

Supplement for Council

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On **Monday 13 July 2026** At **5.00 pm**

Amendment to Local Plan and Motion 18a E-Bikes Self Amend

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FULL COUNCIL 13 JULY 2026

PROPOSED SUBMISSION DRAFT OXFORD LOCAL PLAN 2045

RESOLVE: To send to the Inspector with the Submission Plan an invitation to modify the the Oxford Local Plan 2045 so as to delete Policy SPS8 Land at Meadow Lane on pp.38-39.

JUSTIFICATION: Deletion of the allocation is necessary to ensure the Plan is justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

REASONS:

- The Council is under a statutory obligation to only submit a plan which it considers to be sound (see s.20 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- To be sound, the plan must only include policies which are justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
- Policy SPS8 is clearly not justified on the evidence as being consistent with national policy for the following reasons:
 - **On Ecology:**
 - The Sustainability Appraisal noted the site is “highly ecological constrained” by virtue of supporting a habitat for badgers and invertebrates.
 - Contrary to paragraph 187(d) NPPF, there is no evidence that development of the site would “minimise [...] impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity”.
 - The Sustainability Appraisal scores the site negatively for ecology.
 - **On Heritage:**
 - The Sustainability Appraisal notes that the site lies within the Iffley Conservation Area and in the setting of and within the setting of three listed buildings (Tudor Cottage, Townsend Close and Wall and Gate of Townsend Close).
 - There is again no evidence whatsoever that the site could be developed and, if so, at what quantum, without conflicting with the statutory duties at s.66 and 70 Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Area) 1990 and paragraphs 213 NPPF.
 - The Sustainability Appraisal scores the site negatively for heritage.

- **On Sustainability:**
 - The Sustainability Appraisal records that the site lies beyond the maximum walking distance to everyday services and facilities.
 - The Sustainability Appraisal also notes the site is over the maximum walking distance to the nearest bus stop to access those facilities (and even then, the timetable is limited).
 - Contrary to paragraph 77 NPPF, the site would therefore fail to provide a “genuine choice of transport modes” for future occupiers.
 - The Sustainability Appraisal scores the site negatively for sustainability.
- **Overall:** Policy SPS8 is the worst scoring site in the whole Local Plan according to the Council’s own Sustainability Appraisal yet delivers the smallest quantum of housing.

PRACTICAL POINTS

- The modification would not require re-consultation.
- It would not delay the submission of the Plan.
- It would not affect in any way the overarching strategy of the Plan because the site is so small and its delivery capacity is unknown. It would not “scupper” or “undermine” the remainder of the Plan in any way.
- It would save the community the time, expense and considerable stress of having to fight the Council at examination over a site which is plainly unsound and is of no consequence to the delivery of the strategy of the Plan.
- It does no more than writing to the Inspector to invite the removal of the allocation from the Plan.

E-bikes

Council believes:

- That substantial public concern and risk is caused by use of illegally modified e-bikes and mopeds which are not authorised for public roads;
- That the government's proposal for a National Work-Related Road Safety Charter to improve compliance by employers, while a good initiative, will not be strong enough to address the menace caused by these dangerous vehicles;
- That while individuals committing offences by using these vehicles ~~on public roads, pavements, cycle paths, tow paths or anywhere else they should not do so~~ must feel the full force of the law, so too must those who tacitly support their use such as delivery platforms and retailers;
- That those who profit from the sale of kit from the illegal modification of bikes should cease doing so;

That a decision on the July 2020 e-scooter trial is also long overdue;

Council welcomes and endorses:

- Recent enforcement efforts by Thames Valley Police to seize and destroy such vehicles;
- The campaign run by the Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA) and the Bicycle Association (BA), which presses for national guidance to identify, seize and prosecute non-compliant e-bikes, strengthened oversight of the supply chain and delivery platforms (including mandatory compliance checks for fleet operators), and stronger enforcement against online marketplaces and retailers selling non-compliant vehicles and modification kits;
- Attempts to ensure that regulations relating to the Product Regulation and Metrology Act 2025 prevent the sale of kits using lithium-ion batteries which could be used to modify bikes in an unsafe manner.

Council resolves:

- To ask the leader to write to the Secretary of State for Transport in **support of the MCIA / BA campaign, with copy to their CEOs and Oxford's MPs, to ask her to review whether existing legislation provides sufficient powers to prevent the manufacture, import, sale and advertising of products intended to unlawfully modify electrically assisted pedal cycles, to bring forward further legislation if necessary, to press for a decision on the July 2020 e-scooter trial**, and urge swift action and stronger enforcement against riders who break the law, relevant employers and those who enable illegal activity

- To ask the leader to write to the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner urging an increase in enforcement activity against these vehicles, with such activity being focused upon public safety, and clamping down on exploitative working practices and those who profit from such practices, and offering City Council support so far as this is feasible.