include policy OS3 and I recommend accordingly in **PM4**.
- 4.10 Paragraphs 3.10 to 3.12 relate to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. I am advised by WODC that work on that Plan has been abandoned. I therefore recommend in **PM5**, the deletion of paragraphs 3.10 to 3.12 and the insertion of revised text.
- 4.11 Paragraphs 3.13 to 3.15 refer to the Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan and the Cassington Conservation Area and provide useful background information.

#### [Community Views on Planning Issues \(page 24\)](#)

- 4.12 Chapter 4 summarises the consultation undertaken and in particular the response from local residents to the questionnaire that was circulated.

#### [Vision, Objectives and Land Use Policies \(page 26\)](#)

- 4.13 The Vision summarises the aspirations of the community and sets out four consequential Objectives. WODC (Regulation 16 response) suggests that reference should be made to climate change and biodiversity. I agree that this would accord with national advice and therefore recommend in **PM6** that the Vision is modified accordingly. Consequentially it is also recommended that the first Objective be modified (**PM7**).

#### [Policy CAS1: Cassington Nature Recovery Network \(page 28\)](#)

- 4.14 The identification of the draft Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network (Plan E on page 30) is a key component in the identification of important areas for biodiversity throughout the County, including the identification of links between those areas. Although the Network currently has no formal status, I am satisfied that the evidence on which it is based is appropriate and justified and that it will contribute significantly to achieving climate change mitigation and to the health and well-being of the local community.

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<sup>7</sup> See Regulation 16 response.

- 4.15 Policy CAS1, clearly and concisely, establishes how proposed development must contribute towards maintaining and improving the functionality of the Network.
- 4.16 Oxfordshire County Council<sup>8</sup> request that St Peters School playing field and surrounding land be removed from the policy CAS1 designation, primarily because the designation may hinder the County Council in securing planning permission for future expansion of the school facilities. However, both WODC and CPC have concluded that the policy would not present a significant constraint to any potential expansion of the school and its facilities<sup>9</sup> and I agree. I have been given a copy of the Phase 1 Habitat Survey for the Primary School site (dated Spring 2022) which concludes that the site is 'relatively biodiverse'. I have seen no evidence to the contrary. However, the policy does not 'prevent' development per se, but rather it seeks to ensure that any development maintains and improves the functionality of the Network. Should a development proposal undermine the integrity of the Network, this could be overcome if suitable alternative provision is forthcoming.
- 4.17 I conclude that policy CAS1 will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and meets all the other Basic Conditions.

#### [Policy CAS2: Active Travel \(page 31\)](#)

- 4.18 The Active and Sustainable Travel Network is identified on the plans on pages 49 and 50 of the CNP. Policy CAS2 seeks the retention and improvement of these routes. I am satisfied that the approach being taken by the Parish Council accords with the advice in chapter 9 of the NPPF on 'Promoting Sustainable Transport'. However, in the interests of clarity for the decision maker, the wording should be strengthened by the use of the word 'will' rather than 'should' (**PM8**).
- 4.19 Similarly it should be made clear that improvements to the Network will be supported and therefore **PM9** is recommended. In this way, Policy CAS2, as modified, will meet all the Basic Conditions.

#### [Policy CAS3: Dark Skies \(page 32\)](#)

- 4.20 Policy CAS3 seeks to ensure that light pollution is minimised. Whilst the essence of the policy is appropriate, I consider that it is too onerous to expect all development proposals to accord with the policy. I therefore recommend the modification of the first sentence of clause A of the policy (**PM10**). As modified, the approach being taken by CPC accords with the advice in the PPG Light Pollution and meets all the other Basic Conditions.

#### [Policies CAS4: Cassington Conservation Area \(page 33\), CAS5: Design Code for Cassington Village \(page 33\), and CAS6: Locally Listed Buildings \(page 34\)](#)

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<sup>8</sup> Regulation 16 consultation response.

<sup>9</sup> See response to my Question 2.

- 4.21 I saw on my visit that Cassington displays a number of very attractive features, in particular within the Cassington Conservation Area. Policy CAS4 seeks to protect and enhance the character of the conservation area.<sup>10</sup> More detail about the expectations of the Parish Council, with regard to design and appearance, are included within the Design Code for the village, which is addressed in policy CAS5 (and appended to the CNP as Appendix B). However, I consider that a stronger explanation for including the Code as an Appendix to the CNP is required and therefore I recommend **PM11**.
- 4.22 The Design Code (dated July 2022) clearly establishes the expectations of the Parish Council with regard to design and is based on a clear analysis of the character of the village and its setting.
- 4.23 Three structures, which I saw on my visit, are identified in policy CAS6 for local listing: The Bell; Manor Farmhouse; and various drystone walls. I consider all of them are of significant value to the character of the village. However, greater clarity is required to enable a decision maker to be confident in interpreting the policy. Therefore, I recommend in **PM12**, a modification to policy CAS6, including the inclusion of a new requirement B with regard to retaining the significance of the identified locally listed buildings.
- 4.24 I am satisfied that all three policies (as modified) are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan for the area and meet the other Basic Conditions.

#### [CAS7: Local Services and Community Facilities \(page 35\)](#)

- 4.25 Policy CAS7 identifies a number of community facilities which the Parish Council is keen to protect. There is, however, a level of flexibility in the policy should a partial change of use of a facility be required to secure its longer term viability. I consider that the policy would benefit from greater clarity and strengthening of its intent and therefore I recommend **PM13** and **PM14**. In that way the approach encapsulated in policy CAS7 will be in general conformity with the policies of the Development Plan and meet the other Basic Conditions.

#### [CAS8: Zero Carbon Building \(page 37\)](#)

- 4.26 Policy CAS8 appears to me to be relatively complex, although I note that it is intended to be 'a temporary measure' which will be superseded by policies in the forthcoming Local Plan Review.
- 4.27 The implementation of higher energy efficiency standards is a key environmental objective and I consider that the approach being taken by CPC accords in general with the advice in the PPG on Renewable and low carbon energy.

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<sup>10</sup> See the Cassington Conservation Area Appraisal (2007).

- 4.28 Paragraph 5.25 includes a requirement for an applicant to provide evidence regarding the design methodology used. I agree with the District Council that this lacks clarity and therefore recommend, in **PM15**, modifications to the text.
- 4.29 Paragraph 5.32 refers to high land values in the Cassington area but I was not provided with any substantive evidence that this is the case and therefore recommend the deletion of the last sentence in paragraph 5.32 (**PM16**).

[CAS9: Infill Residential Development \(page 41\) and CAS10: Affordable Housing \(page 42\)](#)

- 4.30 WODC, in its Regulation 16 response, expresses the concern that the wording in the CNP implies that Cassington does not have a role to play in meeting West Oxfordshire's overall housing requirement. The District Council suggests the amalgamation of policies CAS9 and CAS10 and consequent modifications to the supporting text. The Parish Council confirms that it largely accepts the revised wording for the policy and text.<sup>11</sup> I agree that the suggested text provides greater clarity on the issue of providing more homes and affordable housing and therefore recommend that both the policies and the text are modified as set out in **PM17** and **PM18**.
- 4.31 Policy CAS9, as modified, succinctly establishes the Parish Council's approach to residential development and affordable housing provision and meets the Basic Conditions.

[Implementation \(page 44\)](#)

- 4.32 Chapter 6 explains the Parish Council's approach to development management, sets out a list of potential infrastructure improvements and addresses a number of non-planning issues. However, there is no reference to the monitoring and review of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is an important component in the plan-making process, in order to ascertain whether or not the policies are effective and therefore I recommend the insertion of additional text in paragraph 6.1 (**PM19**) which summarises the Parish Council's approach to monitoring.
- 4.33 With regard to the list of potential infrastructure improvements, in paragraph 6.4, I consider that the wording should be clarified for the benefit of the decision-maker and therefore recommend **PM20**.

[Other Matters](#)

- 4.34 Thames Water, in its Regulation 16 response, suggested a number of modifications to the CNP, including a new policy on water efficiency.

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<sup>11</sup> See response to my Question 13 to the Parish Council.

However, I am satisfied that WOLP policy OS3 addresses the concerns expressed and agree with both the District and Parish Councils that no specific policy in the CNP is required.

- 4.35 Churchfields Care Home seek to secure the relaxation of the policies that apply to its site in Cassington in order that the facilities that it provides can be increased, primarily through the erection of an accommodation block and a two storey extension. However, I agree with the District and Parish Councils that there is currently insufficient justification for including a site specific policy in the CNP. I consider this to be an issue that may more appropriately be considered as part of the forthcoming Local Plan review.

### *Minor Amendments*

- 4.36 Amendments to the text can be made consequential to the recommended modifications, alongside any other minor non-material changes, up-dates, or corrections in agreement between the Parish and District Councils (PPG Reference ID:41-106-20190509). I note for example suggestions for the inclusion of footnotes, rectifying an administrative error (see page 2 of CPC response to my questions) and potential up-dates regarding the preparation timetable for other planning documents relevant to the Parish.<sup>12</sup> These can all be addressed by CPC as non-material changes. Although it is not a modification that is required to meet the Basic Conditions, CPC may wish to make it clearer which Objective(s) (as set out on page 26) each policy is intended to achieve.

## **5. Conclusions**

### *Summary*

- 5.1 The Cassington Neighbourhood Plan has been duly prepared in compliance with the procedural requirements. My examination has investigated whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements for neighbourhood plans. I have had regard for all the responses made following consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, and the evidence documents submitted with it.
- 5.2 I have made recommendations to modify a number of policies and text to ensure the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum.

### *The Referendum and its Area*

- 5.3 I have considered whether or not the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates, and I conclude that the Cassington Neighbourhood Plan (as modified) has no policy or proposals which I consider significant enough to have an impact beyond

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<sup>12</sup> See also paragraph 4.5 above.

the designated Neighbourhood Plan boundary, requiring the referendum to extend to areas beyond that boundary. I recommend that the boundary for the purposes of any future referendum on the Plan should be the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

### *Overview*

- 5.4 Cassington is an attractive small village which sits within a primarily agricultural setting and it is clear that local residents value the character of the locality and the amenities that the village provides. Significant effort has been invested in the preparation of the CNP and there is no reason to doubt that the community's Vision for the Parish, of sustainable growth within the constraints of the Green Belt, will be achieved.

*David Hogger*

Examiner



## Appendix: Modifications (20)

Note: Additions are shown in **bold** and deletions denoted with ~~strikethrough~~.

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no. / other reference	Modification
PM1	Page 6 Paragraph 1.2	Delete: 2040 Insert: <b>2041</b>
PM2	Page 17 Paragraph 3.5	Modify second sentence to read: The WOLP 2031 makes no development allocations in The Parish and <del>defaults to National Planning Policy provisions on the Green Belt for managing development proposals</del> <b>expects development proposals to have regard to relevant Green Belt policy as set out in the NPPF.</b>
PM3	Pages 18 and 19 Paragraph 3.6	Delete the word <del>default</del> in the first bullet point and <del>defaulting</del> in the fourth bullet point and replace it in both instances with: <b>having regard.</b>
PM4	Page 18 Paragraph 3.6	Insert new bullet point: <b>Policy OS3 Prudent Use of Natural Resources – which includes the requirement for new development to achieve optional building regulations requirement for water efficiency of 100 litres/person/day. Thames Water has confirmed that this can only be achieved using the ‘Fittings Approach’. The ‘Calculation Method’ will therefore not be appropriate as it fails to meet the intended water performance levels.</b>
PM5	Page 22 Paragraphs 3.10 to 3.12	Delete all of paragraphs 3.10, 3.11 and 3.12 and replace with:

		<b>West Oxfordshire Council has committed to a review of the Local Plan with the new plan being adopted in 2024 and covering the period up to 2041. The Parish Council will therefore commit to an early review of the CNP should it be necessary to bring the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan up-to-date with those in the forthcoming Local Plan.</b>
PM6	Page 26 Vision	Modify the last sentence of the Vision to read:  Whilst change in the wider area has been significant, it has provided opportunity for improved connectivity of the multi-functional green infrastructure network of the Parish; <b>the enhancement of biodiversity; and the mitigation of climate change.</b>
PM7	Page 26 Objectives	Modify the first Objective to read:  To protect and improve the ecological <b>multi-functional</b> value and connectivity of the green infrastructure assets of the village and wider Parish <b>for nature recovery and mitigating the effects of climate change.</b>
PM8	Page 31 Policy CAS2	Modify start of second sentence of C to read:  Proposals that fragment the routes <del>should</del> <b>will</b> be resisted .....
PM9	Page 31 Policy CAS2	Add a new requirement D to read:  <b>Development proposals that would make an appropriate contribution to the improvement and/or extension of the network will be supported.</b>
PM10	Page 32 Policy CAS3	Modify the first sentence of requirement A to read:

		All development proposals <b>Development proposals that require the installation of external lighting</b> should be designed to minimise the occurrence of light pollution.
PM11	Page 33 Paragraph 5.15	Delete the last sentence of paragraph 5.15: <del>The content of the Code forms part of the policy but has been attached as an Appendix purely for practical presentational reasons.</del> And replace it with: <b>The Code is an integral part of the policy and is extensive in setting out the positive characteristics of the conservation area and in distinguishing the different character areas of the Parish. It is therefore published as an Appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan. The Code has been prepared and consulted on as part of this Plan preparation and it is an important component in the decision making process.</b>
PM12	Page 34 Policy CAS6	Modify sub-section A to read: <del>In addition to the locally listed building identified in the Cassington Conservation Area Appraisal, the</del> <b>The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following buildings and structures, as shown on the policies map, as locally listed buildings by way of their local architectural or historic interest.</b> <b>This is in addition to those identified in the Cassington Conservation Area Appraisal.</b> <del>for the application of WOLP policy EH9 Historic Environment:</del> Add new sub-section B to read: <b>The effect which development proposals would have on the</b>

		<b>significance of an identified Locally Listed Building should be taken into account in determining planning applications. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets (which includes locally listed buildings), a balanced judgement will be taken having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset and the public benefits of the development as referred to in WOLP policy EH9 (Historic Environment).</b>
PM13	Page 35 Policy CAS7	Modify criterion B to read:  Development proposals which would affect the use of the identified community facilities in the policy, <b>or which would significantly undermine their quality,</b> will be determined against resisted <b>unless suitable alternative provision is made.</b> <del>T</del> he provisions of Policies E5 (Local Services and Community Facilities) and EH5 (Sport, recreation and children's play) of the WOLP <b>will continue to apply.</b>
PM14	Page 35 Policy CAS7	Modify criterion C to read:  Proposals to change the use of part of a community, open space, sport or recreation facility that is surplus to requirements will be <del>supported</del> <b>resisted unless</b> where it can be clearly evidenced that they <b>proposal</b> will not undermine the overall viability and importance of the community open space, sport or recreation facility concerned.
PM15	Page 38 Paragraph 5.25	Replace last sentence of paragraph 5.25 as follows:  <del>This means that the applicant must demonstrate those factors that make its</del>

		<p><del>use unfeasible, for example, the topography and orientation of the site.</del></p> <p><b>It is acknowledged that it may not be feasible to do so on some sites, for practical or cost reasons, and if that is the case it should be fully explained in the planning application.</b></p>
PM16	Page 40 Paragraph 5.32	<p>Delete the last sentence of paragraph 5.32:</p> <p><del>Land values in the Cassington area are high relative to build costs and ought to be sufficient to ensure requirements to tackle improving energy and carbon performance are viable.</del></p>
PM17	Pages 41 and 42 Policy CAS9 and Policy CAS10	<p>Modify the policy title to read:</p> <p><b><del>Infill Residential Development</del> Providing New Homes</b></p> <p>Delete <u>all</u> of policies CAS9 and CAS10 and replace them with a 'new' policy CAS9:</p> <p><b>In accordance with policy OS2 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan, support will be given to appropriate limited housing development which respects the character and local distinctiveness of Cassington and which would help to maintain the vitality of the village.</b></p> <p><b>Given the location of Cassington, within the Oxford Green Belt, and in accordance with national policy and policy OS2 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan, unless there are very special circumstances, residential development in the Parish will comprise the following:</b></p> <p><b>a) limited infilling in the village;</b></p> <p><b>b) limited affordable housing for local community needs;</b></p>

		<p><b>c) the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, provided it would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development or cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need.</b></p> <p><b>In respect of criteria a) above, 'limited infill development' will be classed as development on sites which form a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage provided that gap does not comprise an important visual feature.</b></p> <p><b>In respect of criterion b) above, 'limited affordable housing for local community needs' is taken to mean that affordable housing which is necessary to meet a locally identified need for new affordable homes. Any such proposals must be located on previously developed or undeveloped land, either within or adjoining the built up area. This Plan supports the delivery of up to 10 affordable homes in this context over the plan period, unless there is clear evidence of additional locally identified need that would support additional affordable homes.</b></p> <p><b>Any new affordable homes proposed beyond the built up area of Cassington will be classed as 'Rural Exception Sites' and therefore will be subject to the relevant considerations of policy H3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and national policy set out in the NPPF.</b></p>
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PM18	<p>Pages 41, 42 and 43</p> <p>Un-numbered paragraph below policy CAS9 and paragraphs 5.33 – 5.39</p>	<p>Delete <u>all</u> of the supporting text on pages 41, 42 and 43 and replace the text with:</p> <p><b>5.33 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan identifies an overall housing requirement of at least 15,950 homes in the period 2011 – 2031. Cassington is located within the Eynsham – Woodstock sub-area which is anticipated will accommodate 5,596 new homes. The majority of these new homes will be provided through strategic allocations at Eynsham, as well as at other allocated sites at Woodstock, Long Hanborough and Stanton Harcourt.</b></p> <p><b>5.34 In addition to these housing allocations, the Local Plan anticipates around 289 new homes coming forward from unallocated windfall sites across the sub-area in the period 2017-2031. Cassington is defined as a village in West Oxfordshire’s settlement hierarchy and is washed over by the Oxford Green Belt. Therefore, in addition to meeting the relevant criterion of</b></p>

		<p><b>Local Plan policies OS2 and H2 and to be in accordance with national policy (NPPF paragraph 149), any such windfall housing provision will need to meet an identified local affordable housing need and will need to comprise:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>limited infilling</b></li> <li>• <b>limited affordable housing for local community needs; or</b></li> <li>• <b>the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land provided the proposed development would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development and not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>5.35 The policy establishes the goal of delivering affordable homes to meet local needs. In January 2021, the Housing Needs Survey commissioned by the Parish Council identified a need for approximately 10 affordable homes. It is acknowledged that additional land may be needed to deliver affordable homes and that this may be outside the built-up area of Cassington. The Survey identified a greater need for social or affordable rented accommodation and therefore the policy reflects that finding.</b></p>
PM19	Page 44 Paragraph 6.1	<p>Modify chapter heading to read: <b>IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING</b></p> <p>Add a second sentence to paragraph 6.1 to read: <b>The Parish Council will endeavour to monitor the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood</b></p>



		<b>Plan, in line with best practice. It will look to review the Plan on a five yearly cycle so that its contents remain valid and up-to-date.</b>
PM20	Page 44 Paragraph 6.4	<p>Modify the first sentence in paragraph 6.4 to read:</p> <p>Although the scale of development likely to be consented in the Parish during the plan period is likely to be very limited, there may be opportunities <del>through S106 agreements (or through the Community Infrastructure Levy)</del> to secure financial contributions to invest in improving local infrastructure. <b>Where contributions to community infrastructure are required, they will be made through Section 106 Agreements and/or, (if it is introduced during the currency of this Plan) the Community Infrastructure levy.</b></p>