

**West Oxfordshire District Council**  
**Draft Core Strategy**  
**Summary of responses from residents outside the Carterton area**  
**(Witney, Chipping Norton, Eynsham, Woodstock and elsewhere)**

There were responses from 66 people plus 3 local organisations (Transition Eynsham, Witney Allotments Association and Woodford Mill Residents Association). Of these 33 were from Witney (including Ducklington and Curbridge), 9 from Eynsham, 7 from Chipping Norton, 2 from Long Hanborough, 1 each from Woodstock, Bampton, Church Hanborough, Hailey, Leafield, Middle Barton and Stonesfield (the remainder of responses did not contain a specific address).

**Witney**

- Witney's growth should happen sooner, rather than later in order to boost the local economy. Making land available for development might help stabilise house prices.
- The Woodford Mill Residents' Association describe the Core Strategy as a most impressive document and support the approach for Witney
- No more development until transport infrastructure is in place and local jobs. Further growth will affect the quality of life of existing residents
- Object to western expansion of Witney
- Object to the Cogges Link Road (5 responses) – ineffective; environmental impacts; increase flood risk; waste of money; increase congestion on Station Lane; loss of green space
- Support Cogges Link Road (5 responses) – it is a necessity; if landscaped/managed appropriately could enhance ecology of area
- What happens if Cogges Link Road does not go ahead?
- Favour junction improvement at Shores Green
- Need Shores Green as well as Cogges Link Road
- Support West End Link Road
- West End Link Road should be built before Cogges Link Road to allow the introduction of a gyratory system
- Object to proposed West End Link Road – impact on River Windrush, the water meadows and environment in general, inadequate assessment of flood risk, a major engineering project, impact on biodiversity, visual, historic character of town and residential amenity.
- Development at North Witney should be considered in order to provide West End Link Road, address surface water issues and eliminate need for Cogges Link Road. Also closer to town centre than western site so less dependency on car use and less of a need to duplicate facilities
- Development at North Witney does not provide homes for locals.
- Important to keep the town and surrounding villages separate and prevent urban sprawl – this should be confirmed in policy.
- Need to address existing drainage problems in Eastfield Road/Hailey Road
- Important that infrastructure requirements keep pace with development and that the historic and commercial role of Witney is not prejudiced. Need to provide local employment (to prevent commuting) and additional leisure and medical facilities.

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- Car parking must be free to keep Witney's shops viable
- Much more parking facilities needed in the town centre
- Town and town centre should remain distinctive – avoid 'clone town'. Important to keep independent shops
- Huge need for affordable homes in Witney for couples on an average income
- Money from affordable housing at Downs Road should be invested in West Witney Sports Ground to make it one of the top sporting arena in the area
- As West Witney develops should have an increase in bus service to Carterton and Witney town centre – not simply a diversion of existing service away from Minster Lovell and Curbridge
- Bus services for surrounding villages needs to be extended and improved
- Object to housing next to A40, west of Witney, because of traffic noise and quality of life
- Concerns about possible rat-running through Curbridge, including development traffic associated with West Witney, and the future of land between the village and the A40
- Waiting list for allotments is now about 3 years (Witney Allotment Association). With further growth of town, demand will increase. Support Core Strategy's recognition of wide ranging role of allotments. Important that suitable land is designated for allotments at West Witney and then implemented
- Can railway be reinstated? Perhaps with a branch line to RAF Brize Norton?

**Chipping Norton**

- Core Strategy represents a potentially serious threat to the future viability and vitality of Chipping Norton. Need to plan for at least 800 new dwellings, with the comprehensive development of a string of sites around the eastern edge of the town, along with the creation of an improved road, cycle and pedestrian network.
- Unclear practical proposals for retail and business development in the town. Will not address vulnerability of commercial and social infrastructure, nor deliver housing type and tenure to meet the community's need. No assessment given of town's resilience to climate change, potential for renewable energy generation and green infrastructure
- Chipping Norton should be developed as a working Cotswold town, rather than a heritage piece
- The tourism role of the town should be supported
- 400 new homes is not enough
- Welcome the thrust of the proposals for the town, especially the reduction in the number of new homes to be built. Fear that town could become a commuter community
- A proposal for 400 new homes in the town is excessive, especially all the extra traffic generated
- Town will benefit from quality private housing, rather than affordable and/or smaller dwellings which will unbalance the community and make it less attractive
- More affordable housing is needed for locals
- Homes needed for young people and families

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- No more retirement housing needed – current provision more than adequate
- Main need is for more employment opportunities locally, including cheap offices for start-up companies. Sufficient employment land needs to be protected and new sites allocated to support the needs of existing and new businesses
- Need to include provision of fibre-optic cable broadband access
- Heavy vehicle movements through town of great concern. Large lorries should be banned; town centre is an accident blackspot; high pollution levels/poor air quality; CO2 emissions
- Measures to alleviate traffic movements have had implications on other settlements, including Burford
- A proper A44 bypass is needed
- Expensive and limited public transport means a high reliance on cars for those living in the villages surrounding Chipping Norton in order to get into the town.
- Need to improve cyclist facilities and bus service frequency
- Substantial additional free parking facilities needed
- Retailing should be in town centre and not on the edge of Chipping Norton in order to maintain and improve the viability of the existing range of both national and independent stores. The town has a special retail status – Core Strategy underplays this
- The town has too many tourist shops. Small shops selling local produce should be encouraged
- A high quality scheme is required for the old hospital, ambulance and care home site, and adjoining public house, retaining original old buildings.

**Eynsham**

- Land west of Fruitlands should not be allocated (7 responses). An important area of open space/ green infrastructure, with amenity and wildlife value, contributing to the countryside setting, set precedent for further large scale development in area (*Officer comment - the developer JA Pye has carried out separate consultation on the development potential of this land*).
- Constraints to further development of village, including land to west: sewerage system; traffic flows/congestion; primary school; health centre; flood risk; urbanise village; destroy historic character.
- Eynsham is unsuitable for further growth, other than one or two additional homes and the re-development of Spareacre Lane Works site (possibly for elderly accommodation)
- Development to the west would destroy medieval ridge and furrow. Loss of Grade 3A agricultural land.

**General comments***Scale of growth*

- Strategy seems sensible and deliverable. Developments proposed at Witney, Chipping Norton and Carterton are proportional
- Scale of growth will have great impact on quality of life and environment

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- Need a strict control on development for all the settlements in West Oxfordshire, not just the small villages, because of the intrinsic character of the area
- Scale of additional housing must be a maximum. The District is becoming overcrowded, with a strain on roads and natural habitats, and the danger of West Oxfordshire's special qualities being damaged or lost.
- Water supply and flood risk is such an issue that there should be no increase in building
- Population growth locally, nationally and worldwide needs to be restricted
- Not just Witney and Carterton that should be having growth
- A lack of clarity of approach for villages. Need a much more demanding approach to address needs of villages, eg decline of Leaffield over the last 30 years
- Avoid building on greenfield sites – threatens District's capacity for sustainable food security.

*Housing*

- Need a supporting document which clearly justifies the level of housing growth
- Level of housing growth is too high – should be linked to natural population growth.
- Should have some new homes in small villages to allow them to thrive and not ossify. Each new home should be limited to 2/3 bedrooms to encourage first-time buyers.
- Affordable/social housing is needed in villages, such as Middle Barton, (rather than only being focussed in Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton) so that people are not forced to move from their village.
- Need an emphasis on affordable housing provision and homes for the elderly
- Lack of economic viability should not be 'an excuse' not to provide affordable housing
- In terms of housing needs – will never satisfy demand
- New housing is not needed – so many houses available for sale
- Could eliminate housing problem in area by addressing issue of second homes and holiday homes

*Infrastructure*

- Vision and strategy focuses on new housing but with only limited improvements being made to infrastructure, including improvements to the road network. Transport is not adequately dealt with in document
- Vision does not address the needs of existing communities in terms of their need for investment and enhancement
- Infrastructure strategy is not a strategy and does not give sufficient recognition to the Council's influence
- Transport infrastructure does not support existing population. High volumes of traffic on A4095 and A40. A massive investment is needed in public transport and/or the road network
- A40 should be dualled or a bus lane added

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- Provide 'park and ride' on A40 and a shuttle bus/park and ride between Witney and Hanborough railway station
- Remove lights on A40 at Cassington and Eynsham
- Must address congestion at Woodstock Road roundabout and tollbridge at Eynsham
- Cotswold Railway line not a viable alternative for commuters
- Urgent need to resolve car parking issues at Charlbury and Hanborough railway stations
- Need more pedestrian streets and cycle routes, including addressing poor cycle connections between Carterton and Witney
- Need to address the issue of traffic speed
- Facilities for electric cars need to be installed throughout West Oxfordshire
- Only brief mention made of 'health'. This needs to be a major consideration. Inadequate numbers of health care professionals

*Flooding*

The risk of flooding is an issue raised by many people, not just in relation to the proposed strategic sites.

Concern that flooding only addressed in relation to new development, not existing homes and businesses.

*Renewable energy and sustainable construction*

- Further guidance should be given on the different energy generation technologies. New installations for hydroelectricity should be considered.
- Should PV farms be encouraged? If so, where and under what circumstances? Need to be aware of potential risks of very large scale PV farms.
- Stand-alone renewable energy can have considerable impact. There should be a requirement for proposals to put forward a sustainable business plan.
- Where possible, existing buildings should be eco-retrofitted. With building conversions use should be made of zero-carbon standards
- New buildings should be built to the lowest possible carbon-emissions; housing should be built to at least Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5 (because of fuel costs and fuel security); make use of communal and individual generators eg medium sized wind turbines; a biomass CHP for each settlement; district biomass energy schemes should be mandatory.

*Environment*

- Support commitment to preserve and enhance the natural environment and biodiversity
- No more garden-grabbing or development which removes vital open space
- Need more emphasis on the importance of preserving and investigating historical and archaeological sites
- Need to be more self-sufficient in food and energy supplies

*Villages*

- Any development in villages must respect village's character and local distinctiveness. Policy CS2 should be amended to make clear that

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development on the edge of a village (or 'within the existing village envelope') will only be permitted for identified local needs

- Need to address impact of traffic in villages.