

Astrid Harvey

From: Community Development
Subject: Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031

From: Nick Way
Sent: 13 October 2020 18:22
To: Community Development
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Dear West Oxfordshire District Council,

I am, here, submitting my comments on the submitted draft Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031:

Overview, p5. This is the first of several **references to the shortage of modest housing in Charlbury. These are entirely justified** throughout the relevant sections of the draft plan. In recent years most new house building in Charlbury has been of larger, often four and five bedroom houses, mainly detached. At the same time, the existing housing stock has continued to rise in price, pushing much of it further out of reach for many young, or not even young people, including young families, which are the lifeblood of any town. This increasing price squeeze is likely to be exacerbated if the Covid-19 Pandemic results in a further exodus of relatively well off buyers from London and other cities, seeking a new home - or an additional weekend home - in Charlbury. Such a trend would also further reduce the availability of smaller houses for older residents to downsize to; downsizing is an important contributor to freeing up mid size housing for growing families.

The draft plan sets the need for affordable housing in the context of seeking a vibrant and successful community, alongside other supporting objectives. I strongly support this holistic and coherent approach to Planning.

Paragraph on Housing, p6: I therefore strongly support the case for a limited supply of new, affordable housing, and the measures to achieve that.

P 17 Key Challenges: I support.

P 20: Objectives. Aim 3: I support. This objective recognises that several different objectives are interdependent.

P 26: Section 5: Housing: I support this section in principle, and much of its content. However, the lack of direction towards any specific geographical area for the development of affordable housing may well result in this need not being met. Also, two particular areas, including Rushy Bank, are ruled out, because they are said to be distinct from Charlbury. It is debatable whether they are, but a bigger point is that the draft plan acknowledges the value of Rural Exception Sites (RES). **By their very nature, RESs do not create future or adjoining development opportunities for market housing, so there is a strong case for Rushy Bank, or similar sites, to be used as RESs for affordable housing. Otherwise, will there be any new affordable housing, in reality?**

Having been a Board Member of the English Rural Housing Association for 16 of the last 21 years, I am convinced that the draft plan is right to state its opposition to the

implementation of Right to Buy to any Housing Association - or local authority - owned affordable housing in Charlbury. Right to Buy would lead, inexorably, to the loss of such housing.

P45: Policy ECT9 Walking and Cycling. I support. It is high time for Plans to provide for sufficient and satisfactory walking and cycle routes to facilities. This has been an omission from Planning for too long.

P47: Policy ECT 12 Electric Vehicle Charging Points in new properties - support. This is the future.

I would be grateful for acknowledgment of receipt of this email. Thank you.

Kind regards,
Nicholas Way