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Subject: Scanned- signed copy of Memo of Cooperation
Date: 07 November 2016 13:16:25
Attachments: [scanned-Staines, Paul - E&E-20161107142151.pdf](#)

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-----Original Message-----

From: Staines, Paul - E&E
Sent: 07 November 2016 13:22
To: Staines, Paul - E&E
Subject:

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[00:17:c8:07:bb:36]

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Memorandum of Co-operation between the local authorities in the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area

Meeting the Objectively Assessed Need for Housing in Oxfordshire

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires Local Planning Authorities (LPA) to have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area. To achieve this, they should prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. The SHMA should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period. This is a key part of the evidence base to address the NPPF requirement of ensuring that Local Plans meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area.
- 1.2 The Localism Act 2011 places a Duty to Co-operate on Local Planning Authorities (LPA). This requires them to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in the preparation of development plan documents where this involves strategic matters. National policy in the NPPF adds to this statutory duty and states that it expects LPAs to demonstrate evidence of having effectively cooperated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts.
- 1.3 The Oxfordshire SHMA 2014 identifies an objectively assessed range of housing need for Oxford of between 24-32,000 homes for the period 2011-2031. The Oxford SHLAA demonstrates that Oxford will not be able to meet all of its housing need within its own boundaries and all Oxfordshire LPAs, together with Oxfordshire County Council agree that assisting Oxford to meet its unmet housing need is a key element of the Duty to Co-operate.
- 1.4 The purpose of this Memorandum of Co-operation is to formally record and make public the agreement of 5 Oxfordshire Local Authorities', under the Duty to Co-operate to the position as set out in this Memorandum, subject to LPA ratification by their full Councils as part of their individual Local Plan preparation.

2.0 The Oxfordshire Housing Market Area

- 2.1 The Oxfordshire Housing Market Area comprises all five Oxfordshire districts; Cherwell, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire.

3.0 Demonstrating the Duty to Co-operate

- 3.1 The five districts within the housing market area, together with Oxfordshire County Council, have collaborated to meet the requirements of the NPPF set out in section 1.2 by addressing the requirement under the Duty to Co-operate to accommodate the unmet housing need for Oxford.
- 3.2 The outputs from this collaboration are the Post SHMA Strategic Work Programme (the Programme). The Programme is a collection of projects designed to enable the six councils of Oxfordshire to arrive at an agreed apportionment of an agreed level of unmet need for Oxford.

3.3 The working assumption for the agreed level of unmet need for the purpose of the Programme is 15,000 homes. This figure is subject to testing through the Oxford Local Plan review

3.4 The apportionment agreed by the five councils who are signatories to this Memorandum is as follows.

	Proportion of unmet need apportioned
Cherwell DC	4400
Oxford City Council	550
South Oxfordshire DC	4950
Vale of White Horse DC	2200
West Oxfordshire DC	2750
Total	14850

3.5 This apportionment is based upon a common assumed start date of 2021 for the commencement of development after the adoption of the respective Local Plan review or Local Plan update/refresh. This assumption does not preclude earlier delivery, but does recognise the complexity of the issues being considered and has sought to factor in reasonable lead times to enable options to come forward and to be fully considered through the Local Plan process.

3.6 The Programme does not seek to identify, propose or recommend any site or sites for additional housing within any district. Each LPA will remain responsible for the allocation of housing sites within its own district and through its own Local Plan process.

4.0 Timetable for implementation

4.1 The anticipated timetable for adoption of the agreed apportionment through each individual LPA Local Plan process is as follows.

Cherwell District Council

The council intends to submit its revised Local Plan, including its share of the apportionment in June / July 2017.

Oxford City Council

Work commenced on Oxford's Local Plan review in January 2016. The Council aims to submit the Plan for examination in December 2018 with adoption anticipated during 2019.

South Oxfordshire District Council

The council proposes submission of its draft Local plan including its response to the apportionment in spring 2017 with adoption in early 2018.

Vale of White Horse District Council

The Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1 is currently at Examination with adoption anticipated early in 2017. Work has commenced on the Local Plan 2031: Part 2 that will address the proportion of Oxford's unmet to be addressed in Vale. It is anticipated that this plan will be submitted in February 2018.

West Oxfordshire District Council

The council intends to respond to the Inspector's preliminary findings with a package of suggested changes to the submission Local Plan in October 2016. The Council proposes that the suggested changes will address its apportionment of Oxford's unmet need and anticipates that the Plan will be adopted in September 2017.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The five authorities that form signatories to this Memorandum agree that the figures in the table 3.4 above represent the agreed apportionment, by district of the agreed level of unmet housing need for Oxford, in order to meet the overall objectively assessed need for additional housing within the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area to 2031.

Signed on behalf of

Cherwell DC..... 

Oxford City Council..... 

Oxfordshire County Council..... 

Vale of White Horse DC..... 

West Oxfordshire DC..... 