

Little Milton
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Consultation Statement
Part 1
April 2018

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Abbreviations

BBOWT	Berks, Berks & Oxon Wildlife Trust
OCC	Oxfordshire County Council
SODC	South Oxfordshire District Council

Introduction

1.1 This Consultation Statement has been prepared to fulfil the legal obligations of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. These require that when a qualifying body submits a neighbourhood development plan to the local planning authority it must also provide a Consultation Statement. Part 5 of the Regulations sets out what a Consultation Statement should contain:

- details of the people and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood plan and explanation of how they were consulted
- a summary of the main issues and concerns raised by the people consulted
- a description of how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood plan

1.2 This Consultation Statement sets out:

- the background to preparation of the Plan;
- a summary of the engagement and consultation that has helped to shape and inform preparation of the Plan;
- details of those consulted about the Plan at the various stages of plan preparation and the extent to which efforts were made to ensure the Plan was prepared with support and input from the local community; and
- a description of the changes made to policies as the Plan emerged in response to consultation, engagement and critical review.

1.3 The process and techniques involved in seeking community engagement and preparing the Submission Draft Plan were appropriate to the purpose of the Plan. The extent of engagement is considered by the Steering Group to fulfil the obligations set out in the Regulations. The Consultation Statement supports and describes the process of plan making as envisaged through the Localism Act 2011 and the associated Regulations, and sets out how it has been applied in Little Milton. This has improved the Plan and ensured that it best meets community expectations and the aspirations of Little Milton Parish Council.

2. Approach to consultation

2.1. The aims of the Little Milton Neighbourhood Plan consultation process were:

- a) To involve as many of the community as possible throughout all consultation stages of Plan development so that the Plan was informed by the views of local people and other stakeholders from the start of the Neighbourhood Planning process;
- b) To ensure that consultation events took place at critical points in the process where decisions needed to be taken;
- c) To engage with as wide a range of people as possible, using a variety of approaches and communication and consultation techniques; and
- d) To ensure that results of consultation were fed back to local people and available to read via the Little Milton Neighbourhood Development Plan website as soon as possible after the consultation events.

2.2. The steering group worked to a consultation strategy which included a plan of consultation activities (see Appendix A).

3. Consultation and engagement

3.1. Throughout the process of consultation and engagement:

- a) Regular updates and progress reports have been published in the monthly village newsletter
- b) The steering group has met regularly, as often as fortnightly in the early stages, and the minutes of all meetings have been published on the website.
- c) All appendices and background evidence studies have been published on the website, initially in draft form, and then in their final versions
- d) Extensive use was made of the outcomes of the Little Milton Village Plan 2014 process, including the 2013 village survey results.

Consultation on the designated neighbourhood plan area

3.2. In Jun-Jul 2016, SODC conducted a formal consultation on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan area under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act. No objections were received. 3 statutory bodies responded with no specific concerns. SODC issued the Area Designation Letter on 4 August 2016.

Consultation on issues and themes for the Neighbourhood Plan

3.3. In Sep 2016 an open meeting was held in the village hall to explain the neighbourhood plan process to villagers, seek initial views on key issues and seek support for the whole process.

3.4. In Sep-Oct 2016 members of the steering group held individual conversations with many local organisations, including the school, pre-school, local estate agents, local farmers, village shop, BBOWT, Thames Water, SODC housing team, the pub, BT, local GP surgery, Natural England, the Church, OCC Highways. Where appropriate, dialogue was continued with some of these organisations as ideas matured.

3.5. This was followed in Nov 2016 by a village wide survey, the questions for which were compiled with the help of consultants. Steering group members devoted a lot of time and effort to obtaining responses; in the event a 73% response rate was achieved. This survey was very helpful in ascertaining the key issues to be addressed.

Consultation on developing the vision, aim and objectives; Consultation on the issues and options

- 3.6. The steering group spent several meetings formulating the draft vision, aim and objectives, and also identifying the issues and options. A number of key issues and options were then the subject of continuing consultation with outside agencies, particularly SODC, Thames Water, BBOWT and OCC Highways.
- 3.7. In addition, the results of the village survey were of great benefit in identifying key issues and objectives.
- 3.8. At the same time as this work was progressed, the parish council was engaged in various meetings concerning the proposed strategic development site at Chalgrove. This dialogue also helped identify key inputs to the neighbourhood plan. Two meetings were also held with OCC infrastructure planners to discuss plans for roads and transport.
- 3.9. The results of this work were presented to the village at two open meetings in Apr 2017. The content of each of the meetings was identical. After a presentation by the chairman of the steering group and a Q & A session which helped reinforce the steering group's perception of the key issues and options, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire regarding the proposed vision, aims and objectives. There was strong support for the draft proposals.
- 3.10. A stall was run at the Village Fete in June 2016. The aim was to keep the Neighbourhood Plan 'in view' and to encourage people to learn more about the village through a light-hearted quiz competition. There were a number of useful conversations between villagers and members of the steering group., but this event was not a major input to the consultation process.

Pre-Submission Consultation

- 3.11. The formal Reg 14 statutory consultation was carried out 13 Jan – 23 Feb 2018.
- 3.12. After redrafting of the Plan following this consultation, the re-drafted Plan was submitted to SODC's planning staff for a final review before Submission

4. Summary of issues raised and changes to the Plan

Early Consultations

- 4.1. Many issues were raised in the early stages of consultation which helped shape the Plan and led to changes to the early drafts. These included:
- a) Preferences for the location of development relative to the village ie. should it be within or adjacent to the village or on open land?
 - b) Development of a Village Character Assessment to aid conservation and design policies
 - c) Developing an Open Spaces policy and designating Local Green Spaces
 - d) The importance the village attaches to protecting the BBOWT nature reserve
 - e) Assessing views and developing policies to protect iconic views
 - f) The need for a policy covering waste water system capacity, developed with the aid of Thames Water
 - g) The priority to be attached to providing more homes suited for young families
 - h) The over-riding priority of the villagers to see solutions to traffic problems in the village
 - i) The potential impact of strategic road developments
 - j) The potential impact of the proposed Chalgrove Airfield development
- 4.2. The changes that were made to the Plan in response to comments made at various stages are summarised in the Appendices.

Pre-submission consultations

- 4.3. Prior to the formal Reg 14 consultation, and following discussions with SODC staff, an informal consultation on the Roads and Transport sections of the Plan was carried out with OCC Infrastructure Planners. The outcomes of this phase of consultation, which resulted in changes primarily to Section 10 of the draft Plan are at Appendix H in Part 2.
- 4.4. As a result of the formal Reg 14 consultation. responses were received from:
- a) Oxfordshire County Council
 - b) South Oxfordshire District Council
 - c) Natural England
 - d) Thames Water
 - e) Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
 - f) Historic England
 - g) Villagers (at consultation open event and one verbal feedback)

4.5. The key issues raised during the pre-submission consultation and the actions taken are summarised in the following table:

Consultee	Subject	Summary of comment or recommendation	Action taken
SODC	General formatting	Some tidying up and rationalisation required	Sections 6 & 7 were made into 3 sections and the order in which sub-sections were presented was re-structured to give a better flow to the Plan
SODC	Capacity of primary school	The data presented concerning the capacity of the primary school is unclear	Figures clarified and cross-referred to SODC's Infrastructure Delivery Plan
SODC	Baseline Evidence Study 3 (Planning History)	Baseline Evidence Study 3 (Planning History) is not needed as part of the Plan	Baseline Evidence Study 3 removed
SODC /Thames Water	Waste water (Sewerage) system	New wording of supporting text proposed by Thames Water. Cross-reference to Infrastructure Delivery Plan proposed by SODC	Supporting text amended
SODC	Dwelling Mix	LM 11 needs redrafting to bring it more into line with the Emerging Local Plan	Policy amended
SODC/ OCC	LM 12 Roads policy	SODC recommended removal of the policy; OCC were content with first part but recommended removing second part	Second part of policy removed
Natural England & Environment Agency	Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure	Proposed adding new supporting text and a new policy	Recommendation implemented
OCC	Health & Well-being	OCC suggested the Plan would benefit from a section on Health & Well-being	New sub-section added
SODC	Employment and Commercial Development	Proposals to improve content of text and policy	Recommendation implemented

SODC	High Grade Agricultural Land	Recommended including a specific policy along the lines of Dorchester on Thames Dot 7 to give specific protection to Excellent and Very Good grade agricultural land as per NP112. Needs supporting map	Additional text, new policy and new map.
Historic England	Conservation of historic character of the village	Further support for conservation of historic assets	Additional wording
SODC (further consultation)	Biodiversity	Further evidence	TVERC biodiversity report commissioned. Additional background evidence study completed, Plan text amended and new maps added

5. Conclusions

- 5.1. The various elements of the consultation process were all important in shaping the Neighbourhood Plan. Early dialogue with various key organisations such as Thames Water, BBOWT, SODC were very valuable and had a major influence on the shape of the plan. The effort which went into obtaining a high response rate to the village survey was very worthwhile as it was felt the survey results gave a good overview of the community's views on future development. The survey which had been conducted in 2013 in support of the Little Milton Village Plan was also of great assistance.
- 5.2. The various events which villagers were invited to attend did not necessarily attract high turnouts, but the Q & A sessions were always lively and challenging and were of great assistance to the steering group in identifying the most important issues. Constant themes which emerged centred on traffic, and concerns about the proposed strategic development at Chalgrove Airfield, both of which can only be partially addressed through the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.3. The Reg 14 pre-submission consultation demonstrated general support for the draft Plan but was very helpful in introducing greater strength or clarity to some aspects of the Plan.

APPENDIX A: Little Milton consultation strategy

The strategy which evolved included:

1. Establishing a working group of parish councillors to monitor developments in the field of neighbourhood planning and ultimately to advise the full parish council whether or not to proceed with drafting a plan.
2. Once the parish council had given the go-ahead in principle, engaging the village at the start of the process through an open meeting, to be followed over the months by two more formal events, one to consult on the draft vision and aims, one to consult on the draft plan as part of the Reg 14 consultation process.
3. Keeping people informed throughout the process by publishing regular monthly updates in the village newsletter and by making copies of steering group minutes and background evidence studies available on the village website.
4. Conducting a wide-ranging survey across the whole village.
5. Engaging early with various statutory bodies eg. OCC Highways and Infrastructure Planners, Thames Water, Natural England, SODC Housing Team, etc. Also engaging early with various key village organisations such as the school, the estate agents, BBOWT, etc
6. Continuing a dialogue with certain key organisations whose input was identified early on as key to the Plan. These included SODC, Thames Water, OCC Infrastructure Planners, BBOWT.
7. Keeping landowners who do not live in the village informed of the process and inviting them to participate in village events and involve them in the Reg 14 consultation.
8. Running a neighbourhood planning stall at the village fete
9. Asking a panel of 'lay readers' to comment on an early draft of the Neighbourhood Plan
10. Conducting the Pre-Submission (Reg 14) Consultation as required by the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations
11. Seeking a second review of the draft Plan by SODC Neighbourhood Planning staff prior to submission
12. Making best use of advice provided consultants, primarily Community First Oxfordshire

Programme of Consultation Activities

Date	Event	More information in:	Duration	People / Contacts
September 2016	Village Open Meeting – Launch Event	Appendix B	2.5 hours	20 attendees
September 2016 – February 2017	Wide-ranging one-to-one discussions and meetings with many outside organisations	Appendix C	Estimated 30 hours	18 organisations
November 2016	Village Survey		N/A	73% of village households
April 2017	Village Event to agree Vision, Aims and Objectives	Appendix D & E	5 hours	50 attendees
June 2017	Stall at Village Fete	Appendix F	3 hours	20 contacts
Nov-Dec 2017	Informal dialogue with OCC Infrastructure Planners	Appendix H	N/A	1 organisation
13 Jan – 23 Feb	Reg 14 - 6 week consultation period	Appendix I, J & K	N/A	
Jan 2018	Consultation Event	Appendix K	2 hours	45 attendees
Mar 2018	Further review by SODC Planning Staff	Appendix L	N/A	

APPENDICES B to L – see Part 2