

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.