

# Statement of Common Ground between Oxford City Council and South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council

## Submission Draft (Regulation 19) Oxford Local Plan 2040

March 2024

### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared by Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, and Vale of White Horse District Council for the Oxford Local Plan 2040. This SoCG reflects and confirms the current position on matters agreed or not agreed by all three parties, with regard to the Duty to Cooperate.

1.2 The area covered by this Statement is Oxford City Council, which is the area covered by the Local Plan 2040. The matters in this Statement are, however, cross boundary and other SoCGs have been prepared on cross boundary matters with other authorities and stakeholders. In addition a separate joint statement of common ground between the five Oxfordshire districts specifically on the subject of Oxford's housing need has been agreed, for clarity housing issues are not covered in this statement. This Statement of Common Ground goes into more detail on other matters specific to South Oxfordshire, VoWH and Oxford, to be considered alongside the Joint SoCG.

### 2.0 Background

2.1 Up until August 2022 the six local authorities in Oxfordshire (Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council) were collaborating on a strategic joint Oxfordshire Plan 2050 with a supporting Oxfordshire-wide evidence base including, amongst other evidence, a housing and employment needs in the form of the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA). That process ended and the local planning authorities are instead preparing individual local plans.

2.2 Various mechanisms for cooperation exist, as set out in Table 1 of the City Council's General Statement of Common Ground.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [general-statement-of-common-ground-august-2023 \(oxford.gov.uk\)](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/general-statement-of-common-ground-august-2023)

### **3.0 Duty to cooperate**

3.1 There is dispute between the parties on whether the Duty to Cooperate has been met, in particular in relation to housing need as set out in the Oxfordshire Joint Statement of Common Ground.

### **4.0 Strategic Matters**

#### **Housing need and unmet need to 2036**

4.1 In the last round of local plans, through collective joint working through the Oxfordshire Growth Board, and subsequently work on OLP2036, there was a working assumption that the unmet need for Oxford was 14,850. An apportionment split of the unmet need was agreed by Oxfordshire Growth Board, with 4,950 to South Oxfordshire and 2,200 to VoWH.

4.2 The apportionment of unmet need, as set out in OLP2036, was addressed in full in existing Local Plans. South Oxfordshire made provision for 4,950 homes for Oxford, through sites allocated in its Local Plan 2035 (adopted in 2020); whilst VoWH made provision for 2,200 homes for Oxford, in its Local Plan Part 2 2031 (adopted in 2019). The consultation draft Regulation 18 document for the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan indicates that the level of need previously agreed to be accommodated, and the site allocations relevant to contributing towards that unmet need, will be carried forwards in the new Joint Local Plan, albeit with some tweaks to specific sites.

#### **Housing need and requirement to 2040**

4.3 Matters relating to Oxford City Council's housing need, housing capacity, housing requirement and unmet need are discussed in the Joint Oxfordshire Statement of Common Ground.

#### **Unmet housing need to 2040**

4.4 South Oxfordshire and VoWH District Councils will meet all of their own identified housing needs and do not require Oxford to meet any of their housing needs.

#### **Economic needs**

4.5 Oxford does not require South Oxfordshire or VoWH Districts to accommodate any of its employment needs to 2040. Neither do those councils at this stage require the city to accommodate any of their employment needs to 2040.

## 5.0 Other strategic matters

- The parties will continue to work collaboratively with the other Oxfordshire authorities on a *Gypsy and Traveller Needs* Assessment to inform their respective Local Plans.
- *Cowley Branch Line*: Oxford and South Oxfordshire District Council continue to support the principle of the delivery of the Cowley Branch Line.
- There are not unresolved duty to cooperate issues relating to the *provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development*
- *Provision of infrastructure for transport*: the cumulative impact of growth on the local and wider transport network is a strategic matter and the Councils will work constructively with Oxfordshire County Council, National Highways and other stakeholders to plan for future highway infrastructure improvements and to support the delivery of the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.
- There are no outstanding Duty to Cooperate concerns between the two parties in relation to the issue of *provision of health infrastructure and local facilities*
- There are no outstanding Duty to Cooperate concerns between the two parties in relation to the issue of *climate change mitigation and adaptation including flood risk*
- *Conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape*: there are no outstanding duty to cooperate issues regarding this issue between the parties.

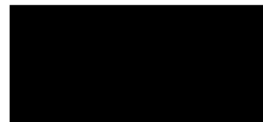
Signed on behalf of South Oxfordshire District Council



Mark Stone, Chief Executive

Date: 28 March 2024

Signed on behalf of Vale of White Horse District Council



Mark Stone, Chief Executive

Date: 28 March 2024

**Signed on behalf of Oxford City Council**



**David Butler, Head of Planning and Regulatory Services**

**Date: 27 March 2024**

## Appendix 1: Key meetings and information sharing

<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of engagement</b>
<b>27<sup>th</sup> March 2023</b>	<b>Policy officers</b>
<b>26<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b>	<b>Policy officers</b>
<b>19<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>OPPO (Policy managers)</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> August</b>	<b>Sharing of HELAA draft report</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup> August</b>	<b>Circulation of note to policy managers</b>
<b>5<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>OPPO</b>
<b>13<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>Workshop</b>
<b>19<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>Policy officers</b>