

Planning and Strategic Housing

Reply to : Chris Hargraves

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Rachel Williams
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Your Ref :
Our Ref :
Date : 23 Dec 2023

LETTER TO PUBLISH NOT TO SUMMARISE INTO SPREADSHEET

Dear Rachel

Oxford Local Plan 2040 – Regulation 19 Submission Draft Plan

Thank you for the opportunity to make representations on your submission draft Local Plan 2040.

Our comments are enclosed in tabular form and set out in plan order for ease of reference.

As you will see, we are generally supportive of the plan and the various stated intentions around zero carbon, tackling inequalities and supporting healthy, inclusive communities.

The majority of our comments are therefore intended to be constructive, making suggestions as to how policies could potentially be tightened and strengthened prior to submission.

There is however one key concern around the soundness of the plan which relates to the approach taken on housing need, the associated approach to setting a capacity-based housing requirement and the potential knock-on effect for West Oxfordshire in terms of the creation of additional 'unmet' housing need.

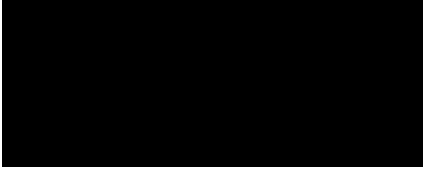
We raised a number of concerns earlier in the year in response to your focused housing need consultation including the lack of engagement with ourselves and the other Oxfordshire local authorities on the issue of housing need, despite it being a strategic matter of clear cross-boundary importance.

Despite this, the submission draft plan remains largely unchanged in terms of approach and whilst we appreciate that the role of the appointed Inspector will be to examine the soundness of your draft plan, the evidence and assumptions upon which it is predicated have direct consequences for our own plan-making process.

It is for this reason that we have no option other than to continue to raise significant soundness concerns as set out in the enclosed response.

In terms of process and procedure, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the District Council's response will be considered at a meeting of the Council's Executive on 17 January 2024. As such, should there be any subsequent amendments to the enclosed response, we will send these through as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



Chris Hargraves
Planning Policy Manager