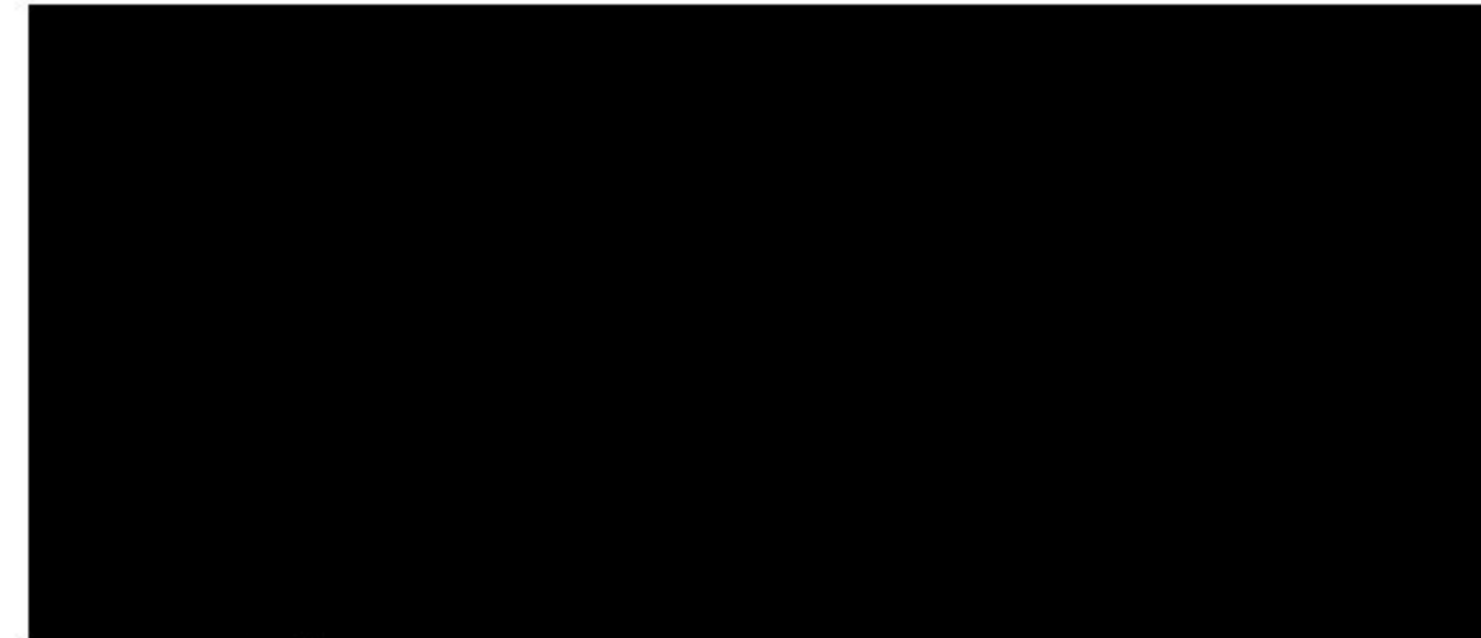


**OLD MILVERTON AND BLACKDOWN
JOINT PARISH COUNCIL**

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23rd. June 2014.

LOCAL PLAN PUBLICATION DRAFT, CONSULTATION JUNE 2014

I write in response to the consultation exercise on the Publication Draft of the Warwick District Local Plan (“the Publication Draft”).

Old Milverton and Blackdown Joint Parish Council (“the Parish Council”) welcomes a Local Plan that will ensure the orderly and sustainable development of Warwick District. It welcome a Local Plan that will meet the future needs of the District to ensure that it remains a vibrant and attractive place to live and work. The Parish Council recognises the enormity of the task that faces the Warwick District Council (the District Council”) in providing new growth whilst balancing environmental and other objectives. The Parish Council welcomes a Local Plan that is based on sound principles and robust evidence to ensure that it provides a solid framework upon which to guide future development.

The Parish Council supports the broad thrust of the Publication Draft and believes that the District Council has balanced necessary growth with the protection of areas that are of historic, environmental and recreational importance to the District.

Size is a key element in maintaining the attractiveness of Leamington and Warwick. At present they are vibrant towns and it is very important that they do not become sprawling conurbations. Therefore, The Parish Council believes that growth targets should be kept to the minimum that permit the sustainable and vibrant development of the District and meets Central Government expectations. In this regard, it understands that the National Office for Government Statistics has recently published growth projections for Warwick District that suggest that the required number of houses may be less than currently proposed in the Publication Draft. The Parish Council asks that this new information is critically assessed and if appropriate that the growth aspirations included in the Publication Draft are amended accordingly.

The Council is pleased that the value of the Green Belt to the North of Leamington has been recognised in the Publication Draft. This narrow area of Green Belt is a vital buffer to prevent Leamington, Kenilworth and Warwick coalescing. It preserves the historic setting of Leamington and Warwick, and has immense recreational value for residents of the nearby towns, who enjoy walking, horse riding, cycle riding, running etc. in the area. The North Leamington Green Belt is under constant attack and there is a real danger that over time it will be eroded by continual creeping development. The planned development of further sports facilities in the area and the possible development of a “park and ride” scheme will result in the increasing urbanisation of the area. In addition construction of HS2 and, if permitted, the Gateway Development at Baginton, will swallow up large tracts of the North Leamington Green Belt.

The Publication Draft identifies two areas in the Green Belt to the North of Leamington which The District Council believes may be suitable for the creation of a Park and Ride scheme. The Parish Council awaits the publication of a feasibility study that the District Council has commissioned to examine the viability of such a scheme. The Parish Council will comment further when this evidence is available for examination but in its absence makes the following observations:

- There will not be dedicated buses to shuttle commuters in to Leamington. The proposed scheme will comprise a car park and associated facilities (waiting rooms, toilets etc.) where scheduled bus services will stop.
- Users will have to time visits to coincide with the bus timetable
- Presumably there will be a charge for using the service
- The proposed sites are too close to Leamington Spa to be of value to commuters to wait and pay for a bus which is unlikely to take them near to their workplace or where they wish to shop.
- Much of the traffic using the A452 crosses to the south of Leamington where there are major employers
- Shoppers are unlikely to use the park and ride when there is adequate parking in Leamington because of the inconvenience of carrying shopping on a bus.
- Oxford appears to have the only park and ride scheme in the country which really works and this is because there is such limited parking in Oxford city centre. There is plenty of parking in Leamington
- The sites are too close to Leamington to reduce congestion on the A452. A more viable scheme may be one focussed on the A46 roundabout with the A452, which could form part of the Thickthorn Development, and provide for Leamington, Warwick, Kenilworth, Warwick University and potentially Coventry. Alternatively, a site near to, or within, the Stoneleigh Park, could provide out-of-town parking for Leamington Spa, Coventry and the NAC.
- There are already a lot of car parks in this area of Green Belt with impervious surfaces all of which reduce the area's ability to absorb rainfall and contribute to flooding (North Leamington School, Brethrens' Meeting House, Cranford, Cranford Lodge, Jephson House, Nuffield Hospital, Woodland Grange, The Blackdown Clinic, Helen Ley House. Leamington Rugby /hockey/netball Club, Old Leamingtonians Rugby Club, Browne Gauges, Ramada Hotel, Park House Care Home.)

The Parish Council does not believe that the proposed Park and Ride scheme will be an attractive alternative to commuters driving in to Leamington

The Parish Council hopes that these observations on the Publication Draft are constructive and helpful and would be pleased to discuss further any of the matters it has raised if that would be helpful.

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