

RECEIVED 27 JAN 2021

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From: Stewart A G Lilly  
Chairman - Woodlands PPG

Our ref: SL/kl/20218478

South & Vale District Council  
135 Eastern Avenue  
Milton  
Abingdon  
OX14 4SB

For the attention of: PLANNING POLICY UNIT

Dear Sir or Madam

RE: **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Developer Contributions Supplementary Document (SPD)**

I refer to your request in respect of the above matters that are being reviewed by the two Authorities, South Oxfordshire District Council and the Vale of White Horse District Council.

GENERAL

It has become apparent over the last decade that the local Planning Authority in their considerations given to the expansion of residential areas **omit and forget necessary Medical Infrastructure**. This is a dangerous omission. Land that is being allocated for residential development must make certain that appropriate consultation with the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group is undertaken **and responses are sought from them**. Great Western Park is an example of where the subject of medical infrastructure has been handled very poorly.

With Gt Western Park the Local Authorities allowed for community buildings, many of which are unoccupied, but more importantly, an insufficient area of land was allocated for Primary Care Medical facilities for the new residents of GWP. **The site that was allocated for medical use is far too small and totally unfit for purpose**. This has been demonstrated by the fact that none of the three local Medical Practices have wanted to become involved in any discussions regarding this site.

The current pandemic and its ongoing impact on the local population has meant that it's now more important than ever that suitable land, minimum of 2.00 acres (8000 square metres approx.) **must be written into planning policy**. Medical Centres of this size can accommodate approximately 10,000 / 12,000 patients. The changes in Primary Care that have had to be introduced since March 2020 have been immense, not only through computing and Information Technology, but also in the space required for G.P's and supporting Nursing and Administrative Staff. It is becoming clear that the minimum size for an efficient Primary Care Medical Centre will have to be at least 12,000 sq. ft (approx. 1,100 sq. metres). Ample allowance for car-parking must include vehicles for Doctors, Nurses, Administrative Staff, Visitors and Patients. An adjoining Pharmacy is another important facility and space and parking must also be considered for them.

## FUNDING OF PRIMARY CARE

Funding of Primary Care is completely inadequate at present. The rapid expansion of residential development and the impact of the pandemic has proven this to be the case. A new policy needs to be introduced whereby Developers and the Landowners make a contribution towards new local medical infrastructure. It is recognised that Local Authorities always allow for education, local shopping, highways, public transport, street art, and community buildings **BUT** medical primary care has for too long been forgotten. South Oxfordshire is expanding; the Enterprise Zone, Science Vale UK, together with the impressive expansion of technical and scientific growth in the area justifies that a balance should be maintained between medical primary care, infrastructure and the rising population. The need for increased local facilities is more urgent than ever. Also, the plans for Didcot Garden Town will see an increase in the population to circa 60,000. (A great deal more than the former 'Didcot Village' of 1899) See Appendix 1.

## CURRENT SITUATION

In 2000 there were three Medical Centres in the OX11 postcode. These Medical Centres not only covered the greater Didcot area but also ~~nine~~ <sup>(12)</sup> *twelve* of its neighbouring villages (see Appendix 2). Back in 2000 those three Centres had a total number of approximately 30,000 registered patients. In 2020 the same three Medical Centres have a total number of 47,000 registered patients, an increase of more than 37%. Two of the three Centres are beyond their maximum intake. Currently, and without the impact of Covid-19, their ability to cope with the excess in patient numbers has been stretched to the limits. It cannot be over-emphasised that there are imminent and dangerous consequences in allowing the shortage of medical facilities to continue.

## PROPOSALS

It should become policy within the Local Structure Plans of both District Councils, and within all negotiations for new development (including the imminent Valley Park), that either CILs are increased or an **additional MILs (Medical Infrastructure Levy)** is imposed. It's true that this will impact on land values, but if the level of Primary Care that is now required is to be achieved, increased levies must be found. For too long Planning Policy has ignored this vital service for its residents.

## SPECIALIST CARE

It is apparent that referrals for certain medical conditions are all based at the Oxford University Hospitals in Oxford (John Radcliffe, Churchill, Nuffield etc). From the success of the Minor Injuries Unit at Abingdon it is clear to see that demand for such facilities now outweighs the capacity it can offer. Within the Local Plan for Didcot Garden Town, proper provision needs to be considered for a medical facility that can undertake minor injuries treatment, and other procedures, where medical specialists can attend locally on referred patients. Informal discussions amongst medical personnel in the area has established that many landowners/ land promoters are prepared to make land available for medical infrastructure if requested by the Local Planning Authority. Informal conversations have been had with MEPC at Milton, Harwell Science Park and other major employers who had not fully appreciated the severity of the situation and the lack of adequate medical care in the area. We trust that the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) recognise this paradox between local growth and economy versus primary medical care.

We submit that this should be a vital part of planning guidance and policy and that a balance of Medical Infrastructure and Primary Care **becomes a standard priority** in all discussions with the District and County Councils.

It is confirmed that this submission is being made jointly by the three Medical Centres within OX11 (Didcot) by their Patients' Participation Group (PPG's) representatives.

The Medical Centres are:

Woodlands Medical Centre, Woodlands Road, Didcot, OX11 0BB  
Didcot Health Centre, Britwell Road, Didcot, OX11 7JH  
The Oak Tree Medical Centre, Tyne Avenue, Didcot OX11 7GD

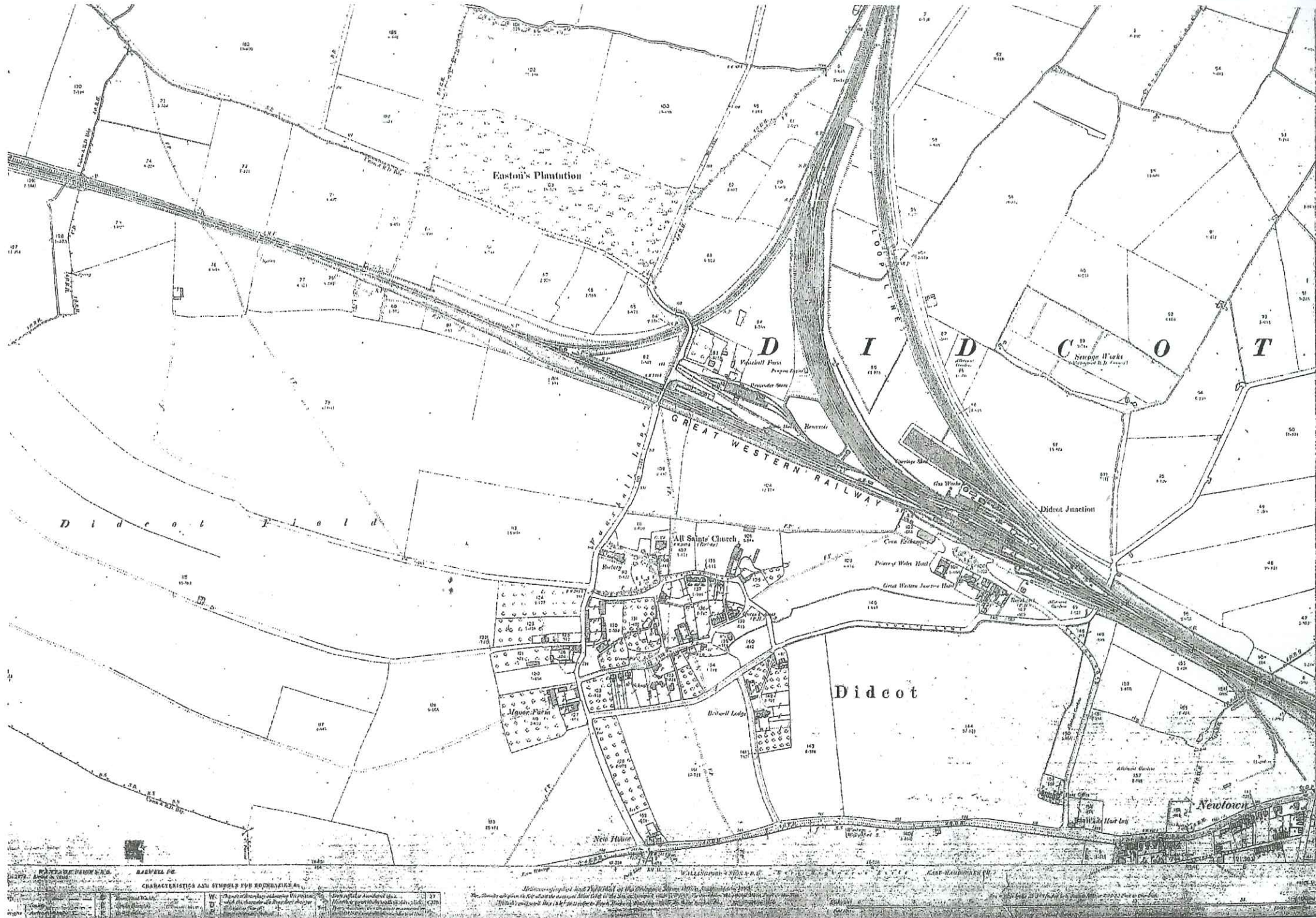


STEWART A G LILLY

Voluntary Chairman of Woodlands Medical Centre PPG and on behalf of:

Shelagh Garvey, Didcot Health Centre  
Andrea Warren, Oak Tree Medical Centre





The  
Villages and communities within catchment of:  
DIDCOT's THREE MEDICAL CENTRES.

1. Didcot Medical Centre, Didcot
2. Oaktree Medical Centre, Didcot
3. Woodlands Medical Centre, Didcot

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Aston Tirrold,  
Aston Upthorpe,  
Blewbury,  
North Moreton,  
South Moreton,  
East Hagbourne,  
West Hagbourne,  
Harwell,  
Harwell Campus Residential,  
Chilton,  
Upton,  
Rowstock,

Also, many others who work locally and registered to Didcot Medical Centres

APPENDIX 2