

**OXFORDSHIRE JOINT STATUTORY SPATIAL PLAN**

**DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

**APRIL 2018**



OXFORDSHIRE JOINT STATUTORY SPATIAL PLAN

DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

PARTIES:

Cherwell District Council

Oxford City Council

Oxfordshire County Council

South Oxfordshire District Council

Vale of White Horse District Council

West Oxfordshire District Council

DRAFT

March 2018

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared by the Parties to assist them in establishing the areas of common strategic interest within which they will work together, and the methodology that they will use to reach agreement.
- 1.2. This statement includes matters that are relevant to the delivery of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, in particular focussing on the preparation of the Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (JSSP) for Oxfordshire. The SoCG is an agreed milestone as set out in the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, with a draft to be completed by 31 March 2018.
- 1.3. There are likely to be further statements prepared and agreed between parties as work to support the Deal progresses.

## 2. The Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal

- 2.1. The Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal is recognition by government both of the track record of successful joint working in Oxfordshire and of its potential to contribute towards the successful sustainable growth of the country. In return for guaranteed funding for affordable housing, infrastructure and economic growth the Deal places commitments upon the constituent Oxfordshire Authorities to ensure that the following is undertaken:
  - Plan for and support the delivery of 100,000 new homes to 2031
  - All of the current suite of Local Plans submitted by April 2019
  - Work to secure additional public and private funding to plan for and support the delivery of 100,000 homes by 2031
  - The submission of a JSSP for Oxfordshire by March 2020.
  - Work with Government to explore further opportunities to drive innovation in partnership, design and construction.
  - Consideration of a Strategic Infrastructure Tariff (SIT)
- 2.2. For the JSSP, the award of Government funding is dependent on meeting a series of milestones.

Action	Date
Draft Statement of Common Ground	31 March 2018
Establishment of JSSP Project Board	July 2018
All Local Plans submitted for examination	1 April 2019
Draft Joint Statutory Spatial Plan	30 October 2019
Submission of Joint Statutory Spatial Plan	31 March 2020
Adoption of plan (Subject to examination)	March 2021

### 3. Description, justification and responsible Plan Making Authorities

- 3.1. The JSSP is a Spatial Plan for Oxfordshire covering the administrative areas of Cherwell, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire District Councils, and Oxfordshire County Council. It will provide a positive vision for the future of Oxfordshire, a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities and set out principles of excellent place making.
- 3.2. This geographical area reflects the existing Local Authority boundaries, and the recognised housing market and economic area. The Oxfordshire Authorities, in partnership with the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP), also have a long history of working together to address strategic cross boundary issues. This culminated in the successful negotiation of the Oxfordshire City Deal in 2014 and the establishment of a governance framework to oversee its delivery. To support this, a County wide Oxfordshire Growth Board was established in 2014. The 2017 Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal is the latest stage in that history of joint working and delivery and partnership with government.
- 3.3. The Oxfordshire Growth Board is a joint committee of the six local authorities, together with key strategic partners - including Oxfordshire's two universities and OxLEP, which was set up to both oversee the delivery of the commitments in the City deal but to also take a wider remit and to facilitate and enable joint working on economic development, strategic planning and growth, including housing.
- 3.4. The coverage of the JSSP is shown on the map below:



#### **4. Strategic matters**

- 4.1. Oxfordshire is uniquely placed within the south east at the juncture of main routes between the capital and Birmingham, and anchors one end of the Central Government recognised Oxford-Milton Keynes- Cambridge Growth Corridor.
- 4.2. The ambitious growth agenda for the wider region will also require joint working amongst the councils to deliver high quality planned growth. As such the partners recognise that this SoCG will require regular periodic review to ensure that it encapsulates the breadth of ambition for Oxfordshire, both for itself and its place within the wider growth agenda.
- 4.3. The scope of the JSSP will comprise of the following key strategic planning matters:
  - An overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development in Oxfordshire to 2050
  - Identify the number of new market and affordable homes and level of economic growth needed across Oxfordshire.
  - Identify an appropriate spatial strategy and strategic locations for new development based upon an understanding and appreciation of both the environmental quality and natural capital of Oxfordshire.
  - Outline the strategic transport and other infrastructure that needs to be provided to support sustainable growth.

#### **5. Delivery and governance arrangements for the JSSP**

- 4.4. The JSSP will be prepared by a project team which may include the commissioning of external consultants headed by a JSSP Programme Lead.
- 4.5. The Project Team will report to a JSSP Project Board, established under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 4.6. The Project Board will be responsible for the delivery of the JSSP and will report to the Growth Board who will oversee progress on the JSSP, approve its budget and review the achievement of milestones as part of an annual review.
- 4.7. The Growth Board will maintain oversight of the JSSP work programme as required by the Deal but agrees that the adoption of the JSSP will require formal decision by each constituent council at the preferred option stage (Regulation 18 Town and Country Planning Act (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012), submission (Regulation 19), and adoption (Regulation 26) stage.

#### **6. Housing requirements in Oxfordshire**

- 6.1 The Oxfordshire authorities are committed to planning to meet the 100,000 housing requirement for Oxfordshire, as set out by the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) by 2031.

- 6.2 The existing and emerging suite of Local Plans for the District Planning Authorities sets out their approach to meeting both their own local housing needs and those unmet housing needs arising from Oxford.
- 6.3 Currently there are adopted Local Plans in place in Cherwell and for Vale of White Horse and partial reviews are underway to address their agreed apportionment of Oxford's unmet housing need. There is a recently examined Plan in the case of West Oxfordshire and new Local Plans underway for Oxford City and South Oxfordshire.
- 6.4 The housing numbers being planned for in each individual Local Planning Authority within Oxfordshire is in Table 1 below. These figures include the commitment to addressing the housing need identified in the SHMA.

**Table 1:**

<b>Council</b>	<b>Proposed Housing Supply</b>
Cherwell	<b>27,240</b>
City	<b>TBC</b>
SOxon	<b>TBC</b>
Vale	<b>24,748</b>
WOxon	<b>15,950</b>

**7. Distribution of housing with JSSP area and process for agreement for further distribution**

- 7.1 The Parties agree that the JSSP will be founded on a robust and proportionate evidence base prepared for Oxfordshire as a whole to give a clear understanding of housing and economic needs, infrastructure capacity constraints and opportunities and environmental constraints and characteristics. Evidence base reports will be commissioned, with the input of District officers and external consultants where necessary.
- 7.2 Notwithstanding the commitment to deliver 100,000 new homes by 2031, the preparation of the JSSP, for the period up to 2050, will include the calculation of new housing need figures based upon the Government's finalised methodology for calculating local housing need, taking account of the implications of the Oxford – Milton Keynes - Cambridge corridor and other relevant growth factors as may be determined.
- 7.3 The JSSP will identify broad locations for strategic housing and economic growth within each Local Planning Authority area and taking account of the opportunities offered by infrastructure investment, environmental constraints and economic growth forecasts.

- 7.4 The JSSP will set out the identified housing requirement for Oxfordshire and the apportionment for each Local Authority area.
- 7.5 The JSSP will also identify high level strategic employment opportunities and locations across the County.
- 7.6 The JSSP will address strategic infrastructure priorities including opportunities for growth offered by the Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge growth corridor, including East –West Rail and the proposed Oxford-Cambridge express way (preferred corridor / route of which is yet to be announced).
- 7.7 Parties will work together to define a monitoring framework to track the implementation of the JSSP, affordable housing and wider growth deal commitments against indicators and milestones.
- 7.8 Parties agree that the JSSP will be shaped by early, proportionate and meaningful engagement with communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and statutory consultees. Methods and timescales will be set out in the Statement of Community involvement (SCI)<sup>1</sup>.
- 7.9 The Parties are currently investigating the scope of the JSSP and the level of detail it will go into, as well as its relationship with individual Local Plans.

## **8. Record of Agreement**

- 4.8. The partners have agreed through the Housing and Growth Deal that they will in future complement the development of Local Plans with one strategic overarching plan (the JSSP) for the county that will consider the following:
  1. Housing and economic growth opportunities
  2. Transport and other key infrastructure
  3. Environmental concerns and green infrastructure
  4. The impact of planned growth upon utilities including water requirements for growth
- 4.9. The JSSP will be formally adopted by each of the Local Planning Authorities at the preferred option stage (regulation 18) and the statutory approval points (regulations 19 and 26 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012).
- 4.10. Whilst the JSSP will be a jointly prepared and adopted strategic planning framework each Oxfordshire LPA will maintain responsibility for preparing its own Local Plan to guide more detailed planning decisions at a local level, together with facilitating the preparation of related Neighbourhood Plans.

- 4.11. The parties agree there is a need to look beyond 2031 to 36 timescales of adopted/emerging Local Plans to maximise benefits which flow from development of the Oxford - Milton Keynes – Cambridge growth corridor and to secure long term investment in supporting infrastructure. The JSSP will provide the framework and allow Oxfordshire to plan positively beyond the timeframe of the existing and emerging Local Plans taking account of developments in other geographical areas and will include an assessment of housing need for the period 2031-50.
- 4.12. It is necessary to prepare a Statement of Common Ground, to;
- a) demonstrate that effective joint working has taken place between parties on strategic cross boundary issues, as required by the NPPF tests of soundness.
  - b) increase certainty and transparency, early in the plan-making process, as to where effective co-operation is required.
  - c) encourage all Oxfordshire Planning Authorities, regardless of their stage in plan-making, to co-operate effectively and seek agreement on strategic cross-boundary issues, including planning for Oxfordshire’s housing need.
  - d) help local planning authorities demonstrate evidence of co-operation by setting clearer and more consistent expectations as to how co-operation in plan-making should be approached and documented.
- 4.13. The Parties agree on the following matters relevant to the preparation of the JSSP:
- a) There is a commitment to plan for 100,000 homes up until 2031
  - b) The current round of Local Plans will be submitted by April 2019.
  - c) The geographical coverage of the JSSP will be housing market and functional economic area of Oxfordshire.
  - d) Individual Local Plans and the JSSP will take account of the emerging Local Industrial Strategy, the Environmental Investment and any updates to the Local Transport Plans for Oxfordshire.
  - e) The JSSP will determine the likely scale of housing need to be planned for up to 2050, including the need for affordable housing, recognising that there will be greater certainty for the early years of the JSSP.
- 4.14. As part of the management of the JSSPs delivery the partners will regularly review and consider relevant risks to the project and will report these to the Project Board as appropriate.
- 4.15. The partners agree that the SoCG will be a dynamic document that will require periodic review to ensure it encapsulates the requirements for joint working that will arise as the partners work collectively on their ambitions for Oxfordshire and the wider area.
- 4.16. Work undertaken by the Oxfordshire Growth Board collectively has resulted to date in:
- The development of an ambitious Strategic Economic Plan
  - The completion of a countywide Strategic Housing Market assessment (SHMA)



- The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) a countywide assessment of the counties strategic infrastructure requirements to support Oxfordshire's expected growth to 2040
- Allocation of Oxford's unmet need.

4.17. The outcome of the post SHMA programme was the identification of a working assumption of Oxford's unmet need and a Growth Board resolution proposing an apportionment of the assumption, supported by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the councils. All councils have signed the MoU, save for South Oxfordshire who have committed to review their local plan upon confirmation of the unmet need figure through the examination of Oxford's local plan.

4.18. Continuing this track record of joint working Oxfordshire has successfully secured local and national funding to rise to the challenges of planned growth, through the 2014 City Deal process, Local Growth Fund, developer contributions, current bids to the Housing Infrastructure Fund and most recently through the agreement of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.

DRAFT

Signed:

Signed:

Name:

Name:

Position:

Position:

Date:

Date:

DRAFT