

Cherwell District Council

Executive

26 February 2018

<p style="text-align: center;">Submission of the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 - Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs</p>
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Report of Executive Director for Place and Growth

This report is public

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the submission of the Partial Review of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for independent examination.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the responses to the consultation on the Proposed Submission draft of the Partial Review of the Local Plan summarised in the Statement of Consultation at Appendix 4.
- 1.2 To note the supporting documents relevant to the preparation of the Partial Review of the Local Plan presented at Appendices 5 to 12 and available on line at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/112/evidence-base/369/local-plan-part-1-partial-review---evidence-base> .
- 1.3 To approve the Schedule of Focused Changes and Minor Modifications to the Proposed Submission draft of the Partial Review of the Local Plan presented at Appendix 3.
- 1.4 To approve the Proposed Submission Draft of the Partial Review (July 2017) (Appendix 2) incorporating the Schedule of Focused Changes and Minor Modifications (Appendix 3) as the Submission draft of the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031.
- 1.5 To recommend to Council that it submits the Submission draft of the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for independent examination with all necessary prescribed and supporting documents.

- 1.6 To authorise the Executive Director for Place and Growth to make any necessary, presentational changes to the Submission draft of the Partial Review and to necessary prescribed and supporting documents before the meeting of the Council.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 This report presents the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 – Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs for approval and subsequent presentation to Council as a 'Submission' Local Plan. Upon approval by Council the Plan would be submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for independent examination.

2.2 Members are invited to consider the following documents:

- i. the Proposed Submission Plan (July 2017) previously approved by Members for consultation in June 2017 (Appendix 2);
- ii. the Statement of Consultation (Appendix 4) which summarises how consultation informed preparation of the Plan; summarises the representations received to the Proposed Submission Plan and identifies the main issues arising from those representations (a copy has also been placed in the Members' Room). Members are advised that the representations are available in full at: <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/112/evidence-base/369/local-plan-part-1-partial-review---evidence-base> and also in the Members' Room (evidence doc. PR78);
- iii. the proposed Schedule of Focused Changes and Minor Modifications (Appendix 3) which officers consider would improve and update the draft Plan in view of the representations received;
- iv. the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Proposed Submission Local Plan (with Non-Technical Summary) (Appendix 5), SA Addendum (Appendix 6) relating to the Focused Changes and Minor Modifications, and the SA Non-Technical Summary (Appendix 7) (together comprising the full Sustainability Appraisal);
- v. other supporting documents and background papers also comprising the evidence base for the Partial Review of the Local Plan (available at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/112/evidence-base/369/local-plan-part-1-partial-review---evidence-base>).

2.3 Following approval by the Executive and Council, these documents would comprise the Submission documents and would be subject to independent examination.

2.4 Their presentation to Members marks the conclusion of work undertaken since 2015 to consider how to sustainably accommodate additional housing to help Oxford meet its unmet housing need in the context of a countywide Housing Market Area. The Plan is informed by the output of cooperation and a concerted programme of work undertaken jointly by the Oxfordshire councils through the Oxfordshire Growth Board in the interest of responding to Oxford's housing need, including for affordable housing, and in support of countywide economic growth.

2.5 This Council committed to working on an on-going basis with the other Oxfordshire councils under the statutory 'duty to cooperate' in the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 adopted on 20 July 2015 (para. B.95). The Oxfordshire councils had all

recognised that Oxford may not be able to accommodate the whole of its new housing requirement for the 2011-2031 period within its administrative boundary.

- 2.6 The Plan made it clear that if joint work between the authorities revealed that Cherwell and other districts needed to meet additional need for Oxford, this would trigger a 'Partial Review' of the Local Plan.
- 2.7 Preparatory work began in 2015. On 19 November 2015 the Oxfordshire Growth Board agreed a total working figure for Oxford's unmet housing need of 15,000 homes (evidence doc. PR12). A consultation on issues for the Partial Review took place from January to March 2016 (evidence doc. PR20). On 26 September 2016, following the completion of a programme of work (see para's. 3.7 to 3.13 below), the Oxfordshire Growth Board agreed an apportionment of Oxford's identified unmet housing need to the district councils (evidence doc. PR27). This included the delivery of 4,400 homes in Cherwell by 2031 in addition to the 22,840 homes provided for by the adopted Local Plan. A consultation on options took place from November 2016 to January 2017 (evidence doc. PR47). On 19 June 2017, the Executive approved the Proposed Submission Document for the purpose of inviting representations (evidence doc. PR70).
- 2.8 Consultation on the Proposed Submission Plan commenced on 17 July 2017 and extended to 10 October 2017 (Appendix 4). A total of 1460 representations were received in response to the consultation (evidence doc. PR78). They have now been considered by officers in reviewing whether the Partial Review (the Plan) is 'sound' and legally compliant - the tests of the independent examination of the Plan that commences upon the Plan's submission to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- 2.9 To be considered 'sound' the Plan must be shown to be:
 - i. positively prepared – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - ii. justified – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
 - iii. effective – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
 - iv. consistent with national policy – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.
- 2.10 Legal compliance includes whether the Plan has been prepared in accordance with required procedures including the duty to cooperate with prescribed bodies on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries, particularly those which relate to strategic priorities.

2.11 The view of officers is that the Plan is sound but that a number of 'focused changes' and 'minor modifications' should be made to it in the interests of its improvement, clarification and updating and to address minor presentational, grammatical and typographical issues. These are all presented in the schedule presented at Appendix 3 to this report.

2.12 Guidance produced by the Planning Inspectorate (*'Procedural Practice in the Examination of Local Plans'*, 4th edition, June 2016) clarifies how such changes will be dealt with by an Inspector who examines a Local Plan:

'3.3 Where an addendum of focussed changes has been submitted with the published plan, the Inspector will also make an early assessment of the nature and status of the addendum. He/she will consider if the changes do not result in a change to the plan's strategy, and whether they have been subject to public consultation (and sustainability appraisal, where necessary). If the Inspector is satisfied on all of these points, the addendum can be considered as part of the submitted plan and the Inspector will make this clear in the initial guidance note (or at the [Pre-Hearing Meeting] if one is held). If this is not the case, the Inspector will usually treat these proposed changes in the same way as any other proposed main modification at post-submission pre-hearing stage...' (i.e. where appropriate, be subject to a process of publicity and the opportunity to make representations).

'3.4. Given that the [Local Planning Authority] can make additional (i.e. minor) modifications to a plan on adoption, it is not necessary for a submission plan to be accompanied by a schedule of minor changes. If the LPA considers that changes are minor it does not need to subject them to the formal examination process. The LPA will be accountable on adoption for the scope of these minor changes.'

2.13 The schedule presented at Appendix 3 includes both proposed focused changes and minor modifications in the interest of being comprehensive but differentiates between them. It is the view of officers that those considerations pertinent to the focused changes have been the subject of consultation. The changes have also been the subject of Sustainability Appraisal (see SA Addendum at Appendix 6) to determine whether or not they are likely to have any significant environmental, social or economic effects which might affect the overall appraisal of the Plan's sustainability. The Proposed Submission Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix 5) and SA Addendum (Appendices 6&7) together comprise the submission Sustainability Appraisal. The proposed changes have also been screened through the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process (Appendices 8&9).

2.14 The focused changes do not significantly affect the Plan but entail refinement of existing policies having regard to additional information included in representations, on-going cooperation and discussions with consultees and the completion of the Plan's evidence base.

2.15 In summary, the main focused changes are:

- i. the lowering of the total number of homes proposed on land to the west of Yarnton (Policy PR9) from 530 homes to 440 homes to improve the deliverability of the site and achieve a high quality of design;
- ii. the reconfiguration of the residential area within the site proposed for allocation to the east of Woodstock (Policy PR10) to respond more

accurately and sensitively to archaeological constraints and increasing the proposed number of homes from 410 to 500 homes having regard to the additional information;

- iii. the introduction of criteria for any potential application for planning permission for the potential development of a golf course at Frieze Farm (Policy PR6c) if needed to replace the golf course proposed for development to the west of Oxford Road (Policy PR6b). The criteria added are consistent with criteria already included in the Plan for other sites.
- iv. deletion of specific references to densities of development within the site policies in view of the required development brief process and to avoid misinterpretation of net and gross densities having regard to different site circumstances;
- v. updating of education requirements in light of further information from Oxfordshire County Council;
- vi. clarification of points of access / connectivity on and within development sites, where required and appropriate, in light of further information from the County Council;
- vii. updating of the infrastructure schedule in view of further information from service providers;
- viii. updating of the consultation requirement in respect of foul drainage connections to ensure any necessary increases in capacity are provided for (*note: relates to further information for the Water Cycle Study*);
- ix. requirement for soil management plans in site policies to encourage the best use of natural resources;
- x. more explicit requirements for sought Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) and archaeological investigations to be taken into account in preparing development schemes in light of comments from Historic England;
- xi. addition of a caveat to the development of safeguarded land to the north of Shipton Road, Woodstock (land reserved at site PR10 for either education or sports pitch use) to require agreement with Historic England following completion of a Heritage Impact Assessment (*note: a HIA has been commissioned by the Council*);
- xii. removal of the requirement to retain land at site PR10 (south east of Woodstock) in agricultural use (within a designated area of green space) to maximise the opportunity for any archaeology to remain undisturbed in light of comments from Historic England;
- xiii. requirement to consult with the Canal and River Trust on development briefs for canalside sites (Policy PR7b – land at Stratfield Farm and Policy PR8 – land east of the A44);
- xiv. requirement for the Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) for site PR8 (land east of the A44) to be informed by a hydrogeological risk assessment to

avoid changes to ground water levels that could have an adverse impact on Rushy Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (*note: see para's. 3.193 to 3.195 of this report*);

- xv. updating of requirements relating to Flood Risk Assessment;
- xvi. clarification on the 5 year supply requirements for development sites;
- xvii. requirements for place shaping principles to be agreed with the Council for any unallocated sites that might be considered under the provisions of Policy PR12b to ensure consistency of approach with policies for allocated sites;
- xviii. requirement for any unallocated sites that might be considered under Policy PR12b to provide 50% affordable housing to ensure consistency of approach with policies for allocated sites.

2.16 Officers recommend that the focused changes and minor modifications presented at Appendix 3 be approved and presented to Council for consideration as part of the submission plan.

3.0 Report Details

Background

3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012) includes requirements for the Council to:

- i. have a clear understanding of housing needs in its area;
- ii. prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries;
- iii. work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans;
- iv. work together to meet development requirements which cannot wholly be met within their own areas, for instance because of a lack of physical capacity or because to do so would cause significant harm to national principles and policies;
- v. produce Local Plans in accordance with a statutory Duty to Cooperate with prescribed bodies (including Oxford City Council and the other Oxfordshire Councils);
- vi. meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development.

3.2 The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment was published in April 2014. This found that across Oxfordshire, there is an identified need for provision of around 5,000 homes a year over the period 2011 to 2031. The adopted Cherwell Local Plan provides for Cherwell's needs – some 22,840 homes from 2011 to 2031. Oxford's needs are identified as being between 1,200 and 1,600 homes a year, a potential requirement of around 28,000 additional homes by 2031 (evidence doc. PR04).

3.3 In 2014, through the then 'Shadow' Oxfordshire Growth Board, all of Oxfordshire's councils accepted that Oxford could not fully meet its own housing needs. They collectively committed to consider the extent of Oxford's unmet need and how that need might be sustainably distributed to the neighbouring districts so that this could be tested through their respective Local Plans. This was supported by a Statement of Cooperation (evidence doc. PR01).

3.4 When the existing Cherwell Local Plan was being prepared the Council proposed a commitment to the Partial Review of the Local Plan in the event that there was a need to provide additional housing for Oxford. The Government appointed Planning Inspector who examined the Plan stated,

'...It is ...essential for clarity and soundness that the Council's firm commitment to help meet the needs of Oxford city as part of the countywide housing market area, jointly with other relevant authorities including through the Oxfordshire Growth Board, as well as in respect of the Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal (2014), is formally recorded in the plan...' (Inspector's Report, para. 62, evidence doc. PR45).

3.5 His Non-Technical Summary records: *'Add a formal commitment from the Council, together with other relevant Councils, to undertake a joint review of the boundaries of the Oxford Green Belt, once the specific level of help required by the city of Oxford to meet its needs that cannot reasonably be met within its present confines, is fully and accurately defined'* (Inspector's Report, p.3)

3.6 The commitment is provided at para. B.95 of the existing Local Plan (2015):

'Cherwell District Council will continue to work under the 'Duty to Co-operate' with all other Oxfordshire Local Authorities on an on-going basis to address the objectively assessed need for housing across the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area and to meet joint commitments such as the Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal (2014). As a first step Cherwell District Council has sought to accommodate the housing need for Cherwell District in full in the Cherwell Local Plan. Cherwell District Council recognises that Oxford may not be able to accommodate the whole of its new housing requirement for the 2011-2031 period within its administrative boundary. The urban capacity of Oxford is as yet unconfirmed. Cherwell District Council will continue to work jointly and proactively with the Oxfordshire local authorities and through the Oxfordshire Growth Board to assess all reasonable spatial options, including the release of brownfield land, the potential for a new settlement and a full strategic review of the boundaries of the Oxford Green Belt. These issues are not for Cherwell to consider in isolation. These options will need to be undertaken in accordance with national policy, national guidance, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) regulations, and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to establish how and where any unmet need might best be accommodated within the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area. Joint work will need to comprehensively consider how spatial options could be supported by necessary infrastructure to ensure an integrated approach to the delivery of housing, jobs and services. Full public consultation will be central to a 'sound' process and outcome. If this joint work reveals that Cherwell and other Districts need to meet additional need for Oxford, this will trigger a partial review of the Local Plan, to be completed within two years of adoption, and taking the form of the preparation of a separate Development

Plan Document for that part of the unmet need to be accommodated in the Cherwell District. The Council will engage in joint working on supporting technical work such as countywide Sustainability Appraisal as required to support the identification of a sustainable approach to meeting agreed, unmet needs.'

- 3.7 In November 2014, the Oxfordshire Growth Board agreed a joint work programme for considering the level of unmet housing need and how that need could be distributed to the individual district councils (evidence doc. PR05).
- 3.8 On 19 November 2015, the Growth Board agreed a total working figure for Oxford's unmet housing need of 15,000 homes. On the basis of Oxford's overall housing need being 28,000 homes from (2011-2031), this meant approximately 13,000 homes being provided within Oxford's administrative boundary (evidence doc. PR12).
- 3.9 On 26 September 2016, the Growth Board considered a report summarising the output of the countywide work programme (evidence doc. PR27). This comprised:
- i. the review of the urban capacity of Oxford to inform agreement on the level of unmet housing need (evidence doc. PR11, PR08 & PR09);
 - ii. a Green Belt Study to assess the extent to which the land within the Oxford Green Belt performs against the purposes of the Green Belt as defined in national policy (evidence doc. PR13);
 - iii. the sustainability testing of spatial options to help inform the apportionment of unmet need to the rural districts (evidence doc. PR14);
 - iv. a high level transport assessment of spatial options (evidence doc. PR15);
 - v. an education assessment of spatial options (evidence doc. PR16).
- 3.10 The Growth Board decided on an apportionment of 14,850 homes between the district and city councils (evidence doc. PR27). Cherwell district was asked to consider the accommodation of 4,400 homes in addition to its existing Local Plan commitments (some 22,840 homes).

Oxfordshire Growth Board Apportionment of Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs	
District	Apportionment - No.of Homes (Net)
Cherwell	4400
Oxford	550
South Oxfordshire*	4950
Vale of White Horse	2200
West Oxfordshire	2750
Total	14850

*South Oxfordshire did not agree to the final proposed apportionment

- 3.11 The Leadership of South Oxfordshire District Council did not agree to the final apportionment. However, with regard to effective joint working, it should be noted that South Oxfordshire District Council had been engaged in the Growth Board work programme for its duration and that its officers had agreed the final report recommended to the Growth Board as well as all intermediate progress reports.

- 3.12 The Growth Board work programme enabled a countywide, cooperative decision to be made on how the unmet housing need should be accommodated at a district level. It has informed the plan making process of the Cherwell Partial Review but as a non-statutory planning process it does not bind the Council to planning for 4,400 homes nor a prescribed approach or outcome as to how or where the Council should provide for Oxford's unmet housing need. The Partial Review process does this on a statutory plan making basis and tests the sustainability and deliverability of providing for an additional 4,400 homes.
- 3.13 In November 2016, following the apportionment decision, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed by the Leaders of all the Oxfordshire Councils (except South Oxfordshire) making clear the agreed position (evidence doc. PR28):
- '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'* (para. 3.4);
- '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'* (para. 3.6).
- 3.14 West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) has responded to the apportionment decision by making provision in its draft Local Plan (as at September 2017) for a further 2,750 homes in the period 2021 – 2031 to assist with the unmet housing needs of Oxford in addition to addressing its own needs (approximately 15,950 homes) (i.e. in accordance with the Growth Board apportionment). It has publicly corresponded with its Local Plan Inspector on final modifications and associated consultation. The Inspector has advised (16 January 2018) that subject to modifications the Plan is capable of being legally compliant and sound.
- 3.15 The Vale of White Horse Local Plan (Part 1), adopted in December 2016 but prepared prior to the Growth Board decision of 26 September 2016, provides a commitment (para. 1.26) to a Local Plan Part 2 '*closely informed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board process to apportion the 'working assumption' unmet need figure of 15,000...*'. It states, '*...if the Part 2 plan is not adopted within two years of the adoption of Local Plan 2031: Part 1, then from that time until the adoption of the Part 2 Plan, the Council's housing requirement will be 20,560 plus the agreed quantum of Oxford's unmet housing need to be addressed within the Vale of White Horse District*'. Vale consulted on a Publication [Proposed Submission] Version of its Part 2 Plan in October 2017. It states (p.20), '*The Part 1 plan allocates strategic development sites to fully meet the Vale's own housing requirement up to 2031 (20,560 homes)...*'; '*...the additional housing allocations needed to ensure the agreed quantum of unmet housing for Oxford to be addressed within the Vale is also fully met...is for 2,200 homes to be delivered ...up to 2031...*'. (i.e. in accordance with the Growth Board apportionment). All Oxfordshire councils have committed to Plan for and support the delivery of 100,000 new homes between 2011 and 2031 in the Outline Agreement for the Oxfordshire Growth Deal (Appendix 11) (by reference to the SHMA 2014 at para. 24).

Preparation of the Proposed Submission Local Plan (July 2017)

- 3.16 Preparation of the Plan began in 2015 following adoption of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031. An issues consultation paper for the Partial Review was approved by Members on 4 January 2016 (evidence doc. PR19) and published that month with a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (evidence docs. PR20 & PR25). The consultation paper highlighted issues potentially requiring consideration in undertaking the Partial Review. The paper was prepared to inform engagement with local communities, partners and stakeholders in the early stage of the Partial Review process and to ensure that a wide cross-section of views were obtained. A 'call for sites' was made in the interest of identifying sites that might be appropriate to develop to help meet Oxford's housing needs.
- 3.17 Two workshops took place for Parish/Town Councils in the north and south of the district on 23 and 24 February 2016 respectively. A meeting with Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum (Oxford) and with Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum (Oxford) took place on 2 March 2016. A total of 148 representations were received (Appendix 4).
- 3.18 On 7 November 2016, the outcome of the Oxfordshire Growth Board work programme was presented to Members (evidence doc. PR69) together with a proposed options consultation paper and the results of consultation at the issues stage. The representations and site submissions received in response to the previous issues paper and the wider 'call for sites' were made publicly available (evidence doc. PR21) and a Statement of Consultation (evidence doc. PR24) was presented to Members. This included an extensive schedule of the comments received in relation to each issues paper question.
- 3.19 The Executive noted the Oxfordshire Growth Board's decision to apportion 4,400 homes to Cherwell in the interest of meeting Oxford's agreed unmet housing need and approved the options paper for formal public consultation.
- 3.20 Consultation on the options paper (evidence doc. PR47) took place between November 2016 and January 2017. The consultation matters included the level of housing the council was being asked to accommodate, a draft vision and objectives for the Partial Review, potential areas of search for accommodating development, potential strategic development sites and the emerging evidence base. The consultation was supported by an Interim Transport Assessment (evidence doc. PR22) and Initial Sustainability Appraisal (PR23) in addition to other documents.
- 3.21 During the consultation period workshops were held with Parish/Town Councils on 7 and 12 December 2016 and other stakeholders on 13 December. Four staffed, public exhibitions were held - in Banbury (26 November), Bicester (3 December), Cutteslowe in Oxford (10 December) and in Kidlington (19 December) (Appendix 4).
- 3.22 A total of 1225 responses were received to the options consultation. The Statement of Consultation presented at Appendix 4 sets out the main issues raised and how those issues were taken into account preparing the Proposed Submission Document (Appendix 2).
- 3.23 Following the options consultation, plan preparation continued supported by evidence gathering including:

- Habitats Regulations Assessment screening (PR30);
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (PR31 & PR32);
- the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (PR35);
- the County Council's A44-A4260 Corridor Study (PR36);
- the County Council's Park and Ride (Oxford) Report (PR37);
- a Green Belt Study (PR40)
- a Small-Scale Green Belt Review relating to commitments in the adopted Local Plan to accommodate high value employment needs (PR42);
- a Strategic Economic Growth Study (PR41);
- a Viability Assessment (PR 49);
- a Village Analysis Study (PR50);
- a Landscape Character Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (including heritage and ecology review) (PR51);
- a Transport Assessment (PR52);
- Sequential and Exception Tests (Flooding) (PR53);
- a draft Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (PR54);
- a draft Water Cycle Study (PR71);
- other supporting documents; and,
- an underpinning process of Sustainability Appraisal (PR43).

3.24 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) scoped the issues for preparing the plan, established sustainability objectives and tested the vision and objectives for the Plan against them. The SA objectives were used to appraise the likely environmental, social and economic effects of providing for 4,400 homes and the effects of providing a significantly higher or lower number. It appraised areas of search as broad locations for accommodating growth across the district and specific development sites within those areas of search which were taken forward.

3.25 A summary of the reasons that specific areas of search and sites were taken forward or rejected was provided within the Sustainability Appraisal. This took into account the results of the sustainability appraisal itself and other planning considerations. The environmental, social and economic effects of proposed policies were also appraised, and mitigations identified, to inform the preparation of a sustainable plan.

3.26 Officers examined nine areas of search as potential broad locations for accommodating the development). Within these areas a total of 147 potential sites had been identified comprising at least two hectares of land (Appendix 5). The Areas of Search (illustrated at Appendix 5, Non-Technical Summary, Figure 1.10), were as follows:

Option A	Kidlington & Surrounding Area
Option B	North & East of Kidlington
Option C	Junction 9, M40
Option D	Arccott
Option E	Bicester and Surrounding Area
Option F	Former RAF Upper Heyford & Surrounding Area
Option G	Junction 10, M40
Option H	Banbury & Surrounding Area
Option I	Remainder of District / Rural Dispersal

- 3.27 The outcome of the plan preparation process, informed by the evidence base (including the Sustainability Appraisal) and the outcome of consultation, was that Option C through to Option I were not considered to be suitable for accommodating housing to help meet Oxford's unmet housing needs for the following reasons:
- i. they were less well situated to build communities associated with Oxford;
 - ii. they were less well situated to assist with the delivery of the Oxford Transport Strategy, in terms of existing sustainable travel connectivity and the opportunity for sustainable commuter travel behaviour;
 - iii. they were more likely to result in a higher level of commuting to Oxford by private motor vehicle;
 - iv. they were likely to result in less affordable transport options for accessing Oxford for potential occupiers of affordable and low cost housing
 - v. more dispersed options provided less opportunity for strategic infrastructure investment (e.g. transport and education);
 - vi. the likelihood that significant additional development could not be built at Bicester, Banbury and RAF Upper Heyford by 2031 in addition to that in the existing Local Plan (2015).
- 3.28 It was concluded that options C to I, or a combination of any options including C to I, would not sufficiently deliver the vision and objectives which underpin the Partial Review.
- 3.29 Additionally, it was concluded that option C to I would have a greater detrimental impact on the development strategy for Cherwell set out in the existing adopted Cherwell Local Plan (2015). The reasons for this are documented in section 7 of the Sustainability Appraisal (see Appendix 5).
- 3.30 Option A (Kidlington & Surrounding Area) and Option B (North & East of Kidlington) were considered to be most suitable for meeting Oxford's needs.
- 3.31 In summary, this was because of:
- i. the proximity to Oxford, the existing availability of public transport and the opportunity to maximise the use of sustainable and affordable transport in accessing Oxford's key employment areas and services and facilities;
 - ii. the opportunity to achieve an overall, proportionate reduction in reliance on the private motor vehicle in accessing Oxford's key employment areas and services and facilities and to achieve further investment in sustainable transport infrastructure;
 - iii. the deliverability of sustainable transport improvements in comparison to other Areas of Search;
 - iv. relationship of existing communities to Oxford;
 - v. existing economic relationship between the areas of search and Oxford;
 - vi. the opportunity to provide affordable homes to meet Oxford's identified need close to the source of that need.
- 3.32 It was concluded that Options A and B could deliver the vision and objectives which underpin the Partial Review. Furthermore, it was considered that they would not significantly undermine the delivery of the development strategy for meeting Cherwell's needs set out in the existing Local Plan (2015). In the absence of other suitable options, Areas A and B were taken forward.

- 3.33 Within Areas A and B a total of 41 site options were considered and assessed for inclusion in the Partial Review. These sites were assessed through the consideration of range of evidence including landscape, transport, land availability, flood risk and green belt studies. They were also assessed with the benefit of feedback from consultation, through the preparation of a Habitats Regulations Assessment, and through the Sustainability Appraisal of the likely environmental, social and economic effects of developing each site and the synergistic and cumulative effects of the proposed growth.
- 3.34 Many of the sites identified were situated within the Oxford Green Belt. In addition to their overall sustainability, sites were also considered for their suitability in meeting the Partial Review's vision and objectives. Sites within the Green Belt were only taken forward in the absence of other suitable alternatives.
- 3.35 On 19 June 2017, a draft Proposed Submission document was presented to the Executive (evidence doc. PR70), along with the Sustainability Appraisal, Statement of Consultation, Equalities Impact Assessment. A public link was provided in the report to the evidence base at that time including the representations received to the previous consultation on options (evidence doc. PR29). The Proposed Submission document (Appendix 2) was approved for the purpose of inviting representations.

Duty to Cooperate

- 3.36 The Duty to Cooperate is a statutory requirement for the Council to cooperate with Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and other prescribed bodies when it undertakes certain activities, including the preparation of Local Plans and in relation to cross-boundary strategic matters. This is to maximise the effectiveness with which activities are undertaken. LPAs are required 'to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis'.
- 3.37 For Cherwell the local planning authorities that border Cherwell are:
- Aylesbury Vale District Council
 - Buckinghamshire County Council
 - Northamptonshire County Council
 - Oxford City Council
 - Oxfordshire County Council
 - South Northamptonshire Council
 - South Oxfordshire District Council
 - Stratford-on-Avon District Council
 - Vale of White Horse District Council
 - Warwickshire County Council
 - West Oxfordshire District Council
- 3.38 Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) sets out the other prescribed bodies for the purposes of implementing the Duty. Of those bodies listed in the Regulation, the following bodies are relevant to Cherwell District:
- The Environment Agency
 - Historic England

- Natural England
- The Civil Aviation Authority
- The Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes Agency)
- The NHS Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- The NHS England South East
- The Office of Rail Regulation
- The Highways Authority:
 - Oxfordshire County Council
 - Highways Agency (now Highways England)
- The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- The South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership
- The Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership

3.39 In preparing the Partial Review of the Local Plan, officers have engaged with the prescribed bodies in order to identify and consider relevant strategic issues and respond effectively in the preparation of the Plan. This is explained in the Duty to Cooperate statement (Appendix 10) and supplemented by the Statement of Consultation (Appendix 4).

The Proposals of the Proposed Submission Local Plan (July 2017)

3.40 The Proposed Submission Plan (July 2017) as presented to members in June 2017 (Appendix 2) does the following:

- i. Section 1 explains why the plan has been produced and how an understanding of Oxford's unmet housing need has been arrived at;
- ii. Section 2 explains how the Plan has been prepared including the options considered in arriving at our development strategy;
- iii. Section 3 sets the scene for the Plan; describing the county, Cherwell and Oxford context and the wider cross-regional issues;
- iv. Section 4 describes a vision and objectives for helping to meet Oxford's unmet housing need within Cherwell;
- v. Section 5 provides our strategy for meeting the vision and objectives in a way that achieves sustainable development including policies for strategic development sites to provide the required homes;
- vi. Section 6 explains how we will ensure that the strategy is delivered.

3.41 The Plan's vision for meeting Oxford's unmet housing needs in Cherwell is as follows (Appendix 2, p.58):

'To provide new development that meets Oxford's agreed, identified housing needs, supports the city's world-class economy, universities and its local employment base, and ensures that people have convenient, affordable and sustainable travel opportunities to the city's places of work, study and recreation, and to its services and facilities. This development will be provided so that it:

- i. creates balanced and sustainable communities*

- ii. *is well connected to Oxford*
- iii. *is of exemplar design which responds distinctively and sensitively to the local built, historic and environmental context*
- iv. *is supported by necessary infrastructure*
- v. *provides for a range of household types and incomes reflecting Oxford's diverse needs*
- vi. *contributes to improving health and well-being, and*
- vii. *seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment.'*

3.42 To achieve this vision, the Plan has a number of objectives (Appendix 2, p.60). In summary they involve:

- i. partnership working to meet needs and required infrastructure by 2031
- ii. providing development so it supports the projected economic growth which underpins the housing needs and local Oxford and Cherwell economies
- iii. substantively providing affordable access to new homes for those requiring affordable housing, new entrants to the housing market, key workers and those requiring access to Oxford's key employment areas; and, providing well designed development that responds to the local context
- iv. providing development so that it complements the County Council's Local Transport Plan (including the Oxford Transport Strategy) and facilitates demonstrable and deliverable improvements to the availability of sustainable transport for access to Oxford.

3.43 The Plan's strategy (Appendix 2, p. 62-67) has been prepared to meet these objectives and achieve the vision. It seeks to meet Oxford's specific needs while achieving substantial benefit for Cherwell's communities.

3.44 The Plan provides for development that will support the city's economy, universities and its local employment base and ensure that people have convenient, affordable and sustainable travel opportunities to the city's places of work and to its services and facilities.

3.45 The strategy prioritises the need for development to be well connected to Oxford, to be related to the area of the district that has the strongest economic and social relationships with the city, which is fully integrated with the County Council's sustainable transport policies, which seeks to grasp the opportunities for distinctive place-shaping and which provides a consolidated approach to green infrastructure and for the achievement of net gains in biodiversity.

3.46 The Plan focuses development on a geographic area extending north from Oxford to south Kidlington, along the A44 corridor to Yarnton and Begbroke, and up to Woodstock in West Oxfordshire (Appendix 2, p.65, figure 10).

3.47 The Plan is not without controversy. It involves development in the Oxford Green Belt - a designated area of land around Oxford in which existing planning policies have the fundamental aim of preventing urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Under national planning policy, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances through the preparation or review of a Local Plan.

3.48 Having considered all reasonable options for accommodating development, the Plan explains (Appendix 2, p. 66-67. para. 5.17), that there are exceptional

circumstances for development in the Green Belt to help meet Oxford's needs within Cherwell.

3.49 The consideration of all other reasonable options suggested that a sustainable alternative could not be delivered without unacceptable harm to the existing Cherwell development strategy. The Plan avoids undermining the strategy of the existing Cherwell Local Plan (2015) and the delivery of planned growth at Bicester, Banbury and Former RAF Upper Heyford. Other examined options outside the Green Belt would not deliver development that sufficiently and sustainably meets Oxford's needs so that it achieves the Plan's vision.

3.50 In summary, the Plan's proposed policies seek to achieve the following:

- i. deliver the required homes for Oxford by 2031 in a form that achieves sustainable development (policy PR1: Appendix 2, p.69);
- ii. deliver a mix, tenure and size of homes that responds to identified needs (policy PR2: Appendix 2, p.73);
- iii. exceptionally allow for development in the Green Belt having considered all other reasonable options and the vision and objectives we need to achieve (policy PR3: Appendix 2, p. 77-78);
- iv. maximise the opportunity for affordable and sustainable transportation from development areas to Oxford's key employment areas, services and facilities (policy PR4a: Appendix 2, p. 82);
- v. use the advantage of sustainable transport opportunities to help strengthen Kidlington centre in accordance with the existing Local Plan (2015) and the Kidlington Framework Masterplan (policy PR4b: Appendix 2, p.83);
- vi. provide a consolidated and integrated approach to the provision of green infrastructure alongside new development, particularly within the Green Belt (policy PR5: Appendix 2, p. 86);

3.51 The Plan provides for the development of strategic sites that will best achieve the vision and objectives and deliver sustainable development in the Oxfordshire, Cherwell, Oxford and wider context.

3.52 The proposed sites included in the Proposed Submission Plan (July 2017), and the respective number of dwellings planned, are as follows:

Plan Area	Policy / Site	Page No. (Appendix 2)	No. of Homes
North Oxford	Policy PR6a – Land East of Oxford Road	89-94	650
	Policy PR6b – Land West of Oxford Road	95-99	530
	Policy PR6c – Land at Frieze Farm (reserved site for replacement Golf Course)	100-101	-

Kidlington	Policy PR7a – Land South East of Kidlington	106-110	230
	Policy PR7b – Land at Stratfield Farm	111-116	100
Begbroke	Policy PR8 – Land East of the A44	120-126	1950
Yarnton	Policy PR9 – Land West of Yarnton	129-133	530 (see para. 3.197 below)
Woodstock	Policy PR10 – Land South East of Woodstock	138-143	410 (see para. 3.202 below)
Total			4400

3.53 The Plan's proposed policies map shows the location of the sites (see Appendix 2, p158).

Consultation on the Proposed Submission Plan (July 2017)

3.54 Following the Executive's approval of the Plan in June 2017, the consultation period on the Proposed Submission Plan commenced on 17 July 2017. Originally intended to run from 17 July to 29 August, the consultation period was extended to 10 October 2017 (supported by additional publicity) in the context of significant public interest and providing the opportunity for a number of additional documents to be considered. These comprised a Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (evidence doc. PR54) (published as a draft), appendices that had not originally been included within the County Council's A44/A4260 Corridor Study (evidence doc. PR36) and a Position Statement on Open Space and Recreation (evidence doc. PR72). The additional documents were published on 25 August 2017, thereby being available for six weeks.

3.55 Staffed public exhibitions were held during July and August 2017 at the following locations:

- Shipton-on-Cherwell Village Hall on Wednesday 19 July 2017;
- Yarnton Village Hall on Friday 21 July 2017;
- Woodstock Community Centre (West Oxfordshire) on Thursday 27 July 2017;
- Cutteslowe Pavilion, Cutteslowe Park (Oxford) on Tuesday 1 August 2017;
- Begbroke Village Hall on Wednesday 2 August 2017;
- Exeter Hall, Kidlington on Thursday 17 August 2017.

3.56 The consultation was supported by evidence documents including a Sustainability Appraisal (evidence doc. PR43), Habitats Regulations Screening Report (PR44) and Statement of Consultation (PR46).

3.57 The Statement of Consultation now presented to Members at Appendix 4 documents the consultation arrangements.

- 3.58 A total of 1460 representations were received which are available on-line at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/112/evidence-base/369/local-plan-part-1-partial-review---evidence-base> (evidence doc. PR78). The main issues raised are summarised in the Statement of Consultation (Appendix 4) which includes summaries of each individual representation in Plan order.
- 3.59 Most of the responses received were objections. Most were received by email and therefore many did not include postal addresses. It is therefore not possible to give an accurate geographic breakdown of the objections. However, a substantial level of response was received from communities at Yarnton, Begbroke, Gosford and Water Eaton, and Kidlington and to a lesser extent at north Oxford and Woodstock in West Oxfordshire.
- 3.60 Approximately 550 of the 1460 representations received comprised cards containing responses coordinated by Kidlington Development Watch and often containing additional comments provided by individual respondents.

Overarching Issues Raised

- 3.61 The overarching issues raised include objections to:
- the plan as a whole;
 - the assessment of housing need and reliance on its methodology (the 2014 Oxfordshire Strategic Market Assessment);
 - providing additional housing to meet Oxford's housing needs;
 - the level of housing provision being made within the administrative boundary of Oxford;
 - the deliverability of affordable housing to meet needs;
 - the ability to secure the availability of housing to those working in / accessing Oxford;
 - development in the Green Belt and the case presented for such development, particularly the 'exceptional circumstances';
 - the development of the proposed sites including the context of other alternatives;
 - the impact of the proposed developments on the Green Belt, on the separation/coalescence of settlements and on their identity;
 - the loss of the historic North Oxford Golf Course;
 - the justification for site selection;
 - the omission of alternative sites, particularly from site promoters, including for the development of land at:
 - Banbury
 - Bicester
 - Wendlebury
 - Weston-on-the-Green / Junction 9 of M40
 - north of The Moors, Kidlington
 - Islip
 - in the vicinity of Former RAF Upper Heyford
 - Shipton-on-Cherwell Quarry
 - rural locations
 - the impact of development on local communities;
 - the impact of additional traffic;
 - the capacity / convenience of the highway network;

- the impact on air pollution;
- the impact on biodiversity / wildlife;
- the impact on infrastructure capacity particularly highways, health and education;
- the proposals for infrastructure provision and the timely deliverability of infrastructure;
- the proposals for sustainable transport, their achievability and effect;
- the suggested closure of Sandy Lane to create a green link;
- the impact of the proposals on access to, and the environment and viability of Kidlington centre;
- the process for preparing the Plan including the appropriateness of the consultation arrangements, not consulting on a draft Plan at the formative 'Regulation 18' stage prior to 'Regulation 19' consultation on the Proposed Submission Plan, the quality and timeliness of evidence.

3.62 Responses from the most immediately affected local authority areas (including Parish/Town Councils), Parish Meetings, Neighbourhood Forums in Oxford, campaign groups and other local representatives are highlighted below. Extensive responses are summarised more fully at Appendix 1. The summary below and at Appendix 1 must be read in conjunction with the Statement of Consultation at Appendix 4 which contains summaries of all representations.

Begbroke Parish Council

3.63 Begbroke Parish, together with Yarnton Parish, includes the proposed sites to the east and west of the A44 (Policies PR8 and PR9). The Parish Council's objections and concerns cover a wide range of issues including the consultation arrangements; the level of and approach to calculating housing need; the deliverability of housing that would meet local needs; the impact on the Green Belt including for individual parishes; the lack of justification for development within the Green Belt; objections to sites and the alternatives to the Plan's proposals; the impact on traffic congestion and air quality; the deliverability of transport infrastructure improvements; the impact on wildlife habitats and the Oxford Canal; and, the lack of benefits for local communities. The Parish Council's objections are summarised more fully at Appendix 1.

Bladon Parish Council (West Oxfordshire)

3.64 Bladon Parish is next to the proposed site to the south east of Woodstock (Policy PR10). The Parish Council's main points of objection relate to traffic volumes and the impact on Bladon in relation to Policy PR10 (south east of Woodstock). In particular, it is concerned about the volume of traffic on the A44, Bladon roundabout and passing through the village via the A4095; pollution caused by the volume of traffic; and, the effect of traffic on the World Heritage Site of Blenheim.

Blenheim Parish Meeting (West Oxfordshire)

3.65 The Parish Meeting relates to Blenheim Palace. Site PR10 to the south east of Woodstock is part promoted by the Vanburgh Unit Trust which manages the Blenheim Palace Estate. No representation was received from Blenheim Parish Meeting.

Gosford and Water Eaton Parish Council

- 3.66 Gosford and Water Eaton Parish contains the sites to east and west of Oxford Road (Policies PR6a and PR6b) and to the south-east of Kidlington (Policy PR7a).
- 3.67 The Parish Council provided a number of supportive comments on the overall approach to providing high levels of affordable housing, on the requirement for 50% affordable housing which it considers should be a minimum and on providing housing for key workers.
- 3.68 Gosford and Water Eaton Parish Council's objections and concerns include: the soundness of the Plan and its supporting documents; the weight and justification given to the proposed housing requirement of 4,400 homes; the assessment of housing need; the impact of a high level of development within the parish and the scale of growth overall; the need for further impact testing; the effect on existing communities and the historic and natural environment; the lack of infrastructure capacity; the impact on existing traffic congestion and air quality; the urbanisation of the area; the achievability of transport/highway mitigations and other infrastructure; the impact on Kidlington; the loss of countryside; the impact on residential amenity; inconsistency with adopted Local Plan policies; the loss of Green Belt including that of 'high' value; the longer term sustainability of the Green Belt; delivering housing to meet specific local needs; coalescence between Kidlington, Gosford and Water Eaton and Oxford; the identity of villages; conflict with national policy; harm to the landscape; objections to site proposals / policies and the robustness of transport and sustainability evidence. The Parish Council's objections are summarised more fully at Appendix 1.

Kidlington Parish Council

- 3.69 Kidlington Parish includes the proposed site at Stratfield Farm (Policy PR7b). The Parish Council provided supportive comments in relation to the development of sites PR7a (south east of Kidlington) and site PR7b (Stratfield Farm) and securing permanent green boundaries if justified by exceptional circumstances; securing 50% affordable housing; retaining Green Belt and avoiding development to the north of Kidlington; and, retaining Green Belt designation on Frieze Farm.
- 3.70 Kidlington Parish Council's objections and concerns include: the need to complete the new Oxford Local Plan; the level of housing needs, the methodology for assessing housing need in view of Government consultation on a new, standardised approach; the need to protect the separation of settlements; harm to integrity, functions, scale of the Green Belt; including higher value Green Belt land; the lack of 'exceptional circumstances' for development in the Green Belt; objection to specific sites being removed from the Green Belt; the impact on traffic congestion and air quality; the coalescence of settlements and harm to their character; the loss of valued open land; conflict with adopted Local Plan policies; detrimental effects on the community and the environment; the need for more account to be taken of the Kidlington Masterplan; the need for the timely delivery of infrastructure; the need to apply the 50% affordable housing requirement to the policy for unallocated sites; the need for clarity on how affordable homes would be allocated; securing homes to meet local needs; the impact on Kidlington centre; harm to countryside; objections to specific sites; and detailed comments on policies. The Parish Council's objections are summarised more fully at Appendix 1.

Oxford City Council

3.71 The City Council supports the Plan's strategy and proposed sites. It highlights the following:

- positive approach to joint working on cross boundary issues has been demonstrated;
- positive, timely and comprehensive approach towards planning for the unmet needs of Oxford;
- cooperative approach is to be commended;
- support for the overall spatial strategy, vision and objectives which specifically and positively respond to the issue of meeting Oxford's unmet need and recognise that the strategy needs to be different to that of meeting the wider district needs;
- support for the plan's guiding principles:
 - the strategy reflects the importance for sites to have a good spatial relationship to Oxford;
 - the strategy seeks to locate development so that it would be well-connected to Oxford and support the city's economy
 - the strategy seeks to offer people, convenient, affordable and sustainable travel opportunities to the city's places of work, services and facilities;
- support for the sites proposed;
- welcomes how cross border issues including affordable housing and transport have been addressed to achieve a joined up approach to design and integrated communities, particularly the links to Northern Gateway, access to Oxford Parkway Station and the sensitive consideration of Cutteslowe Park;
- supports the position that there are exceptional reasons for development within the Green Belt;
- supports the allocation of sites PR6a and PR6b;
- supports the reservation of land at Frieze Farm for a replacement Golf Course should this be required;
- supports the analysis of the close relationship between Kidlington and Oxford and that new homes to its south would be well related to Oxford;
- agree that it is possible to develop to the south of Kidlington while maintaining an important Green Belt gap;
- welcomes the provision for good public transport, cycle and pedestrian links for the sites to the south of Kidlington;
- supports the allocation of sites at Begbroke, Yarnton and Woodstock & welcomes the delivery of sustainable transport links;
- welcomes the 50% affordable housing requirement and on-going dialogue on housing allocations policy;
- supports delivery of 'key worker' housing (noting Oxford's new emerging approach);
- supports the proposed approach to development briefs;
- supports the clear approach to the housing trajectory.

3.72 The City Council has a number comments seeking further consideration:

- on presentation of the Green Belt study / alignment with Oxford's emerging Local Plan (*note: relates to a request from the City Council to include two areas of land in the study*);

- a detailed comment on mapping notation;
- questions whether a higher density of development would be appropriate for site PR6b (west of Oxford Road) but notes the opportunity to agree detailed principles through the development brief.

Oxfordshire County Council

3.73 The County Council supports the proposed submission document and its alignment with the Oxford Transport Strategy (OTS). Its supporting comments include:

- the Plan is coherent and seeks to address Oxford's unmet housing need in a positive, justified and effective manner, consistent with national policy in the NPPF;
- the proposed allocation of sites within close proximity to Oxford offers excellent opportunities for making use of existing transport infrastructure and for enhancing sustainable links into Oxford;
- the scale of housing being planned for is supported;
- the vision is supported;
- the proposed housing would be well connected to Oxford's key employment locations and the city centre and would help to deliver the Oxford Transport Strategy;
- supports the spatial strategy which focuses development on land in North Oxford, Kidlington and along the A44 corridor. These locations have strong economic links to Oxford; offer the opportunity to build on existing public transport and other infrastructure capacity e.g. education and help fund the delivery of planned transport investment in Rapid Transit corridors, remote Park & Ride, and cycling and walking improvements set out in the County's Local Transport Plan and as part of the Oxford Transport Strategy;
- supports CDC in seeking to respond to Oxford's affordable needs whilst ensuring development remains viable;
- there are high levels of traffic congestion in the southern Cherwell/North Oxford area, an issue which extends into neighbouring districts and made worse by cumulative growth across the region. However, the proposed sites score highly in terms of sustainability due to the opportunities for public transport, cycling and walking connectivity with the city, and would therefore have a lesser impact in transport terms;
- OCC will work collaboratively with CDC and Oxford City Council to maximise modal shift; work on identifying solutions to the highway capacity problems will require a wider collaborative approach and should be considered through future planned strategic development that is likely to be progressed through the Oxfordshire Growth Deal;
- welcomes the proposed education provision within the plan;
- agrees that there are exceptional circumstances for removing land from the Green Belt and allocating it for housing including the urgent need to provide homes to meet Oxford's significant needs, particularly for affordable homes, and the inability of the City Council to fully meet its own needs within its administrative boundary;
- the proposed locations offer the most sustainable options for meeting Oxford's needs; channelling development for Oxford's needs towards other settlements in Cherwell would result in longer distance commuting to Oxford, placing further pressures on the transport network;

- the plan generally aligns with Local Transport Plan 4 and the Oxford Transport Strategy (OTS);
- the highway improvements within the highway boundary that are detailed in the Infrastructure Schedule are supported;
- the proposals would improve on existing, and provide new, pedestrian and cycle infrastructure between existing and new sites, including to Northern Gateway, Water Eaton / Oxford Parkway and North Oxford; and ensure that the developments and infrastructure complement the LPT and corridor studies;
- the Plan seeks to set new Green Belt boundaries which are well defined and which can last beyond the plan period;
- there is no objection to land at Frieze Farm remaining in the Green Belt and being used as a golf course as appropriate facilities for outdoor sport which preserve the openness of the Green Belt;
- reference to Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy is welcomed;
- the content relating to public rights of way and access to the countryside is supported;
- the education provision in the plan is supported (subject to detailed comments);
- supports the removal of Water Eaton Park and Ride from the Green Belt;
- supports the encouragement of the sustainable and safe management of waste;
- strongly supports health and well-being within the vision, notes the 'golden threads' with adopted Local Plan objectives, and welcomes the focus on Areas of Search A and B in that context;
- supports the requirements for archaeological assessment and potential pre-determination investigations;
- supports the attention given to green infrastructure (GI), landscape and biodiversity in the plan and in respect of development brief requirements.

3.74 Its areas of concern are as follows:

- reservations regarding the proposed location of the new secondary school at Begbroke;
- reservations about the proposal for a potential new rail station at Begbroke despite issues being identified as a scheme in OxIS (Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy);
- detailed observations provided on the infrastructure schedule;
- the need to consider the housing needs of in lower paid roles essential to the functioning of the Oxfordshire economy (e.g. care workers and school support staff) in the approach to key workers;
- site specific policies should set out or refer to all the necessary developer contributions and infrastructure required e.g. references to strategic highway contributions or public transport contributions;
- detailed observations on site policies including for education provision;
- reference should be made to the Active & Healthy Travel Strategy and to new Cycling and Walking Design Guides;
- concerned from recent experience as to whether the policy requiring 'a single, comprehensive outline scheme' will be strong enough to ensure the allocations come forward as a single planning application;
- query the reason why references to the requirements for vehicular access by emergency services have been made;

- in line with the Oxford Transport Strategy, low-car developments should be sought through policy (as is proposed at Northern Gateway) in order to restrict car use and encourage sustainable transport use;
- requirements for active travel and wheelchair routes should be applied consistently,
- health promoting infrastructure should be provided early in the development programme and its use monitored and measured;
- the role of green infrastructure in health and well-being, climate change, water management and landscape design could be highlighted;
- site specific policies could include a requirement for landscape assessment.

Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp Parish Council

- 3.75 Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp Parish contains the site proposed for development to the south east of Woodstock (Policy PR10). No representation has been received.

Summertown & St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum (Oxford)

- 3.76 The area of Oxford represented by the Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum is adjacent to Cutteslowe, to the south of the A40 (Northern By-Pass). No representation has been received.

Tackley Parish Council (West Oxfordshire)

- 3.77 Tackley Parish is north of, and close to (about 1.5km), to the proposed site at the edge of Woodstock (Policy PR10). No representation has been received from the Parish Council.

West Oxfordshire District Council

- 3.78 The site to the south east of Woodstock (Policy PR10) abuts West Oxfordshire's administrative boundary. The site lies immediately beyond the existing Green Belt boundary. West Oxfordshire District Council is supportive of the Plan's vision and considers that there are exceptional circumstances for development within the Green Belt:

- support for CDC's positive steps in taking forward the Partial Review;
- important to consider the relationship of sites with Oxford and how well they contribute in meeting Oxford's needs. The vision is appropriate in principle;
- the strategic objectives rightly recognise the need for Cherwell to work in partnership with other authorities in delivering Oxford's unmet housing needs;
- the strategic objectives rightly recognise the needs for transport improvements;
- support for policy PR3. Exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated to justify the release of sites from the Green Belt, including sites for housing to help meet Oxford's unmet housing needs and sites for necessary transport infrastructure;
- the release of sites from the Green Belt is necessary to deliver the scale of housing required in a sustainable manner;
- the proposed sites to be released relate well to Oxford and to proposed or existing transport infrastructure;

- Policy PR4a provides an appropriate framework for the two councils to work together on transport and infrastructure issues;
- agrees with the expectation that strategic developments would be expected to provide proportionate financial contributions towards necessary infrastructure and services.

3.79 However, West Oxfordshire District Council has the following objections/concerns:

- it is essential to have recognition of the wider transport improvements required in policy PR4a. For example, the proposed A40 link road and improvements to the A44;
- consideration should be given to improving rail links by providing a new station at Begbroke;
- there is a need to make efficient use of land released from the Green Belt for housing purposes. Some of the proposed densities on sites to be released do not appear to make efficient use of land despite their close proximity to Oxford and sustainable transport infrastructure and services. This would mean development to the south east of Woodstock (Policy PR10) would not be required. Site capacities need to be reviewed;
- concern over the impact of the proposed Woodstock urban extension including the potential adverse effects on the settings of important heritage assets;
- not clear that CDC has appropriately considered the cumulative impact of Policy PR10 in combination with proposals in the proposed West Oxfordshire Local Plan. The WODC Plan proposes 670 new homes as extensions to Woodstock including 300 immediately to the west of the Cherwell site for which planning approval has been given subject to a section 106 agreement. The cumulative effects that need to be considered include the impact on the setting of the Blenheim World Heritage site. Site PR10's openness is readily apparent from the A44 as visitors travel to Woodstock from the south and this contributes to the setting of the World Heritage site. A key issue to consider is whether there would be any in-combination harm;
- CDC has not considered that there is already a lack of parking in Woodstock. There is concern that the development of PR10 would create a satellite village whereby shoppers would use the car to commute to and from Kidlington;
- concerns about the impact of Policy PR10 on the setting of the Blenheim Villa Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) which is within the site. Although the SAM would be protected, the proposed housing area would represent a significant change to the landscape just to the north of the SAM, adversely affecting its setting;
- there is a strong hedgerow feature on the western boundary of site PR10 which follows the alignment of an historic track. The development would breach this natural boundary and extend development in an incongruous 'finger' to the east, It would not relate well to the existing urban form of Woodstock in this area;
- Policy PR10 would impact on the landscape and setting of Woodstock as a result of an incongruous urban extension poorly related to the characteristics of the location;
- as an alternative to PR10 and in addition to re-considering densities on other sites, the development of site PR3a should be considered which is proposed for removal from the Green Belt;
- more efficient use of Green Belt sites could deliver at least 410 homes.

Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum (Oxford)

3.80 Wolvercote and Cutteslowe are the most directly affected areas of Oxford. The Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum (which also represents the Cutteslowe area) has the following objections:

- the Plan is unsound;
- the proposals to build on the Green Belt are not based on an “objectively assessed” housing need;
- there is a need to first explore other ways of meeting Oxford’s housing needs, for example by Oxford City Council using land within its boundaries for housing rather than for employment and building homes at a higher density;
- the Government has recently put forward a new way of calculating objectively assessed housing need and this suggests that housing needs and therefore unmet housing needs have been wrongly calculated and overestimated;
- Oxford City Council has not yet prepared a local plan so there is currently no estimate of how much housing it can provide;
- does not support building on the Green Belt. States that the majority of Wolvercote residents are against it;
- the Green Belt has already been reduced;
- the Plan is not consistent with national Green Belt policy;
- there would be high risk of harm to the Green Belt (Green Belt Study);
- there would be coalescence of Oxford and Kidlington;
- a new community could be built on an existing brownfield site at Shipton-on-Cherwell quarry;
- existing roads approaching the north of Oxford are already congested / at full capacity in peak periods;
- there are few indications that the completed work on the Wolvercote and Cutteslowe roundabouts has much improved traffic flow;
- high pollution levels a concern and would be made worse;
- the transport infrastructure could not cope with the additional traffic and is already affected by approved developments at Northern Gateway and Barton (Oxford);
- unrealistic to expect that the suggested highway improvements would be implemented in the necessary time scale in the present economic climate;
- buses approaching from out-of-city Park and Ride facilities would not cope with the increased demand from the 4,400 dwellings closer to the city;
- the proposed housing would not be well located in relation to employment sites to the south east of Oxford;
- many people would still prefer to drive;
- delivery of the sustainable transport proposals is questionable;
- object to Policies PR6a and PR6b (east and west of Oxford Road);
- development would harm the existing views of open countryside from Cutteslowe Park;
- if the North Oxford golf course is to be relocated it will take some years to develop a similar, mature, natural environment;
- the golf course is a recreational facility and valued for its biodiversity;
- other possible sites that have not been given sufficient consideration;
- concerned that unaffordable expensive homes would be built for the benefit of commuters to London (proximity to Oxford Parkway);
- unlikely that would be a net biodiversity gain due to the loss of Green Belt land.

Woodstock Town Council (West Oxfordshire)

- 3.81 Woodstock Town Council's administrative area abuts site PR10. Its objections and concerns include: the development of site PR10; substantial impact on the historic town and its heritage assets; cumulative impacts including West Oxfordshire's development proposals and in particular the neighbouring site; the substantial increase in housing provision; the loss of green space and agricultural land; the harm to character and heritage significance; loss of a crucial buffer zone between Woodstock and London-Oxford Airport; virtual merger with Kidlington; the creation of a damaging hard edge on the A44 approach; impact on archaeology and the setting of Blenheim Roman Villa; extreme traffic congestion, non-compliance with national and local policy; the impact on current residents and businesses; lack of highway capacity; the need for substantial investment in highway infrastructure; the impact on air quality; the level of housing need in view of Government consultation on a new assessment methodology; the delivery of affordable housing; concern about site PR10's detachment; lack of services, facilities and parking in Woodstock; poor accessibility to Woodstock; conflict with operation of the neighbouring airport; and, concerns about assumptions in the Sustainability Appraisal. The Parish Council's objections are summarised more fully at Appendix 1.

Yarnton Parish Council

- 3.82 Yarnton Parish, together with Begbroke Parish, includes the land proposed for development to the east and west of the A44 (Policies PR8 and PR9). Its objections are:
- the removal of land from the Green Belt for sites PR8 (east of A44) and PR9 (west of Yarnton) is not consistent with national policy. Objects to both sites;
 - the 'exceptional circumstances' for development in the Green Belt are largely implausible;
 - no regard has been given to the identity of Yarnton and Begbroke;
 - there would be no effective infrastructure;
 - concerned about Policy PR8's reference to 'Begbroke' when the bulk of the proposed housing would be in Yarnton Parish;
 - concerned about defining the separation of Yarnton and Begbroke;
 - conflict with adopted Local Plan policies: Policy Villages 1 which limits development at Category A villages, Policy ESD14 for Green Belt protection and Policy ESD 13 for the landscape;
 - the plan would not maintain the separate identities of Yarnton and Begbroke;
 - questions the achievability of bus lane improvements along the A44 (Begbroke to Loop Farm);
 - concerned about the closure of Sandy Lane without a suitable alternative route.

Other Representatives

- 3.83 The Statement of Consultation (Appendix 4) includes summaries of the responses from organisations including Harbord Area Residents Association (Oxford), Friends of Cutteslowe and Sunnymead Park (Oxford), Summertown and Wolvercote Conservatives and the North Oxfordshire Green Party.

- 3.84 A joint representation has been received from Councillor Neil Prestidge and Councillor Maurice Billington (Ward Members for Kidlington East) who consider that there is a need for housing in this area but who do not agree on the number of houses that are being proposed, the sites that have been proposed for development or the type of development that has been proposed. Councillor Griffiths (also Ward Member for Kidlington East) considers that there are not exceptional circumstances for development in the Green Belt and that the Plan is not supported by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan. She has other concerns about the impact of the Plan, development of the north Oxford golf course and about the Plan's deliverability.
- 3.85 Councillor Gant, Oxford City Council Member for Summertown ward and Leader of the City Council's Opposition, has highlighted the Government's consultation on a proposed new methodology for assessing housing need. He considers that it would significantly reduce the forecast need for Oxford and that the Plan process should be paused until the full implications of a new methodology are understood. For that reason he states that the Memorandum of Understanding agreed at the Oxfordshire Growth Board in November 2016 cannot be relied upon. Councillor Gant considers that there are not exceptional circumstances for development in the Green Belt and that reasonable alternatives have not been considered. He has other specific comments on affordable and key worker housing and questions whether the Plan would facilitate movement in the housing market.
- 3.86 A representation has also been received from Councillor Buckley, Member for the Wolvercote and Summertown Division of Oxfordshire County Council. He considers that the identified level of housing need is not justified, has concerns about congested transport corridors into Oxford, that housing could be more sustainably provided in South Oxfordshire district, about the importance of delivering affordable housing and housing for local workers, and that exceptional circumstances for development in the Green Belt have not been justified. He objects to the development of sites PR6a and PR6b immediately to the north of Oxford and suggests the alternative use of brownfield land such as Shipton-on-Cherwell quarry.

Layla Moran MP

- 3.87 The Member of Parliament for Oxford West and Abingdon has the following objections:
- the estimates of housing need published by the Government in the Planning For Homes consultation (14 September 2017) are so significantly lower than the figures this plan is based on that the only reasonable course of action is for CDC to halt the current process and reassess. The new figures not only suggest that a much lower target is needed for Cherwell DC, but also for Oxford and other neighbouring districts. This may have a substantial effect on what the level of Oxford City Council's unmet need is. Until the case for the unmet need is unequivocally made, given the huge public opposition, a more cautious approach should be taken;
 - the proposals will cause significant coalescence between Yarnton, Begbroke and Kidlington, undermining one of the key principles of national planning policy. Cherwell DC have failed to set out 'exceptional' reasons why there is a need to build on the Green Belt on the scale proposed when there are other sites available in the district;
 - objects to Policy PR1(a) to build 4,400 houses in this area for Oxford overspill. This is not a proven requirement and not justified. It is based on a highly

inflated estimate of housing need in the county. It is unsustainable. It would hugely worsen traffic problems and pollution. Schools and health services would be overstretched. The Green Belt's open countryside in which nearly 4,000 of the houses would be built would be sacrificed for ever and its walks and views lost. Natural habitats and wildlife would be destroyed;

- Oxford City Council has been allocating land in the city for employment instead of for housing. It has ignored the impact on surrounding Districts and failed in its duty to cooperate. The City Council should do more to meet its own needs;
- objects to Policy PR3 to remove land from the Oxford Green Belt. The Green Belt around Kidlington preserves green spaces that are so greatly appreciated and enjoyed by local residents. It protects both the historic city of Oxford from overdevelopment and neighbouring villages from coalescence;
- Government guidance says that Green Belt is a permanent designation and that unmet housing need is not a reason for building in the Green Belt. The plan is therefore ineffective and not consistent with national policy. These proposals reduce separation gaps so they are almost negligible;
- objects to Policy PR11 on infrastructure because it only sets out "an approach". It is wishful thinking. No costs are shown and in most cases no source of funding is identified. There are no projects to improve the already congested highway network for private vehicles and no indication of how it will cope with the additional vehicles owned by the occupiers of these new houses and the other developments planned for the area. The plan is not positively prepared because it does not provide for necessary infrastructure.

North Oxford Golf Club and its Members

3.88 North Oxford Golf Club (NOGC) has made the following comments:

- the golf course is very compact covering a total of around 32 hectares;
- careful management and maintenance over the past 110 years have enabled NOGC to retain a full, attractive and challenging 18 holes and at the same time be compliant with evolving requirements for safety and space;
- it would be completely infeasible to design a new 18-hole golf course on a site that was 10% smaller than the existing compact site. There may be an underground gas main across the land. The 29.95 hectares of the Frieze Farm site are therefore a complete non-starter for a golf course;
- CDC has made no effort to engage at all with NOGC on the question of possible replacement golfing facilities that would be "equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location" (National Planning Policy Framework, para 74);
- The proposal to identify a specific replacement site was not mentioned at all in the November 2016 consultation, so NOGC has had no opportunity to prepare any arguments to present to CDC in writing or in public meetings;
- CDC is falling well short of required procedural standards.

3.89 Many separate responses have also been received from individual members of the Golf Club who object to its proposed residential development (Policy PR6b) and to the use of Frieze Farm as a potential replacement facility (Policy PR6c). The recreational, social, historic and environmental importance of the golf course and objections to the impacts of development have been highlighted among other issues.

Campaign Groups

3.90 The Executive's attention is drawn to the responses from the following campaign groups:

- Begbroke and Yarnton Green Belt Campaign;
- Kidlington Development Watch;
- Woodstock Action Group.

Begbroke and Yarnton Green Belt Campaign (BYG)

3.91 On 1 August 2018, the Begbroke and Yarnton Green Belt Campaign advised that it had a growing membership of over 250 people. It is professionally represented and its objections / concerns include: the plan preparation and consultation process has not been lawful; some evidence has been missing; lack of justification for altering Green Belt boundaries; object to the removal of sites from the Green Belt and to the development of site PR10 (Woodstock) due to the impact on the A44 corridor; the Sustainability Appraisal process is flawed including the assessment of reasonable alternatives; the transport assessment is flawed; the exceptional circumstances for development in the Green Belt are flawed; the assessment of housing need is flawed; the Plan is premature in light of the Government's consultation on a proposed new methodology for assessing housing needs; the Council is not compelled to plan for 4,400 homes and the countywide assessment has not been completed; the Council has wrongly accepted the apportionment without question; the Growth Board process was flawed; alternative development options are available; a number of evidence documents are flawed (including the Habitats Regulations Assessment) or distracting. BYG's objections are summarised more fully at Appendix 1.

Kidlington Development Watch (KDW)

3.92 Kidlington Development Watch advises that it has an interest in planning issues, publicises consultations that directly affect Kidlington and offers advice on how people can best make their views known. It states that it has a good understanding of the views of Kidlington residents, a large number of whom have made representations because of KDW's activities.

3.93 KDW's objections and concerns include: the plan has not taken into account previous consultation; the Statement of Consultation is flawed; the Plan's proposals have been predetermined; the Council has not consulted on the acceptability of development in the Green Belt; the 2014 SHMA is not sound; the consultation process and documents have been inadequate; the Council has failed the Duty to Cooperate; the housing need and job growth are over-estimated; the Plan is premature due to the Government's consultation on a new methodology for assessing housing need – the need for Oxford and Cherwell would fall significantly; Oxford's expansion is unsustainable; more housing could be accommodated within the city; the Green Belt would gradually disappear; exceptional circumstances have not been demonstrated; there is a risk of over-allocating land; there would be significant traffic problems; the transport assessment is flawed and the deliverability of infrastructure is doubted; impact on countryside, views, habitats, environment, air and light pollution; object to the removal of sites from the Green Belt and to PR10 (Woodstock) due to the impact on the Green Belt and the town. KDW's objections are summarised more fully at Appendix 1.

Woodstock Action Group

3.94 Woodstock Action Group has raised the following objections/concerns:

- Woodstock Action Group aims to conserve the local environment against unnecessary development and to preserve, maintain and enhance the historic character and charm of Woodstock; to support low-cost affordable housing for local residents, in appropriate areas and to reject large scale housing development on inappropriate sites;
- objects to Policy PR10 (land south east of Woodstock) on transport grounds
- concerned about capacity/safety/congestion of A4095, A34 and A44
- concerned about increase in car ownership
- concerned about impact of PR10 on infrastructure, services, commercial centre and approach to Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site.
- objects to PR10 on pollution grounds
- atmospheric pollution has not been considered within the plan
- the WSP/Parsons Brinkerhoff Air Quality Assessment carried out for the WODC application does not extend to the PR10 allocation. Concerned about the cumulative impact of development and pollution;
- objects to and requests deletion of PR3 (Green Belt)
- concerned about urban sprawl, merging of villages, encroachment on open fields along the A44, deterioration of the setting and approach to the Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site and the diminishing of the special character of Woodstock;
- believes the plan should focus on regenerating land within Oxford;
- asserts that Policy PR3 (Green Belt) is excessive, unsound, untenable and superfluous in light of the new calculation for unmet need;
- concerned about the consultation process and complexity of consultation documents;
- there is no indication of when the planning proposals will be delivered;
- housing needs to be built close to where jobs are e.g. Northern Gateway, Langford Lane and Gosford;
- if the 4,400 houses and WODCs 300+ houses are progressed undiluted and in accordance with the exaggerated and dismissed SHMA figures, this would prove to be unsustainable, unjustified and contrary to NPPF policy;
- the plan is not positively prepared or complete and the sources or identification of funds for infrastructure are not shown.

Prescribed Bodies

3.95 As explained in the Duty to Cooperate Statement at Appendix 10, officers have engaged effectively with adjoining Councils and 'prescribed bodies' in the interest of producing a sound plan and in seeking to comply with the Duty to Cooperate. Officers would, in particular, draw Members' attention to the responses from Highways England, Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.

Highways England

3.96 A response was received from Highways England which led to further discussion including with Oxfordshire County Council as Local Highway Authority. In its representation, Highways England supported the Plan's objectives, acknowledged

the advantages of the growth locations in terms of making the use of sustainable transport and noted the importance of sustainable transport solutions to minimise the impact of additional traffic on the highways network.

3.97 It emphasised the risk that if Green Belt development were not permitted, allocations elsewhere could potentially have a far more onerous impact on the highway network than predicted in the Partial Review. However, the following concerns were raised:

- the lack of detailed information on residual impacts and associated, potential mitigations;
- concern about potential traffic impacts on the strategic road network, particularly the A34/A44 Peartree Interchange, and other sections including other links and junctions on the A34 and M40 Junction 9;
- the importance of an accurate impact assessment;
- request for clarity on the contributions from developer and other funding to deliver the infrastructure schemes included in the plan;
- the potential need for an approach where planning permission would be conditional on including proportional funding for the infrastructure set out by the Partial Review;
- concern that with the enhanced transport improvement package there would still be links on the A44 corridor that would be at over-capacity in 2031 during peak hours and delays at some junctions along these corridors;
- need for clarification on whether the proposed mitigation measures to support the additional housing development were an output from or input to the Oxfordshire Strategic Model;
- the need for clarification on the off-site transport improvements / schemes / infrastructure inputs;
- in view of predicted capacity issues along the A34 and at M40 junction 9, the need for a more comprehensive set of model output to assess the impact on the strategic road network;
- recommended use of junction specific models with and without the proposed development and infrastructure measures;
- the need for sensitivity testing of scenarios.

3.98 Highways England notes the potential for a future Oxford to Cambridge expressway and associated improvements to the A34 to enable the accommodation of the proposed growth but emphasises that at this stage no reliance can be placed upon it.

3.99 Officer comments on this response are provided at paragraphs 1.160 to 3.174.

Natural England

3.100 Natural England's representation to the Partial Review Proposed Submission Plan indicated that it considered the Plan was not legally compliant, and did not currently meet all the tests of soundness in terms of its effectiveness and consistency with national policy. However its concerns centred on the need for further evidence and once available it indicated it would be happy to review its advice on the Plan. Natural England's concern relates to three issues:

- i. The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Air quality assessment;
- ii. Draft Water Cycle Study findings;

- iii. Potential impact of development site PR8 on Rushy Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

3.101 This response is explained further in the officer comments provided at paragraphs 3.123 to 3.125; 3.155 to 3.159; and 3.192 to 3.195.

Environment Agency

3.102 The Environment Agency's representation indicates that in order to make the Plan sound, the latest climate change allowances should be used as part of the evidence base in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) supporting the Partial Review. It considers that the SFRA is not consistent with NPPF paragraph 165 which indicates that "planning policies and decisions will need to be based on up-to-date information about the natural environment". It has stated that this may impact on the deliverability of potentially allocated sites within the sequential test, which may have to be revisited.

3.103 This response is explained further in the officer comments provided at paragraphs 3.126 to 3.132.

Historic England

3.104 Historic England's representation supports a number of references to the historic environment contained in the Partial Review Plan. However it also raises objections in relation to Policies PR6a, PR6b, PR6c, PR7a, PR7b, PR8, PR9, PR10, and PR12 b. Its comments on Policies PR6b, PR6c, PR7a, PR7b, PR8, PR9 and PR12b requested minor re-wording of policy requirements or the addition of new requirements to overcome its objections.

3.105 This response is explained further in the officer comments provided at paragraphs 3.186; 3.199 to 3.201; 3.203.

All Comments Received

3.106 The summaries above do not provide an account of all of the 1460 representations received. Members are reminded that all formal comments received to the Proposed Submission Plan and, indeed, in relation to all stages of the plan-making process are available for consideration as follows:

- by presentation of the Statement of Consultation presented at Appendix 4;
- by way of the publication on-line of all the representations received to the Proposed Submission consultation and to the earlier issues and options consultations (evidence document references: PR21, PR29 and PR78 available at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/112/evidence-base/369/local-plan-part-1-partial-review---evidence-base>);
- by depositing all the representations received to the Proposed Submission consultation in the Members' Room.

Officer Comments

3.107 Officers have considered all comments made in representations in reviewing whether in their view the Plan is 'sound' or whether any significant changes are

necessary to the Plan's strategy. They have informed the identification of the proposed focused changes and minor modifications at Appendix 3.

- 3.108 The 'soundness' of a Plan does not require every single objection to be resolved or withdrawn. The tests of soundness are that the Plan is i. positively prepared; ii. justified; iii. effective; and, iv. consistent with national policy (see para. 2.9 above). The Plan must also be legally compliant including with regard to how it has been prepared, meeting the Duty to Cooperate and the process of Sustainability Appraisal.
- 3.109 The officer comments below address key themes and issues in the context of all the representations, identifying areas where some change to the Plan is recommended.

Weight of Local Objection

- 3.110 The number of representations and objections from affected Parish/Town Councils, local communities, their representatives and neighbourhood areas illustrate the level of local concern. The collective weight of local opinion as represented by BYG, KDW and WAG is noted in particular. The overall response to the Proposed Submission Plan (1460 representations) far exceeds that received to the equivalent stages of the adopted Local Plan (approximately 300-400 representations). Nevertheless, the Plan is also produced in the wider public interest of meeting objectively assessed needs and the weight of objections in itself does not invalidate the proposals.

Consultation

- 3.111 Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) requires public participation in the preparation of a local plan. It sets out a requirement to notify particular bodies (including specific and general consultation bodies and residents or other persons carrying on business in the Local Planning Authority's area) of the subject of a local plan which the LPA propose to prepare and to invite them to make representations as to what that local plan ought to contain.
- 3.112 Regulation 19 concerns the arrangements for making the proposed submission documents available before submission of a Local Plan to the Secretary of State and associated notifications and publicity (also Regulation 35).
- 3.113 Regulation 20 provides that any person may make representations to an LPA about a local plan which the LPA proposes to submit to the Secretary of State. Any such representations must be received by the LPA by the date specified in a required statement of the representations procedure.
- 3.114 Regulation 23 provides that before the person appointed to carry out the independent examination of the local plan makes a recommendation, they must consider any representations made in accordance with Regulation 20.
- 3.115 The Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI, July 2016) sets out who Cherwell District Council will engage with in preparing key planning policy documents and how and when they will be engaged. Its aim is to encourage community and stakeholder involvement.

- 3.116 Officers are of the clear view that the Partial Review has been prepared in accordance with the Local Plan Regulations and the Council's SCI. Consultation on the Proposed Submission Local Plan was preceded by two separate consultations on issues and options when the Plan was at a formative stage. Options and Proposed Submission consultations were supported by staffed, public exhibitions. Town/Parish Council and stakeholder workshops have been held. Officers consider that legally compliant, appropriate and timely opportunities were provided for the public to engage effectively with the plan making process at the Regulation 18 stage and for people to give intelligent consideration and response in terms of the content of the Plan and its specific proposals. Members are now invited to conscientiously take into account the representations in considering the recommendations of this report.
- 3.117 In addition to the requirements as to consultation in the Local Plan Regulations and the Council's SCI, the courts have set down requirements, in particular *R (Moseley) v Haringey London Borough Council* [2014] 1 WLR 3947. They are that: (i) consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage; (ii) the proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit of intelligent consideration and response; (iii) that adequate time must be given for consideration and response; and (iv) that the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising any proposals. Officers consider that there has been compliance with all these requirements.
- 3.118 Members are advised that there is no statutory requirement to publish a draft Plan prior to the publication of a Proposed Submission document. In the issues consultation paper (January 2016, evidence doc. PR20), the Council advised under 'next steps' that the responses received would be used *'to inform the preparation of the next stage of the Partial Review: consultation on the spatial options for accommodating the additional growth'* (para. 8.1). In the options consultation paper, (November 2016, evidence doc. PR47), the Council advised under 'next steps', *'The feedback we receive will be used in the further consideration of issues and options, in completing our evidence base and in preparing a proposed document which we will publish in 2017'* (para. 9.2). The Plan's preparation has been in accordance with these stated intentions.

Evidence

- 3.119 Officers are of the view that, in accordance with the NPPF, the proposed Plan is based on, adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area. The Plan seeks to ensure an integrated approach to the provision of housing by planning to meet the needs of Oxford within a Cherwell context and within shared economic circumstances. It seeks to respond to relevant market and economic signals (for example, see Cherwell Strategic Economic Growth Study - evidence doc. PR41). Evidence cannot be produced in anticipation of all issues but, as required by the NPPF, it is proportionate.
- 3.120 The evidence base supporting the Plan is published on-line at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/112/evidence-base/369/local-plan-part-1-partial-review---evidence-base>. The Sustainability Appraisal (Appendices 5-7) includes an account of the most relevant evidence base that has informed the Appraisal process.

- 3.121 Evidence was initially gathered through the Oxfordshire Growth Board to support the examination of Oxford's unmet housing need and its apportionment. It continued through the issues and options stages of plan development to the production of the Proposed Submission document. Strategies, studies and assessments have informed the shaping of the Plan's vision, objectives and policies. They have sometimes, necessarily, informed each other (for example the Transport Assessment informing the Sustainability Appraisal). At each stage (issues, options and proposed submission) the consideration of representations has informed the Plan's development. Officers are of the view that the evidence gathering process has been robust, objective, proportionate and informative.
- 3.122 On some matters, it has been necessary to continue with evidence refinement or the production of supplemental evidence in response to representations received / issues raised.
- 3.123 Natural England was consulted on the Draft Water Cycle Study (WCS) supporting the Proposed Submission Partial Review Plan, and as a result of its concern that the water quality levels downstream of Cassington Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) are maintained post development, additional text was incorporated into the Study relating to development in the Cassington WWTW catchment (Section 9.1 of the WCS) as follows:

“It is recommended that Cherwell District Council consider embedding a development control policy within their Local Plan to require that developers provide evidence to them that they have consulted with TWUL, the Environment Agency and Natural England regarding wastewater treatment capacity, and the outcome of this consultation, prior to development approval. The Council should consider the response from TWUL, the Environment Agency and Natural England when deciding if the expected timeframe for the development site in question is appropriate.

Where there is uncertainty from TWUL that the necessary capacity is available, a Grampian condition could be imposed, prohibiting development authorised by the planning permission or other aspects linked to the planning permission (e.g. occupation of dwellings) until the provision of the necessary treatment infrastructure to accept the additional flows is in place.”

- 3.124 Natural England's representation has requested the incorporation of a policy in the Plan to reflect the text in the Water Cycle Study. This has been addressed through proposed minor changes to the wording of Policies PR7a, PR7b and PR8 (Appendix 3, proposed changes FC40, FC46 and FC60), as these development sites will drain to Cassington WWTW.
- 3.125 As explained later in this report, Natural England's other comments have also resulted in the preparation of a Hydrological and Hydrogeological Study (evidence doc. PR80).
- 3.126 The Environment Agency's representation concerning the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and having regard to the latest climate change allowances has required further consideration. The Partial Review Plan is supported by a Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), together with a more detailed Level 2 SFRA focused on a small number of sites where flood risk needed further investigation. The approach to be taken to the new climate change allowances in the Level 1 SFRA was discussed and agreed with the Environment Agency at the

start of the study. The Level 1 SFRA includes text referring to the new climate change guidance but was not required to model or map the latest allowances. Instead, it was agreed with the EA that a proxy for new climate change allowances should be used. The Level 2 SFRA provided additional information on flood risk and requirements for developers undertaking site specific Flood Risk Assessments.

- 3.127 Further discussion has taken place with the Environment Agency following receipt of its representation, and on 22 January it confirmed that it is satisfied that the Level 1 SFRA (and the associated Sequential Test, evidence doc. PR53) did not require modelling work to assess the impact of climate change. With regard to the Level 2 SFRA (which includes sites PR7a and PR8), the EA remained concerned about the potential impact of the latest climate change allowances on the delivery of three sites proposed for allocation in the Plan (PR6c - Land at Frieze Farm; PR7a - Land South East of Kidlington; and PR8 - Land East of the A44). This was discussed at a meeting on 7 February at which the EA, whilst acknowledging that it could not in this instance insist on the modelling of the new climate change allowances, requested further consideration be given to the three sites through an Addendum to the Level 2 SFRA. Officers have agreed to the preparation of the Addendum.
- 3.128 Site PR6c (Frieze Farm), reserved for potential construction of a golf course, has a slither of land on the north western boundary of the site within flood zones 2 and 3. The Environment Agency has indicated that this is not of major concern due to the proposed use, but it would be preferable to understand if the site would be at higher risk of flooding in the future. The Level 2 SFRA Addendum will examine ground levels at the site to assess this. In addition, the Schedule of Focused Changes and Minor Modification at Appendix 3 proposes (ref. FC36) an addition to Policy PR6c: *“The application will be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment, informed by a suitable ground investigation and having regard to guidance contained within the Council’s Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The Flood Risk Assessment should include detailed modelling of watercourses taking into account allowance for climate change. There should be no ground raising or built development within the modelled flood zone.”*
- 3.129 Site PR7a (South East of Kidlington) contains a relatively small area of Flood Zone 2 and 3 in its north-east corner. The policy requires (criterion 13) residential development to take place outside the modelled flood zone 2 and 3 envelope and for a Flood Risk Assessment to be submitted with the planning application. The Addendum to the Level 2 SFRA will examine ground levels at the site to assess the potential impact of new climate change allowances.
- 3.130 Site PR8 contains areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3, located within proposed green infrastructure areas along Rowel Brook and to the west of the Oxford Canal (to the east of the railway). The Environment Agency acknowledges that the flood zones lie outside of areas proposed for built development, but as they are close to the boundary of these areas, it is concerned that an increase in flood extent as a result of new climate change allowances could impact on areas proposed for development. The Level 2 SFRA Addendum will examine ground levels and flows to assess the potential impact of this and the Schedule of Focused Changes and Minor Modifications at Appendix 3 proposes a change to policy PR8 (ref. FC59) clarifying that *“Residential development must be located outside the modelled Flood Zone 2 and 3 envelope.”*

- 3.131 At the time of writing this report the additional work is being undertaken by the Council's consultants with the expectation that an update can be provided to the meeting and that the Addendum to the Level 2 SFRA will be available for submission of the Plan, should it be approved by Members. Until the Addendum is produced it is not known whether more detailed modelling will be required (which would take several months) or whether there will be any implications for the three sites.
- 3.132 Members are advised that there is therefore some risk. However, the Plan's proposals avoid built development in the existing EA modelled flood zones; the necessary work required by the EA is being undertaken and can be made available to inform the Local Plan Examination; and, the Plan's policies include requirements for both Flood Risk Assessments (including proposed changes at Appendix 3) and development briefs which provide scope for detailed consideration of site layouts. Officers therefore do not suggest that any further change is required at this time.

Duty to Cooperate

- 3.133 The Council has worked jointly and closely with all of the other Oxfordshire councils on an on-going basis to address the objectively assessed need for housing across the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area in accordance with its commitment in paragraph B.95 of the adopted Local Plan. The engagement has been carried out on a constructive and active basis. This has included on the Oxfordshire Growth Board's work programme for identifying the level of Oxford's unmet housing need and for determining an apportionment of that need to individual district councils; in preparing an Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy; and, more recently in reaching an outline agreement with the Government for an Oxfordshire Growth Deal including its commitment to the delivery of 100,000 homes between 2011 and 2031 (Appendix 11), and (currently) in preparing an associated Delivery Plan.
- 3.134 The strategic support provided by partner authorities such as Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and West Oxfordshire District Council reflects the close, cooperative work that takes place across Oxfordshire on cross boundary priorities, a largely common understanding that Oxford's housing need is acute, and that, in the current context, identified housing needs would be most sustainably met by planning for development that has a close and well-connected relationship with Oxford.
- 3.135 The perspectives on specific proposals and the detail of policy are understandably reflective of the responsibilities, priorities and challenges of each authority. In particular, in the case of comments from the County Council as service provider, informed by subsequent discussions, this has led to some small scale refinement of the Plan within the schedule of focused changes and minor modifications at Appendix 3. It includes, for example, the updating of education requirements and amendment of specific highway requirements.
- 3.136 The Duty to Cooperate statement presented at Appendix 10 explains the strategic issues on which the Council has engaged with the requisite prescribed bodies and how that has been effective in informing the Plan. The continued dialogue with Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England and how that affects the Plan as recommended to Members is explained later in this report.

Objective Assessment of Housing Need

- 3.137 The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 was produced jointly by all the Oxfordshire councils in accordance with Government guidance and has been scrutinised through the examinations of the Cherwell, Vale of White Horse and (currently) West Oxfordshire Local Plans. It provides a clear understanding of housing needs and remains the most up-to-date, cooperatively produced and robust assessment.
- 3.138 As highlighted in representations, the Government, in September 2017 published a consultation document entitled 'Planning for the right homes in the right places' in which a proposed new methodology for assessing housing need was highlighted.
- 3.139 The basic methodology suggested a simplified method involving three components: a demographic baseline, a modification to account for market signals (the price of homes) and a cap to limit any increase an authority may face when they review their plan. 'Indicative' figures accompanied the consultation to demonstrate what the effect of the methodology could be under the circumstances at that time. These suggested that Oxford's basic needs would be 746 dwellings per annum (2016-2026) and that Cherwell's would be 762 per annum (2016-2026) compared to the need identified in the 2014 SHMA of 1400 per annum (2011-2031) for Oxford (mid-point) and 1,142 per annum (2011-2031) for Cherwell. However, the consultation paper included the following paragraph:

'46. Plan makers may put forward proposals that lead to a local housing need above that given by our proposed approach. This could be as a result of a strategic infrastructure project, or through increased employment (and hence housing) ambition as a result of a Local Economic Partnership investment strategy, a bespoke housing deal with Government or through delivering the modern Industrial Strategy. We want to make sure that we give proper support to those ambitious authorities who want to deliver more homes. To facilitate this we propose to amend planning guidance so that where a plan is based on an assessment of local housing need in excess of that which the standard method would provide, Planning Inspectors are advised to work on the assumption that the approach adopted is sound unless there are compelling reasons to indicate otherwise. We will also look to use the Housing Infrastructure Fund to support local planning authorities to step up their plans for growth, releasing more land for housing and getting homes built at pace and scale'

- 3.140 Within the consultation paper were proposed transitional arrangements depending on the stage reached in preparing a Plan. It was suggested that if plan was submitted for examination on or before 31 March 2018 or before the revised NPPF was published (whichever was later), authorities should continue with the current plan preparation. Otherwise, it was suggested that the new standardised method would apply.
- 3.141 The consultation paper stated:

'52. We are also proposing transitional arrangements to set a period of time before which plans would be expected to use the standard method for calculating the local housing need. This recognises that a number of plan makers have already made significant steps in preparing their plan, and we want to encourage them to

complete their plan, avoiding further delays and so undermining the delivery of new homes.'

3.142 The consultation paper was very clear in its support for authorities seeking to provide more homes than might be required by the draft methodology provided there is a more than the draft figures given in the consultation document, provided there are evidence-based and sound planning reasons for doing so. It was similarly clear that Local Planning Authorities should not hold-up their planning making.

3.143 Further consultation of changes to Government policy are expected. On 30 January 2018, the Government's Chief Planning Officer advised,

'NPPF timetable update

We are currently revising the NPPF in order to implement our planning reform package from the housing White Paper, the Planning for the right homes in the right places consultation and the announcements at Autumn Budget. We intend to publish a draft revised NPPF before Easter. We will consult on both new policies from the Budget, and the text of the Framework, to make sure the wording is clear, consistent and well-understood. Our ambition is to publish a final revised Framework in the summer.'

Local Housing Need transitional arrangements

In our Planning for the right homes in the right places consultation in September we set out that the new standardised method should be used, unless the plan will be submitted for examination on or before 31 March 2018, or before the revised Framework is published (whichever is later). In light of the timetable set out above these transitional arrangements will apply to any plans submitted before the final revised Framework is published.'

3.144 In view of the fact that the final, revised NPPF will not be published until the summer (an 'ambition'); that the Council had committed to a two-year review programme for the Partial Review beginning in 2015; that there is agreement among all Oxfordshire councils that Oxford cannot fully meet its own housing needs; and, that all Oxfordshire Councils have committed to Plan for and support the delivery of 100,000 new homes between 2011 and 2031 in the Outline Agreement for the Oxfordshire Growth Deal (Appendix 11) (by reference to the SHMA 2014 at para. 24), officers do not recommend that the plan-making process be paused.

3.145 It might be considered that a risk for the Council would be for the objectively assessed need to fall significantly later in 2018 and for individual local planning authorities within Oxfordshire to start re-appraising Oxford's level of unmet need and its apportionment. This risk cannot be eliminated but is reduced by the following circumstances:

- the need for additional homes, including affordable homes, and the growth of the Oxfordshire economy will remain as key planning considerations;
- the outline agreement for the Oxfordshire Growth Deal (Appendix 11);
- the expected commitments from West Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils in their new Local Plans to fulfil their apportioned housing figures;

- the existing and expected commitments from Vale of White Horse District Council in its existing and new Local Plan to fulfil its apportioned housing figure;
- the commitment between all of the Oxfordshire Councils to the production of a new Joint Spatial Plan and the alignment to that Plan in the commitment to deliver 100,000 homes by 2031 in the Growth Deal Outline Agreement.

The 'Trigger' for the Partial Review

- 3.146 To strive to achieve the two year timetable set out within paragraph B.95 of the Local Plan, and in the context of a general agreement across the Oxfordshire authorities that Oxford could not fully meet its own housing needs, it was necessary to begin preparatory work for the Partial Review in 2015 while countywide work to examine the level of unmet housing need continued.
- 3.147 Paragraph B.95 of the adopted Local Plan states, '*...If this joint work reveals that Cherwell and other Districts need to meet additional need for Oxford, this will trigger a partial review of the Local Plan, to be completed within two years of adoption, and taking the form of the preparation of a separate Development Plan Document for that part of the unmet need to be accommodated in the Cherwell District.*'
- 3.148 On 19 November 2015 the Oxfordshire Growth Board agreed a total working figure for Oxford's unmet housing need of 15,000 homes (see evidence doc. PR12). Members may recall that this was reported to the Executive on 4 January 2016 when the issues consultation paper was approved for consultation (evidence doc. PR19):

'3.7 While this work [the Growth Board work programme] has not been finalised, on 19 November 2015, the Oxfordshire Growth Board agreed a total working figure for Oxford's unmet need of 15,000 homes. The report presented to the Growth Board stated:

"...The first key project within the Programme was to agree the figure for unmet need in Oxford City. This was done by asking the critical friend to critique the Oxford SHLAA [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment], the Cundall report [an alternative assessment of housing capacity] commissioned by South, Vale and Cherwell [Councils], the Oxford response to this and any other relevant information. Following consideration of the report all authorities agreed a working assumption of 15,000 homes for Oxford City's unmet need. All authorities agree to work towards this in good faith, based on the previously agreed process which includes the review of the Oxford City's Local Plan.

The Board should note that the working assumption of 15,000 is a working figure to be used by the Programme as a benchmark for assessing the spatial options for growth and is not an agreed figure for the true amount of unmet need..."

3.8 It will not be until the countywide work is complete that this figure can be refined and a housing distribution to individual districts can be agreed. There is a need to achieve further refinement of the current urban housing potential of Oxford and the City Council will need to explore what further contribution to meeting its housing need might be possible in its Local Plan review. However, the agreed 15,000 figure provides a basis for individual Councils to begin to consider possible scenarios...'

3.9 The countywide work will be completed by Summer 2016 and will inform the distribution of unmet housing need to the individual district Councils. It will also inform the preparation of the Partial Review of Local Plan Part 1.

3.10 There is a need to progress work on the Partial Review in order to meet the timetable commitment made in paragraph B.95 of the adopted Local Plan (completion within 2 years of adoption).'

Apportionment of Housing Need

- 3.149 There is not a single Local Planning Authority for Oxfordshire. The Oxfordshire Growth Board, a Joint Committee of all six Oxfordshire Councils, and represented by the Leaders of each, is the appropriate non-statutory body for jointly considering countywide spatial planning issues. It embarked on a proportionate, evidential programme of work in the interest of reaching agreement on the level of Oxford's unmet housing need and how that might reasonably be apportioned to the districts councils. This resulted in the decision of the Growth Board on 26 September 2016 (evidence doc. PR27).
- 3.150 Members are advised to be mindful that this was not a statutory planning process and could not replicate that for the preparation of a Local Plan. However it represents cooperative cross-border working on strategic priorities, as envisaged by the national policy in the NPPF. It should also be noted that the consultation anticipated by the Growth Board on the apportionment process has not taken place. Nonetheless, the Council has taken active steps through its consultations to inform the public about the Growth Board programme and its output. Officers consider that those steps and the consultation in respect of the Partial Review have properly informed and engaged communities in the process. As a technical programme of work leading to a decision supported jointly by the elected leaderships of each Council (other than South Oxfordshire District Council), officers are of the view that it represents an appropriate basis for testing at an individual district level through a Local Plan process.
- 3.151 The Council's consultations have provided the opportunity to consider the Growth Board evidence and the suggested level of additional housing to be accommodated within Cherwell. It can be seen that there is much local opposition. However, officers see no evidential reason to consider that the apportionment arrived at on a countywide, cooperative basis could not be accommodated subject to the Plan's detailed policy requirements.

Vision and Objectives

- 3.152 Officers have considered the proposed vision and plan objectives in light of the representations made. No change is recommended. The goals of meeting housing needs; supporting the city's economy, universities and its local employment base; and ensuring that people have convenient, affordable and sustainable travel opportunities to the city's places of work, study and recreation, and to its services and facilities are essential to delivering a Plan that truly relates to Oxford's need. The vision's aims are central to achieving sustainable development.

Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives

- 3.153 Officers consider that all reasonable options have been considered. The housing capacity of Oxford has been tested by the Oxfordshire Growth Board. The Council has tested Areas of Search covering the entire district to determine which Areas were not suitable for accommodating Oxford's unmet housing needs and which could deliver the Plan's vision and objectives. Within those Areas identified, all reasonable site options were examined. The consideration of alternatives was informed by evidence, consultation feedback and sustainability appraisal.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 3.154 It has been explained earlier in this report how the Plan has been informed by a process of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) from early scoping of issues, an Initial SA accompanying the options consultation, the SA informing the Proposed Submission Plan and, at Appendices 6&7, an SA Addendum related to the proposed Schedule of Focused Changes and Minor Modifications (Appendix 3). The SA has been informed by evidence supporting the plan. Officers are of the view that it has been a robust and informative process that complies with statutory requirements.

Habitats Regulations Assessment: Air Quality Assessment

- 3.155 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 require the Council to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to assess whether there are any likely significant effects on sites of European importance as a result of the Plan proposals. Natural England's representation on the HRA air quality assessment indicated that firstly, the scope of the HRA should be extended to assess whether there are any likely significant effects on Aston Rowant Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and secondly that in order to fulfil the requirements of the regulations the air quality assessment and associated traffic modelling should comprise an in-combination assessment to take account of all proposed allocations in adopted and emerging local plans across the County. Cherwell's HRA considers in combination effects of all committed and allocated growth at the time of preparation but as the position is constantly changing does not reflect all growth from emerging local plans.
- 3.156 Following further discussion with Natural England (jointly with other Oxfordshire district councils), it agreed that Aston Rowant SAC (within South Oxfordshire) did not need to be included within the HRA, primarily due to its distance from the district boundary. This is consistent with previous HRAs undertaken to support the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.
- 3.157 Natural England also invited the submission of further information which underpinned the respective HRA's of each Oxfordshire council to enable it to consider the combined context. This was provided in November 2017. Following consideration of the additional information, on 26 January 2018, Natural England revised its advice and asked for further consideration, in-combination, of the outputs of Cherwell's and the Vale of White Horse's HRAs (relating to Vale's Local Plan Part 2 Submission Plan) only. Natural England has advised that if this indicates the need for avoidance and mitigation measures then this should be able to be covered through a Statement of Common Ground.

- 3.158 The Council's consultants have undertaken further analysis on this issue and at the time of writing this report a joint response to Natural England was in the process of being agreed between Cherwell and Vale of White Horse officers. It is anticipated that an update may be able to be provided to the meeting.
- 3.159 The view of officers is that the advice of Natural England on this issue does not impede progress in completing the Partial Review of the Local Plan.

Transportation

- 3.160 Whilst the proposals for development within the Plan undoubtedly affect a challenging area of the district in transport terms – the interface with Oxford with main transport corridors (A44/A4260) into the city; connections with the A34 and A40; congestion at the Wolvercote, Cutteslowe and Peartree roundabouts and associated air quality issues – it is the view of officers that they represent the best opportunity for maximising the use of sustainable transport, reducing the reliance on the private car, ensuring high levels of accessibility to Oxford's places of employment, its universities, its services and facilities, and developing communities that are well-connected to Oxford.
- 3.161 Officers with the Council's transport consultant have worked in cooperation with Oxfordshire County Council from early stages of plan preparation through regular liaison meetings, through issue specific meetings at key stages of evidence preparation which resulted on the joint commissioning of transport modelling, understanding of the plan's effect on local and strategic road network, the identification of transport mitigation measures and culminated on the joint sign-off of the Transport Assessment supporting the plan. District and County officers met with Highways England at key stages of transport evidence and plan preparation.
- 3.162 In cooperation with the County Council, development locations were selected based on a 'lowest transport impact' basis, appraised through an iterative stage of model testing.
- 3.163 The County Council's proposals for rapid transit routes and strategic cycleway improvements within the Plan's growth area, its strategy for providing Park and Ride facilities further away from the city to encourage early 'modal shift', and its desire to improve traffic movements along both the A4260 and A44, integrate well with proposals for development immediately to the north of Oxford and along the A44 and provide clear opportunities. The aspirations of the Kidlington Masterplan SPD to improve sustainable connectivity within the wider Kidlington / Begbroke area are also informative.
- 3.164 Alignment with the Oxford Transport Strategy, contained within the County Council's Local Transport Plan, has been a central theme of the Plan. Highways England's view that if Green Belt development were not to come forward, land allocations elsewhere could potentially have a far more onerous impact on the highway network is illustrative of the appropriateness of the proposed strategy in transport terms, notwithstanding the highway capacity challenges that endure.
- 3.165 The representation from Highways England (see para's. 3.96 to 3.98) has been considered by the Council's transport consultant and discussed at a meeting attended by Highways England and the County Council.

- 3.166 Officers from the three authorities discussed the effect of the plan on the M40 J9, A34 and A34 junctions and agreed that the main residual issues are concentrated upon the Peartree interchange which suffers from peak traffic congestion even without growth from the Partial Review.
- 3.167 The Plan's concentrated focus on sustainable travel helps to minimise additional impacts and there is an understanding that implementation would need to include improvements to bus services operating through the Peartree interchange and Loop Farm roundabout. There is agreement with the highway authorities that junction 'microsimulation' work may need to be taken forward once there is greater certainty over the precise nature of development.
- 3.168 Through the Growth Board, the Oxfordshire councils have reached an Outline Agreement with Government for an Oxfordshire Growth Deal. Subject to agreement on a required Delivery Plan, it will commit the Government to a 5 year (2018-2023) £215m funding package which includes addressing the transport infrastructure requirements of growth to 2031. This is in the context of the Oxfordshire councils committing to delivering 100,000 homes (2011-2031) in line with the need identified in the SHMA 2014. The Partial Review's sustainable transport mitigation package is included in the emerging Growth Deal under 'North Oxford All Modes Corridor Improvements'.
- 3.169 Officers have updated the Plan's infrastructure schedule attached to the proposed Schedule of Focused Changes and Minor Modifications at Appendix 3. Upon approval of the schedule, it would comprise part of the proposed changes to the Plan. The updates take into account additional information provided by the County Council.
- 3.170 It is the view of officers that the Plan's proposals represent the most sustainable approach to addressing the local highway issues. There is clear alignment with the County Council's policies and programmes as Local Highway Authority. Strategic highway schemes have been identified in the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy which will ensure countywide coordination and form the basis for funding bids. Officers will continue to work closely with the County Council and Highway England to secure investment for the transport improvements including strategic funding such as from the Growth Deal and Local Growth Fund, funding from developer contributions and from the capital programmes of the relevant authorities.
- 3.171 The Plan, its sustainability and its deliverability do not depend on the provision of a railway halt/station. Land is safeguarded to assist with a longer term aspiration following discussions with the site promoter (site PR8) and initial exploratory discussions with the rail industry.
- 3.172 On more detailed matters, officers from the county and district councils are agreed that the potential closure of Sandy Lane to vehicular traffic would not affect the operation of the Strategic Road Network, that modelling evidence shows that Langford Lane operates under capacity and could absorb displaced vehicular moments; and, that modelling shows that the A40-A44 link road (highlighted by West Oxfordshire District Council) is not required to deliver the growth in the Partial Review. Officers recommend that its potential closure, aligned with the implementation of rapid transit routes, is retained within the Plan to maximise the potential for the use of sustainable transport, to create a high quality 'green link' between Begbroke/Yarnton and Kidlington, to achieve a high quality of development

within site PR8 and to assist Network Rail with the closure of the level crossing for safety reasons.

- 3.173 The potential closure of the Sandy Lane level crossing has been discussed with and welcomed by Network Rail. It has also been agreed to introduce a minor amendment to the Plan requiring consultation with it on the development brief for site PR8 in part to avoid the pedestrian/cycle/wheelchair use of the Yarnton Lane/Green Lane as a preferred route that might lead to more intensive use of the level crossing thereon. It has been agreed that the Plan's proposals do not materially lead to increased vehicular traffic over the crossing. Nevertheless, Network Rail wishes to explore its potential for closure. The closure of both Sandy Lane and Yarnton Lane level crossings would be of significant benefit to Network Rail in terms of health and safety, journey times and rail capacity.
- 3.174 Overall, having reviewed all the comments submitted, officers are of the view that a change is not required to plan's strategy for transportation but that the focused changes and minor modifications presented at Appendix 3 would improve the final document in light of detailed comments made.

Other Infrastructure

- 3.175 Many of the representations received include concerns about the capacity of existing infrastructure such as schools and health services and the timely deliverability of new infrastructure to serve the proposed developments. The Infrastructure Schedule supporting the plan has been updated following the receipt of additional information and discussion with service planners / providers such as the County Council (including on education matters), the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (with local GP Practice Managers) and the Council's own community/recreation services. A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document is being presented to Council for adoption at this meeting which will assist in the delivery of required infrastructure. More widely, the completion of an Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (evidence doc. PR35) strengthens the position of the Oxfordshire authorities is seeking Government funding where required to support or accelerate delivery.
- 3.176 Officers consider the Plan's proposals to be 'sound' with regard to infrastructure delivery. The focused changes and minor modifications at Appendix 3 are recommended to improve the Plan and bring specific requirements up-to-date.

Green Belt / Exceptional Circumstances

- 3.177 The national importance given to the protection of designated Green Belts and the 'high bar' set for the removal of land from the Green Belt through Local Plan demonstration of 'exceptional circumstances' has necessarily been a fundamental principle of Plan preparation. The 'exceptional circumstances' test is different from the Development Management test of 'very special circumstances' for 'inappropriate' development within the Green Belt.
- 3.178 Officers have reviewed whether its examination of reasonable alternatives remains robust in the light of representations. They remain of the view that Areas of Search, other than Areas A and B, are unsuitable for the accommodation of the additional development required to meet Oxford's needs. The Council's approach to assessing exceptional circumstances has also been discussed with its Green Belt

consultants in the context of comments made. Officers are of the view that a re-appraisal of the approach and options is not required. They are of the clear view that the exceptional circumstances set out at paragraph 5.17 of the Proposed Submission Plan are robust.

The Impact on Local Communities

- 3.179 The Plan's proposals would undoubtedly have effects on local communities. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process examines the Plan's proposals against a set of environmental, social and economic objectives to determine whether the effects are significant and identify appropriate mitigations. The SA has informed the plan-making process
- 3.180 Of direct consequence would be the increased coalescence of settlements – bringing the south of Kidlington and the north of Oxford closer together, and drawing Begbroke / Yarnton / Kidlington nearer to each other.
- 3.181 The developments immediately to the north of Oxford (PR6a and PR6b) would be located to the south of A34 in an area that already has the perception of a gateway into Oxford due to the presence of Oxford Parkway / Water Eaton Park and Ride and other urban influences. The A34 is a definitive barrier, separating this area from Kidlington to the north and the two proposed developments to the south of Kidlington (PR7a and PR7b). To the west lies the Oxford Canal and railway. No residential development is planned to the east of the railway and to the west of Kidlington. Helped by its large size, its own urban centre and by proposals for open strategic areas of open space within the Plan, it is considered that Kidlington would retain its own identity, with the centre of Kidlington strengthened by the new transport links and growth to its west.
- 3.182 The development of land to the east and west of the A44 would bring Begbroke, Yarnton and Kidlington closer together with a new urban neighbourhood located between. However, officers consider that the Plan's proposals, including for Local Nature Reserves, a nature conservation area and Community Woodland would facilitate a distinctive approach to high quality development along the A44 corridor which would allow for the existing characters and identities of Begbroke and Yarnton to be retained.
- 3.183 The proposed development to the south east of Woodstock (PR10) would bring the town's edge up to Upper Campsfield Road directly opposite London-Oxford airport and within which a new Park and Ride facility is expected to be developed by the County Council. The openness of the airfield would remain and continue to facilitate separation with the built up area of Kidlington. The combined proposals of this Council and those of West Oxfordshire mean that the town can be expected to grow significantly but it is the view of officers that there is no reason to suggest that the Woodstock would lose its identity.
- 3.184 Having considered the representations made, officers remain of the view that the negative consequences of the proposed developments are outweighed by the absence of suitable alternatives and the advantages of meeting Oxford needs in these well-connected locations.

Policy PR6a - East of Oxford Road

- 3.185 The many objections to the development of this site, and the comments on the proposed policy, are noted. Officers remain of the view that the proposed allocation is sustainable and deliverable in view of the evidence. The recommended changes at Appendix 3 include minor changes to the area of land required for primary school use and detailed clarifications and amendments in response to comments received.
- 3.186 Historic England has requested some minor changes to the wording of requirements relating to the historic environment in this and other site policies which are included in the schedule of changes at Appendix 3. It also indicated in its representation that site PR6a should not be taken forward without an assessment of the significance of St. Frideswide farmhouse, the contribution of its setting to that significance, and the likely impact of proposed development on that significance. However following a visit to the site and further discussion, Historic England confirmed that such an assessment was not required at this stage, but requested minor rewording of point 15 (included in Appendix 3).

Policy PR6b – West of Oxford Road

- 3.187 The many objections to the development of this historic recreation facility with its mature landscape are noted. The comments on the proposed policy are acknowledged. During the consultation period, the Leader of the Council, with Council officers, met a group of members of the North Oxford Golf Club to hear their concerns. In the light of evidence, officers remain of the view that the suitability of this site for meeting Oxford's housing needs far outweighs the loss of the golf course and that there remains potential to provide a replacement facility on a comparably sized site at Frieze Farm (Policy PR6c). The recommended schedule of changes (Appendix 3) includes detailed clarifications and amendments in response to comments received.
- 3.188 The Proposed Submission Plan's reference to a lower density of development on land to the west of Oxford Road reflects its well-treed character. However, in the context of other comments received, it is recommended in the focused changes to remove reference to prescribed densities in all site policies in view of the required development brief process and to avoid misinterpretation in light of the different circumstances for each site.

Policy PR6c – Land at Frieze Farm

- 3.189 The many objections to the potential development of this site for a replacement golf course are noted, including comments that the site it is not suitable for such a facility and on the requirements of the proposed policy. At 30 hectares in size, the site is not considered to be the optimum size for the development of a new 18 hole course. Neither does the site have the advantage of the mature landscape that has been created at the existing north Oxford course. However, at only about 2 hectares smaller than the existing course, and being situated very close to the existing course, the site remains to be regarded as a reasonable option for a replacement golf facility should this be necessary to meet local needs. Officers have considered the deliverability of the site from a land use perspective and are of the view that the proposed reservation of land remains appropriate. In response to comments made, changes (Appendix 3) are recommended to Policy PR6c to insert

criteria for considering potential applications for planning permission, consistent with the approach taken for other site policies.

Policy PR7a – Land South-East of Kidlington

- 3.190 The objections to the development of this site, and the comments on the proposed policy, are noted. Officers remain of the view that the proposed allocation is sustainable and deliverable in view of the evidence. The recommended schedule of changes (Appendix 3) includes detailed clarifications and amendments in response to comments received.

Policy PR7b – Land at Stratfield Farm

- 3.191 The objections to the development of this site, and the comments on the proposed policy, are noted. Officers remain of the view that the proposed allocation is sustainable and deliverable in view of the evidence. Recommended changes (Appendix 3) include detailed clarifications and amendments in response to comments received.

Policy PR8 – Land East of the A44

- 3.192 The many objections to the development of this site, and the comments on the proposed policy, are noted. Officers remain of the view that the proposed allocation is sustainable and deliverable in view of the evidence. Recommended changes (Appendix 3) include clarification on required provision for education, and, in response to comments from Natural England, that the Biodiversity Impact Assessment required by Policy PR8 be informed by a hydrogeological risk assessment to ensure the protection of Rushy Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- 3.193 Proposed Policy PR8 contained a requirement for a Biodiversity Impact Assessment supporting a planning application to include investigation of any above or below ground hydrological connectivity between Rowel Brook and Rushy Meadows SSSI. However, Natural England's representation advised that further information regarding potential hydrological impacts on the SSSI was needed at this stage to ensure that the quantum of development allocated was deliverable without a significant impact.
- 3.194 A Hydrological and Hydrogeological Study (evidence doc. PR80) was therefore commissioned by officers which concluded:

“Although a potential hydrogeological connection via superficial sands and gravels is assumed to be present between Rushy Meadows SSSI and the proposed PR8 development land to the south, significant hydrological and hydrogeological linkages were not identified. As a consequence, adverse impacts to Rushy Meadows SSSI as a consequence of the proposed development are considered Negligible.”

- 3.195 The study indicates that whilst it is possible that groundwater abstraction could lower groundwater levels within the SSSI, the extent of the impact would be dependent upon the nature of the abstraction or dewatering activity. The consideration of mitigation measures to control dewatering operations during construction was therefore recommended. Although this would be determined

through the planning application process, a proposed focused change clarifies the supporting information required (Appendix 3, ref. FC56).

- 3.196 Other detailed clarifications and amendments are also recommended for Policy PR8 in response to comments received.

Policy PR9 – Land West of Yarnton

- 3.197 The many objections to the development of this site, and the comments on the proposed policy, are noted. Officers remain of the view that the proposed allocation is sustainable and deliverable in view of the evidence. However, it is recommended (Appendix 3) that the total number of homes proposed is reduced from 530 homes to 440 homes to improve the deliverability of the site and achieve a high quality of design in the context of a representation from the site promoter. Other recommended changes include detailed clarifications and amendments in response to comments received.

Policy PR10 – Land South East of Woodstock

- 3.198 The many objections to the development of this site, and the comments on the proposed policy, are noted. Officers remain of the view that the proposed allocation is sustainable and deliverable in view of the evidence.
- 3.199 Historic England's representation on Policy PR10 indicated that the site should not be allocated for development until an archaeological assessment had been undertaken and ascertained the extent and significance of archaeological remains on the site as a whole, to identify if development is acceptable on the site, and if so over what area. Following further discussion, Historic England was provided with archaeological assessment information submitted as part of the previous planning application on the site (14/02004/OUT) (see Appendix 12 to this report). On examination, Historic England confirmed that further archaeological assessment was not required in respect of the majority of the allocation site, but that having regard to the information contained in the assessment, it could not support the allocation in its current form as the area proposed for housing covers part of the areas of archaeological potential. It advised that:

“Any allocation or proposed development should accurately draw on the information gathered already, and as far as possible avoid areas of intensive archaeology shown on the geophysics and other survey reports...”, and

“We recommend that development is withdrawn from areas of known archaeological potential, particularly those of higher potential, and that these areas are included in green space proposals for any allocation or development...”

“We welcome the allocation of the areas to the south and east of the villa as green space, as this reflects comments provided previously ... in terms of preserving the setting of the villa. We note, however, that the Villa area is allocated as retained agricultural land and so would be vulnerable to on-going ploughing and arable planting. To ensure the on-going preservation of the Villa site and associated higher potential deposits, it would be best preserved under controlled grazing or public open space, than under arable.”

- 3.200 The proposed distribution of uses within site PR10 has been amended in response to Historic England's advice to address these concerns (see proposed changes to policies maps attached to the schedule of changes at Appendix 3). The Policies Map now indicates archaeological constraint areas and a reconfigured residential development area, and has removed the reference to land retained in agricultural use.
- 3.201 The archaeological survey information submitted as part of the outline planning application did not cover that part of site PR10 allocated for primary school use. It is not yet certain whether this land will be required for a school, playing fields or other outdoor sports provision but following further consultation with Historic England, it indicated that in view of archaeological interest to the south in association with the Scheduled Ancient Monument, a desk based Heritage Impact Assessment and Geophysical survey should be undertaken on the site. This work has commenced but in view of associated timescales Historic England has agreed to some additional wording in the plan to ensure that development on that part of the site will be informed by the outcome of the HIA. It is considered that the proposed reconfiguration of the layout, together with other focused changes requested to policy requirements, have addressed the concerns raised by Historic England.
- 3.202 However, the reconfiguration of the proposed residential area meant that officers needed to review the precise number of dwellings that could be provided on the site. This suggested approximately 489 dwellings. This has been rounded to 500 homes for the purpose of what is a strategic housing allocation and which offsets the reduction in the number of homes (90) planned for land to the west of Yarnton (Appendix 3).
- 3.203 Other recommended changes include detailed clarifications and amendments in response to comments received. It is also recommended that the policy makes clear that the development of land for either school or sports pitch use to the north of Shipton Road will be subject to the consideration of a Heritage Impact Assessment in consultation with Historic England.

Affordable Housing

- 3.204 Securing the delivery of affordable housing is critical in helping to meet Oxford's housing needs in the context of the 2014 SHMA and Oxford's Housing Strategy. Officers from the two Councils have been in discussion with a view to agreeing an outline approach for the cross border allocation of housing. The discussions have been broadened out in the context of other Oxfordshire local plans seeking to address Oxford's needs and cooperative work on the Oxfordshire Growth Deal which includes the delivery of affordable homes.
- 3.205 Officers consider that the Plan's approach to tailor the overall need for affordable housing to Oxford's needs to be required and deliverable in the context of evidence including the Plan's viability assessment (evidence doc. PR49). Agreement between the two councils as housing authorities will help ensure timely delivery. The concerns raised in representations about the wider 'affordability' of market housing and the risk that it is not readily available to those working within Oxford go beyond spatial planning issues, but the provision of additional housing would assist movement within the market and officers consider that Policy PR2 - Housing Mix, Tenure and Size would help would tailor the new housing to local needs.

3.206 In the interest of consistency a proposed change (Appendix 3) includes the addition of the proposed 50% affordable housing requirement to Policy 12b: Sites Not Allocated in the Partial Review.

Other Policies

3.207 In addition to objections, detailed comments are provided on Policy PR1 (Policy Achieving Sustainable Development for Oxford's Needs); Policy PR2 (Housing Mix, Tenure and Size); Policy PR3 (The Oxford Green Belt, Policy PR4a: Sustainable Transport), Policy PR4b (Kidlington Centre), Policy PR5 (Green Infrastructure), Policy PR11 (Infrastructure Delivery), Policy PR12a (Delivering Sites and Maintaining Housing Supply), Policy PR12b (Sites Not Allocated in the Partial Review); and Policy PR13 (Monitoring and Securing Delivery).

3.208 Officers consider that these policies are 'sound' and that no improvements are required to policies PR1, PR2, PR3, PR4a or PR4b. Changes (Appendix 3) are proposed to Policy PR5 in response to representations from the Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT), the County Council and Sport England. Small changes to Policy PR11 are advised in light of comments from Scottish and Southern Electric Networks, Sport England, Thames Valley Police and in the context of finalising the Developer Contributions SPD. Some clarification is proposed on how sites would contribute in delivering a 5 year housing supply (PR12a), and as previously stated, on requiring a consistent approach to seeking 50% affordable housing by referencing it under Policy PR12b for unallocated sites. A very minor update to Policy PR13 is suggested as are the relevant updating of maps and appendices.

Overall Response to Proposed Submission Consultation

3.209 The representations received have been considered by officers in reviewing the soundness and legal compliance of the Plan. The representations are summarised as an appendix to the Statement of Consultation (Appendix 4 to this report). The Statement of Consultation summarises the main issues and provides a collective response from officers for each section/policy of the Plan.

3.210 The proposed Focused Changes and Minor Modifications presented at Appendix 3, have been identified in the context of the representations made, on-going cooperation and associated reviews of evidence. They have been tested through the Sustainability Appraisal process and are recommended to Members.

3.211 The view of officers is that the Proposed Submission Plan has been positively prepared and is justified, effective, consistent with national policy and legally compliant.

3.212 It is recommended that the Proposed Submission Plan together with the schedule of Focused Changes and Minor Modifications be approved for presentation to Council with a recommendation that they be Submitted to the Secretary of State together with all supporting documents

Next Steps

- 3.213 Should the Plan be approved by the Executive, and subsequently by Council, its submission would mark the start of its examination by a Government appointed Planning Inspector in accordance with his/her programme.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 This report presents the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 – Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs for approval and subsequent presentation to Council as a 'Submission' Local Plan. Upon approval by Council the Plan would be submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for independent examination.
- 4.2 Consultation on the Proposed Submission Plan commenced on 17 July 2017 and extended to 10 October 2017. A total of 1460 representations were received in response to the consultation. They have been considered by officers in reviewing whether the Partial Review (the Plan) is 'sound' and legally compliant - the tests of the independent examination of the Plan that commences upon the Plan's submission.
- 4.3 The view of officers is that the Plan is sound but that a number of 'focused changes' and 'minor modifications' should be made to it in the interests of its improvement, clarification and updating and to address minor presentational, grammatical and typographical issues. These are all presented for approval in the schedule of changes at Appendix 3 to this report.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 The Plan has been the subject of public consultation and engagement during the course of its production as explained in this report and in the Statement of Consultation at Appendix 4.
- 5.2 Internal briefing: Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 Officers have considered all reasonable alternatives in preparing the Partial Review of the Local Plan. This is documented in the Sustainability Appraisal presented at Appendices 5,6 & 7. The Plan as presented is considered to be sound, legally compliant, and, in the view of officers, would result in sustainable development.
- 6.2 The following alternative options are open to Members but are not recommended for the reasons as set out below:

Option 1: Not to approve the Plan

Joint work with the other Oxfordshire councils has revealed that Cherwell and other Districts need to meet additional housing need for Oxford. In accordance with paragraph B.95 of the adopted Local Plan, this triggered the Partial Review process

to be completed within two years of adoption (from July 2015). Officers consider the proposed Partial Review of the Plan to be sound and legally compliant. Not to approve the Plan would lead to a reconsideration of how the whole District would contribute in meeting the identified housing need in the context of the statutory Duty to Cooperate. There would be significant uncertainty for partner authorities, local communities and the development industry.

Option 2: Not to approve the Plan and seek significant changes

New, significant changes would need to be considered by officers on an evidential basis before the Plan could be re-presented to Members for approval. Changes involving new planning considerations may require re-consultation. The consideration of significant changes would lead to delay.

Option 3: To approve the Plan and seek changes.

Changes would need to be considered by officers to determine whether they would affect the submission of the Plan for examination; whether they would be significant; and, whether they need to be considered on an evidential basis. Changes involving new planning considerations may require re-consultation. The consideration of significant changes would lead to delay.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 Submission and examination of the Partial Review of the Local Plan is being met within existing budgets.

Comments checked by:

Paul Sutton, Executive Director - Finance and Governance 0300 0030106

Paul.Sutton@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 The legal process is set out in the body of the report and has been followed. An extended consultation has been carried out. Subject to making the focused changes and minor modifications, officers consider the Plan is ready for submission for independent examination.

Comments checked by:

Nigel Bell, Interim Legal Services Manager 01295 221687

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8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: Yes

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

This report directly links to all four of the corporate priorities and objectives set out in the Cherwell District Council Business Plan 2017-18 as follows:

- Sound budgets and a customer focused council
- Thriving communities
- District of opportunity
- Safe, clean and green

Lead Councillor

Councillor Colin Clarke – Lead Member for Planning

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Additional Representation Summaries
Appendix 2	Proposed Submission Draft of the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (July 2017)
Appendix 3	Schedule of Focused Changes and Minor Modifications – February 2018
Appendix 4	Statement of Consultation - February 2018
Appendix 5	Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report (June 2017) of the Proposed Submission Local Plan (July 2017) including Non-Technical Summary (June 2017)
Appendix 6	Sustainability Appraisal Addendum February 2018 - Focused Changes and Minor Modifications
Appendix 7	Sustainability Appraisal Non-Technical Summary Addendum February 2018
Appendix 8	Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report June 2017
Appendix 9	Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report Addendum February 2018 - Focused Changes and Minor Modifications
Appendix 10	Duty to Cooperate Statement, February 2018
Appendix 11	Outline Agreement for Oxfordshire Growth Deal
Appendix 12	Heritage Impact Assessment accompanying planning application 14/02004/OUT
Appendix 13	List of Evidence

Background Papers	
None	
Reference Papers	
Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) - https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/83/local-plans/376/adopted-cherwell-local-plan-2011-2031-part-1	
Evidence documents: https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/112/evidence-base/369/local-plan-part-1-partial-review---evidence-base	
Report of Executive Director for Place and Growth to the Executive, Cherwell District Council, 26 February 2018, <i>Submission of the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 - Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs</i> : http://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=115&MIId=3108&Ver=4	
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