

South Oxfordshire LOCAL PLAN 2011-2034 PUBLICITY PERIOD GUIDANCE NOTE

JANUARY 2019

We have designed this guidance note to help you respond to the publicity period on the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2034. You can also view a video that explains how to comment on our website www.southoxon.gov.uk/newlocalplan

What's this stage about?

South Oxfordshire has been working on a new Local Plan to shape the future of the district. Following extensive consultation and gathering of evidence, we have now prepared an updated Local Plan which we are ready to publish prior to this being submitted for independent examination. Before we do, we are carrying out a six-week publicity period to find out whether the plan is sound and complies with legislation. This next stage is formally referred to as the Regulation 19 publicity period.

We have carried out five previous consultations on our plan, including a previous Regulation 19 publicity period in October 2017. The council has since reviewed the Local Plan's strategic allocations and prepared an updated version for consultation.

After the publicity period, we will submit the plan, evidence and responses received only to this publication (also known as representations) directly to the Secretary of State, who will appoint a Planning Inspector to carry out an independent examination.

At this stage, we have to ask very specific questions. Partly based on the answers given, a planning inspector will make a decision on whether our Local Plan is "sound", "legally compliant" and if it complies with the "duty to cooperate". These terms are explained further in this guidance note.

The planning inspector will give more weight to comments that relate to these points, but you are free to comment on any aspect of the plan and evidence you like. You need to provide comments on the prescribed form and submit it between 7 January and 5pm on 18 February 2019. Please be advised that we cannot accept late responses, nor grant any extensions.



The plan and supporting documents are available to download at www.southoxon.gov.uk/newlocalplan. Hard copies of the documents and comment forms are available at the locations listed on page two, during their usual opening hours.

Legal Compliance / Duty to Cooperate

When considering if the plan meets its legal requirements, the inspector will consider a number of issues including:

- **Local Development Scheme (LDS):** has the plan been prepared in accordance with the timetable set out in the LDS?
- **Consultation:** have the appropriate bodies been consulted and have we consulted in accordance with our Statement of Community Involvement?
- **National Policy and Legislation:** does the plan comply with national policy and legislation?
- **Sustainability Appraisal:** has an adequate Sustainability Appraisal been carried out?
- **Habitats Regulations Assessment:** has an adequate Habitats Regulations Assessment been carried out, including Appropriate Assessment where necessary?
- **Duty to Cooperate:** has the plan been prepared in cooperation with other local authorities and prescribed bodies?

All of the above documents are available on our website. You will also find a series of topic papers which set out the processes undertaken and evidence considered to inform the sites and policies in our Local Plan. You may find it helpful to review these papers when considering your response. This includes one on the Duty to Cooperate, which summarises the process the council has followed to ensure the Local Plan is legally compliant.

Soundness

The inspector will also consider whether the Local Plan is “sound” in accordance with [national policy and guidance](#). There are four key areas that contribute to this, including:

a. Has the plan been positively prepared?

The plan must provide a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet South Oxfordshire’s objectively assessed housing needs. It also needs to have been informed by agreements with other local authorities, to meet the needs of our neighbouring authorities (where it is practical to do so) and be consistent with achieving sustainable development.

b. Is the plan justified?

The plan must include an appropriate strategy, taking into account reasonable alternatives, and be based on proportionate evidence. You can view all of the studies that we have used to guide us in our decision-making by visiting our evidence page on our website.

c. Is the plan effective?

The plan should be deliverable over its period (i.e. by 2034) based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities (such as strategic roads and/or rail networks) that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the Statement of Common Ground (available on our website).

d. Is the plan consistent with national policy and does it enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework?

If you feel that there is a justified local need which means we should depart from national policy, please provide evidence and make it clear in your comments what those local circumstances are.

Appearing at the examination

The representation form asks you to indicate whether you would like to participate at the oral part of the public examination.

The inspector will decide the format of how issues are heard. However, if you state that you wish to participate at the oral examination, then you have ‘a right to be heard’. Alternatively, you may feel that your written representation is enough, which is perfectly acceptable and will carry the same weight as oral evidence.

To find out more about the examination process, you can search for the Planning Inspectorate’s “delivering positive local planning” video on [YouTube](#).



How do I submit my comments

You can submit your comments between 7 January and 5pm on 18 February 2019 in the following ways:

- Visit www.southoxon.gov.uk/newlocalplan and follow the link to the online form
- Download a form from our website and email it to planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk
- Complete a form at a drop in event (see our website for details)
- Collect a form from one of the locations below during their usual opening hours and post it back to us (address listed below):
 - South Oxfordshire District Council, Planning Policy, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton, Abingdon, OX14 4SB
 - all public libraries in South Oxfordshire
 - Abbey House Abingdon, Abbey Sports Centre Berinsfield, Barton Leisure Centre, Chalgrove Post Office, Clifton Hampden Post Office, Cornerstone Didcot, via Culham Parish Council (contact Councillor Gibbs on 01235 523679 or email rgibbs@btinternet.com), Didcot Wave Leisure Centre, Leys Pools and Leisure Centre (Blackbird Leys), the Holiday Inn Grenoble Road, Oxford City Council St Aldate’s and the Talking Shop Café, Sandford on Thames during their usual opening hours.

We hope this guidance note is helpful. If you have any questions or require this in an alternative format, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01235 422600 or email planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk.