

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION****Executive****4 September 2023**

Agenda Item Number	Page	Title	Officer Responsible	Reason Not Included with Original Agenda
6.	(Pages 2159 - 2192)	Cherwell Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation Appendices 6, 7, 8 and 9	Assistant Director Planning and Development	Published as a supplement due to size of documents

If you need any further information about the meeting please contact Natasha Clark, Democratic and Elections democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221534

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Interim Duty to Cooperate Statement

FOR EXECUTIVE (4 September 2023)

Cherwell Local Plan Review – Draft Cherwell Local Plan

August 2023

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Cherwell District Council is producing a new Local Plan to 2040. The Cherwell Local Plan Review will cover the administrative area of Cherwell District and no joint Plan with other authorities is proposed to be produced. This statement sets out how Cherwell District Council has engaged with the required bodies and other organisations in the preparation of the draft Cherwell Local Plan under the Duty to Cooperate. This interim statement will be updated for the proposed submission Local Plan next year as part of on-going cooperation and engagement under the Duty to Cooperate. The Council will produce a statement of compliance when the Plan is submitted for examination.

1.2 Formal public consultation has taken place on two previous documents for the Local Plan Review including a Community Involvement Paper (July 2020) and a Community Involvement Paper 2 – Developing our Options (September 2021). The Council's Statement of Consultation sets out the representations, including from the Duty to Cooperate bodies, that have been received and how these have been taken into account for draft Plan.

1.3 The Council published a Duty to Cooperate background paper for public consultation in September 2021 alongside the Community Involvement Paper 2. The representations received have been considered in identifying the strategic matters for the Local Plan at this stage and in producing this Duty to Cooperate Statement.

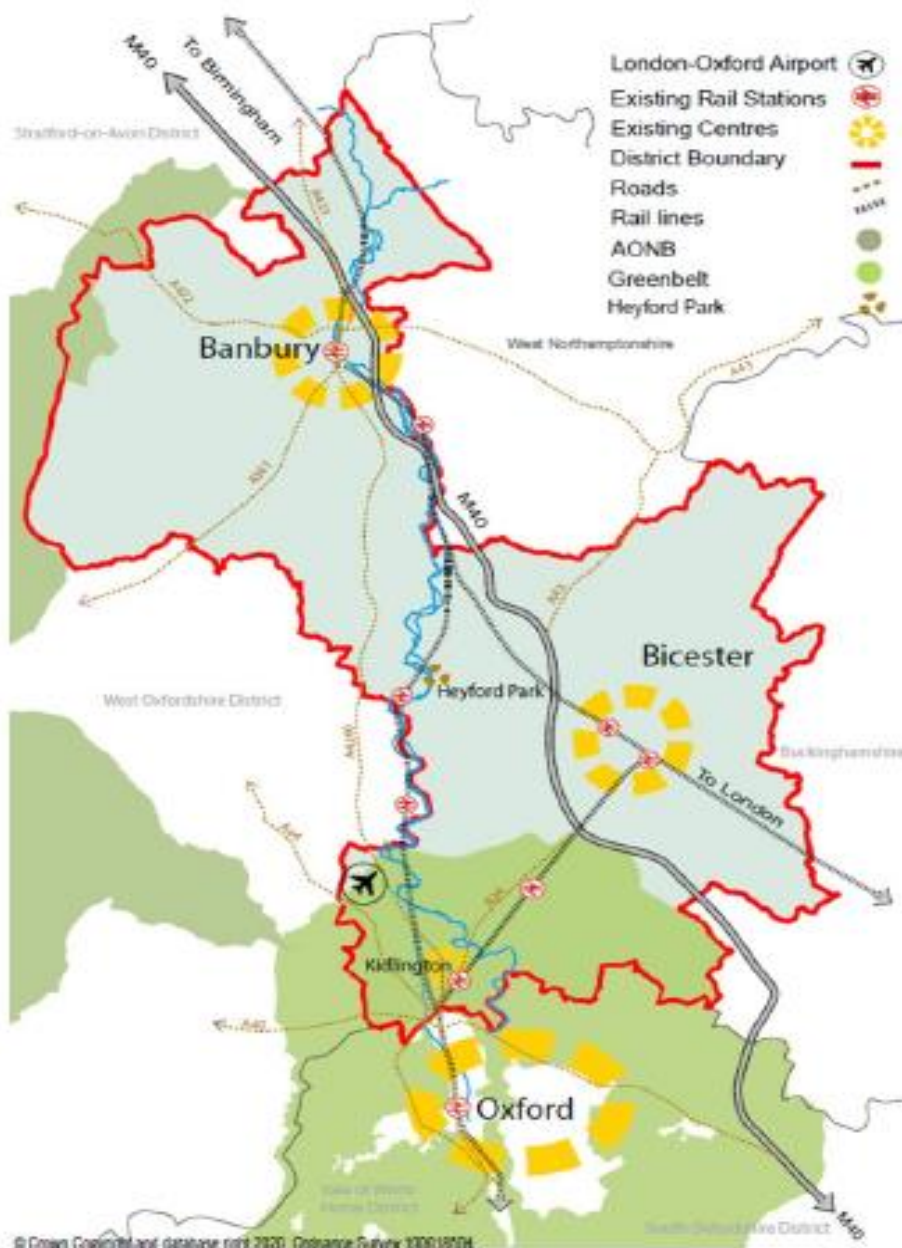
1.4 The Council has engaged with the required bodies and other organisations in the preparation of the draft Plan in a number of ways including through meetings, joint working, the commissioning of evidence and established partnerships. All the prescribed bodies were contacted and invited to produce a statement of common ground during the preparation of the draft Local Plan. These are in preparation and will be published at the proposed submission stage.

1.5 As required at various points, the Council has also engaged under the Duty to Cooperate with organisations and bodies on strategic matters relating to their strategies, Plans and priorities. For example, in relation to neighbouring authorities Local Plans.

2.0 Strategic Context

2.1 Cherwell District is situated in north Oxfordshire, in the southeast of England. It lies between London and Birmingham, immediately north of Oxford and south of Warwick / Leamington Spa. Cherwell District is within a two-tier area, with Oxfordshire County Council providing public services such as education, highways and social services.

2.2 Cherwell covers an area of approximately 228 square miles, and shares boundaries with Buckinghamshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, West Oxfordshire, Stratford-Upon-Avon districts and Warwickshire.



3.0 Legal Requirements

3.1 The duty to cooperate is a legal requirement under Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

3.2 The duty to cooperate requires local planning authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with other local planning authorities, county councils and prescribed bodies in order to maximise the effectiveness of development plan documents in relation to strategic planning matters.

3.3 For the purpose of the Government's duty to cooperate, "strategic matters" are defined in Legislation as "sustainable development or the use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas", including (in particular) sustainable development or use of land for, or in conjunction with, infrastructure that is strategic and has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas. Strategic matters also include sustainable development or use of land in a two-tier area if the development or use is a county matter e.g. transport, education, and minerals and waste planning, or has or would have a significant impact on a county matter.

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) and Planning Practice Guidance

3.4 In addition to the legal requirements set out above, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises the importance of joint working and co-operation between local authorities and other bodies on cross boundary matters and matters of shared interest. The NPPF sets out:

- That local planning authorities "are under a duty to cooperate with each other and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries." (paragraph 24)
- That strategic policy-making authorities should "collaborate to identify the relevant strategic matters which they need to address in their plans." (paragraph 25)
- That "effective and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities and relevant bodies is integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy. In particular, joint working should help to determine where additional infrastructure is necessary, and whether development needs that cannot be met wholly within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere." (paragraph 26)
- That "in order to demonstrate effective and on-going joint working, strategic policymaking authorities should prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these." (paragraph 27)

3.5 There is further practical guidance in the National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in relation to the application of the duty to co-operate, including the organisations that should be engaged with, how the duty to co-operate will be considered at examination and how two or more strategic policy-making authorities can co-operate in plan preparation. The PPG also provides more detail on how statements of common ground should be prepared and presented.

Other relevant guidance

3.6 The Planning Inspectorate's Procedure Guide for Local Plan Examinations states that in order to demonstrate compliance with the duty to co-operate, "the most helpful approach is for

local planning authorities to submit a statement of compliance with the duty". The statement of compliance should identify and detail:

- Any relevant strategic matters and how they have been resolved, or, if they have not been resolved, why not;
- Who local planning authorities have co-operated with and on which strategic matter(s);
- The nature and timing of the co-operation (for example by including meeting notes); and
- The outcomes of the co-operation, including how it has influenced the plan.

Duty to cooperate bodies

Neighbouring authorities

The following authorities have administrative boundaries that directly adjoin Cherwell District:

- Buckinghamshire Council;
- Oxford City Council;
- Oxfordshire County Council;
- South Oxfordshire District Council;
- Vale of White Horse District Council;
- Stratford-on-Avon District Council
- Warwickshire County Council;
- West Northamptonshire Council; and
- West Oxfordshire District Council.

Prescribed bodies

3.7 The Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012 identify prescribed bodies that local planning authorities must co-operate with in plan-making. The prescribed bodies relevant to Cherwell are:

- The Environment Agency;
- Historic England;
- Natural England;
- The Mayor of London;
- The Civil Aviation Authority;
- Homes England;
- Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (or any successor organisation);
- The National Health Service Commissioning Board (NHS England);
- The Office of Rail and Road;
- The Highways Authority (Oxfordshire County Council);
- Highways England.

3.8 In addition to those planning authorities and prescribed bodies listed above, the Council is required to proactively engage with other partnerships as part of the preparation of the Local Plan. These include:

- Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership;

- Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP).

3.9 Other Duty to Co-operate bodies specified in the Regulations but considered not to apply in the Cherwell context are:

- Transport for London;
- Integrated Transport Authorities;
- and the Marine Management Organisation.

3.10 The duty requires those bodies to:

- Engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with other Duty to Co-operate bodies on the preparation of plans and supporting activities;
- Have regard to activities of other Duty to Co-operate bodies; and
- Consider joint approaches to relevant activities including plan making.

4.0 Cooperation on Strategic Matters

4.1 The Cherwell Local Plan 2040 provides a strategic framework to guide the delivery of sustainable development across Cherwell district up to 2040 and the draft Plan contains a number of proposed strategic objectives and policies. This section sets out the cooperation and engagement that has taken place including on strategic matters at this stage. Table 1 summarises the involvement of each prescribed body, and other organisations, and provides a summary of the SOCG being prepared. The Council is exploring the potential to produce a joint SOCG with the Oxfordshire authorities which the Council hopes will be in place before the Local Plan is submitted. Regular meetings have taken place between the Oxfordshire authorities to discuss strategic matters and cross boundary working. Further information is provided in Section 5 of this statement, in the draft Local Plan, and in supporting documents about the cooperation and engagement that has taken place for the Local Plan Review.

Homes needed in the area

4.2 Housing needs and provision is one of the key matters that the Local Plan must address, and where the duty to cooperate is essential. The NPPF states that authorities must work to address housing needs within their housing market area. It also expects authorities to cooperate on meeting one another's housing needs if it cannot be accommodated within the authority where it arises. Part of the evidence base for the Plan includes the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA), which has been commissioned by Cherwell and Oxford City to identify their housing needs. Meetings have been held between the Oxfordshire authorities to discuss meeting housing needs. The draft Local Plan seeks to meet some of Oxford's housing needs. None of the other neighbouring authorities have identified that they require Cherwell to meet any of their housing needs at this stage. Cherwell does not require neighbouring authorities to meet any of its housing needs. The HENA identifies Oxfordshire as the Housing Market Area and Functional Economic Market area.

Gypsy and traveller needs

4.3 The nature of provision for gypsies and travellers means that it is often a cross boundary matter. For Cherwell, the most up to date assessment of need is the 2017 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show people Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). In recent years, the Oxfordshire authorities have co-operated on planning for gypsies and travellers, and a new county-wide GTAA is being commissioned jointly, and once published it will replace the 2017 GTAA. This updated information will be used to inform the needs of the travelling community in the Local Plan Review.

Jobs needed in the area

4.4 Economic growth is an important matter for the Local Plan Review to consider. The Council is a board member of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) which has developed the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and Investment Plan in partnership with the business community, academic institutions and the other Oxfordshire authorities. The HENA identifies the employment needs for Cherwell District. In terms of the neighbouring authorities, none of the authorities have identified that they require Cherwell to meet any of their employment needs at this stage.

4.5 Regular meetings have been held with the LEP on economic matters and matters of common interest. Joint working has taken place between Cherwell District Council and Oxford City Council on identifying employment needs in the HENA. Agents and promoters have been consulted on the production of the Council's employment studies to inform the draft Local Plan.

Provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development

4.6 The district's urban centres of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington are an important focus for shopping, commerce, leisure and other facilities which serve the needs of residents and visitors. In addition to these centres there are significant retail offerings at several out of centre retail parks, major food stores, and various local centres within Banbury and Bicester. A district-wide Town Centre and Retail Study to inform the preparation of the Plan was published for public consultation alongside the community involvement paper 2 and an update has been produced. The study identifies how the main towns in the District serve a wider catchment beyond the District boundaries.

Provision of infrastructure for transport

4.7 The NPPF states that local authorities should work with neighbouring authorities and transport providers to develop strategies and investments for the provision of transport infrastructure which is necessary to support sustainable development (paragraph 106). Thus, strategic transport infrastructure requires cross boundary co-operation. Oxfordshire County Council is the highways authority with responsibility for producing the Local Transport Plan. Neighbouring authorities can also have an important role to play in these matters. National Highways is responsible for the strategic road network including the M40 and A34.

4.8 There are five railway stations in Cherwell and direct rail links from Banbury and Bicester to London, Birmingham and Oxford. Cross country services link Banbury with Manchester, Bournemouth, Newcastle and Reading. Oxford Parkway station in Water Eaton opened in 2015, linking Oxford and London Marylebone via Bicester. Further significant improvement works are taking place and planned in the area as part of the wider East West Rail and HS2 projects.

4.9 London Oxford Airport is situated northwest of Kidlington. The airport is home to the Oxford Aviation Academy training student commercial pilots. The airport is mainly used for private and recreational aviation activity as well as operating a small number of private and chartered flights. Meetings have been held with London Oxford airport.

4.10 Regular meetings have taken place with the Highways authority on transport matters and the Council has been involved in the production of Oxfordshire County Council strategies such the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and Walking and Cycling Strategies and projects including for the A41 at Bicester, Bicester Market Square, Hennef Way and Tramway in Banbury, the A44 in Kidlington and in examining Park and Ride locations. The draft Local Plan seeks to reflect the priorities of the Highway Authority and has assessed the proposed sites in terms of transport impact. The Council has jointly commissioned a transport assessment with the County Council to inform the draft Cherwell Local Plan. A workshop was held with stakeholders to inform the Council's interim Infrastructure Delivery Plan involving Network Rail, National Highways and local authority representatives. A Statement of Common Ground is being prepared with the Civil Aviation Authority and National Highways.

Provision of utilities infrastructure (including telecommunications, waste, water and energy)

4.11 A range of Duty to Cooperate bodies including Oxfordshire County Council and neighbouring authorities are involved in these matters. The water companies and neighbouring authorities have been consulted on a Water Cycle Study to inform the draft Plan. The energy companies have provided information to inform the draft Local Plan including in relation to site requirements. The

Council has produced an Interim Infrastructure Delivery Plan for the draft Local Plan which involves consultation with infrastructure/utilities providers.

Natural Environment

4.12 Cherwell's natural environment is varied. The River Cherwell and Oxford Canal run north-south through the District. There are 19 landscape character types within Cherwell including the Ironstone Downs in the north west, which includes a small area within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Cherwell District contains many areas of high ecological or geological value including sites of international, national and local importance. There are several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and part of the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) lies in the south west corner of the District, north of the boundary with Oxford City. The District is home to many legally protected species as well as priority species and habitats.

4.13 An Oxfordshire Nature Partnership has been established in Oxfordshire involving the Oxfordshire authorities and other stakeholders. Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) bring together local organisations, businesses and people who want to improve their local natural environment. Its purpose is to radically enhance nature, its positive impact on our climate and the priority it is given, helping to make Oxfordshire a county where people and nature thrive. Its priorities inform the Local Plan, which contains policies for preserving and enhancing the natural environment. Officers from Cherwell District have attended meetings of the Oxfordshire Partnership Forum. A nature recovery network is being planned for Oxfordshire with an ambition to double the amount of land of high value for nature by 2050. A Green and Blue Infrastructure Workshop was held and an on-line survey undertaken to inform the Council's Green and Blue Infrastructure Study and Local Plan involving a range of stakeholders including the Oxfordshire County Council and Natural England. A statement of common ground is being prepared with the Oxfordshire Nature Partnership and Natural England.

Flood risk

4.14 The predominant risk of flooding within Cherwell is due to flooding from rivers and watercourses as identified in the Council's Flood Risk Assessment for the Local Plan. In addition to the risk of flooding from rivers and watercourses, overland flow, surface water (pluvial) and ground water flooding affects some areas of the district.

4.15 Managing flood risk is a key element of Cherwell's climate change mitigation plans, involving the Environment Agency, Oxfordshire County Council and neighbouring authorities. The draft Plan seeks to manage and reduce flood risk in the district.

4.16 The Environment Agency and the Oxfordshire County Council (as Lead Local Flood Authority) have been involved in the Flood Risk Assessment for the draft Local Plan. A Statement of common ground is being prepared with the Environment Agency.

Provision of health infrastructure and local facilities/infrastructure

4.17 At the local level Oxfordshire County Council has responsibility for public health and so is important in helping frame the policies of the Local Plan Review. Both the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and NHS England also have important roles to play. Regular meetings are held with officers from the ICB on the Local Plan, development proposals and on a wide range of issues relating to local primary care provision. An SOCG is being prepared with the health bodies (the ICB and the Oxford University Hospitals Trust). The Future Oxfordshire Partnership has produced the Oxfordshire Health Impact Tool Kit. The purpose of the tool kit is to facilitate the delivery of

sustainable growth across the County and aims to positively impact on health inequalities and to create healthy, more resilient and sustainable communities.

4.18 Working with the County Council the draft Local Plan seeks to provide for educational needs, provide for health needs and promote healthy lifestyles including the provision of green and blue infrastructure. Active Travel England (ATE) is now a statutory consultee for larger planning applications and will now help deliver walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure on all future large developments, enabling more people to make healthier, greener and cheaper travel choices.

Climate change mitigation and adaptation

4.19 Climate change is evident locally in the form of extreme weather events such as heavy rainfall. The UK's ten hottest years on record have all been since 2002, and six of the ten wettest years since 1998. The central and southeast of the UK will experience the most extreme temperature peak rises in coming decades, while despite being an area of water stress, the catchments of major rivers – such as the Thames basin, which includes the River Cherwell, will be most under threat from increased flood in winter increasing flood risk in Banbury and other villages. Carbon reduction and associated emissions and air quality issues play a part in preparing the district for changes associated with climate change.

4.20 The Council has declared a climate change emergency and produced a Climate Action Framework. It will ensure its own operations and activities are net zero by 2030 and do its part to achieve a net zero carbon district by 2030 and lead through example.

4.21 At the heart of the Local Plan is an ambition to future proof growth and to ensure that climate change mitigation and adaptation are an integral consideration when planning for new development. The Council has been working with the County Council and other stakeholders to address climate change. The Oxfordshire Energy Strategy (2019) prepared by OxLEP and the 2021 Pathways to a Zero-Carbon Oxfordshire (PAZCO) have informed the Local Plan.

Conservation and enhancement of the historic environment landscape and Green Belt

4.22 Cherwell is characterised by its distinctive and diverse towns and villages and the District has a wealth of important heritage assets, many of which are protected. There are approximately 2,300 listed buildings, 60 conservation areas, 59 scheduled monuments and 11 nationally recognised registered parks and gardens, and a historic civil war battlefield in the District. There are 19 landscape character types within Cherwell including the Ironstone Downs in the north west, which includes a small area within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Ploughley limestone plateau is in the east and the Clay Vale of Otmoor in the south, providing a varied and interesting landscape. The draft Plan seeks to protect and enhance the historic environment, including protecting and enhancing cultural heritage assets and archaeology, and the impact on the landscape considered. A statement of common ground is being prepared with Historic England. Much of the southern part of the District lies within the Oxford Green Belt. The draft Local Plan identifies proposed sites for development in the Green Belt.

Minerals and Waste

4.23 Oxfordshire County Council is responsible for Minerals and Waste Planning. The MWLP is relevant to the preparation of the Cherwell Local Plan, especially in relation to the safeguarding of

mineral resources, aggregate rail depots, sites for recycled aggregate supply, other minerals infrastructure, and sites for waste management. The draft Local Plan includes policies on waste including requirements ensuring materials used in construction are locally sourced where possible, and that waste developed through the construction process is effectively dealt with in a sustainable manner. A statement of common ground is being prepared with Oxfordshire County Council.

Table 1 Summary of key engagement for the draft Local Plan

Body/organisation	Summary of key engagement
Oxfordshire County Council	<p>Regular OCC / CDC Liaison Meetings since the production of the Options Paper discussing County Council matters relevant to the Local Plan, including transport, education, strategic flood risk, archaeology, energy, minerals and waste and public health.</p> <p>Regular OPPO, and other partnership meetings, detailed in Table 2.</p> <p>Engagement with the County Council on forming the strategy and proposed policies in the Plan in relation to County responsibilities.</p> <p>Preparation of a Statement of Common/meetings between the County Council and the District Council on matters relating to the Local Plan and County Council matters and responsibilities.</p>
Oxford City Council	<p>Regular OPPO, and other partnership meetings detailed in Table 2.</p> <p>Regular meetings between the Cherwell and the City Council and with the HENA consultants in devising the study brief and methodology for the study.</p> <p>Joint working on a Gypsy and Travellers needs assessment and other work areas for Oxfordshire to inform Local Plans.</p> <p>Preparation of a Statement of Common/meetings between the City Council and Cherwell District Council including on matters relating to housing and employment needs, gypsy and travellers, the Oxford Meadows SAC, and transport.</p>
West Oxfordshire District Council	<p>Regular OPPO, and other partnership meetings detailed in Table 2.</p> <p>Joint working on a Gypsy and Travellers needs assessment and other work areas for Oxfordshire to inform Local Plans.</p> <p>Preparation of a Statement of Common Ground/meetings between West Oxfordshire District Council and Cherwell District Council on strategic matters including; housing and employment needs, gypsy and travellers, and transport and the proposed allocation in the draft Plan at Woodstock.</p>
South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Council	<p>Regular OPPO, and other partnership meetings detailed in Table 2.</p> <p>Joint working on a Gypsy and Travellers needs assessment for Oxfordshire to inform Local Plans.</p>

Body/organisation	Summary of key engagement
	Preparation of a Statement of Common/meetings on strategic matters including on housing and employment needs, gypsy and travellers, Oxford Meadows SAC, and transport.
Oxfordshire LEP	<p>Meetings discussing the LEPs current and planned strategies and projects and on the economic objectives of the Local Plan and its reflection of the LEPs priorities.</p> <p>Preparation of a Statement of Common/meetings including on the Plans economic objectives and the HENAs housing and employment need scenarios.</p>
Buckinghamshire Council	Preparation of a Statement of Common/meetings between Buckinghamshire County Council and the District Council on the need to consider strategic matters in relation to traffic and landscape impacts at Bicester.
Warwickshire County Council	Preparation of a Statement of Common Ground/meetings.
Stratford Upon Avon District Council	Preparation of a Statement of Common Ground/meetings.
West Northamptonshire Council	Preparation of a Statement of Common Ground/meetings.
Oxfordshire Nature Partnership	Preparation of a Statement of Common Ground/meetings on the priority to enhance nature, our natural environment and its positive impact on our climate.
Homes England	<p>Homes England have been involved in projects in Cherwell including at North West Bicester to help deliver the site.</p> <p>Preparation of a Statement of Common Ground which identifies the need for the Cherwell Local Plan to consider the key objectives of Homes England in respect of housing matters.</p>
Office for Road and Rail	Preparation of a Statement of Common ground which identifies the need for the Cherwell Local Plan to consider the key priorities of the Office of Rail and Road.
National Highways	Preparation of a Statement of Common ground which identifies that the impacts of the Plan's strategy on the sub-regional and regional highway network will be considered.
Mayor of London	Preparation of a Statement of Common ground.

Body/organisation	Summary of key engagement
Natural England	Natural England was consulted at earlier stages of the Plan, on the production of a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) for the draft Plan. Preparation of a Statement of Common ground explaining how the Plan will help to conserve, enhance and manage the natural environment, contributing to sustainable development.
Historic England	Preparation of a Statement of Common ground which identifies that the Cherwell Local Plan Review will need to contain policies which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment. Meetings to discuss development at Heyford Park.
NHS	Meeting held with Oxford University Hospital Trust. Preparation of a Statement of Common ground which identifies that the Cherwell Local Plan Review will reflect NHS priorities, including containing policies for delivering health facilities in Cherwell.
Integrated Care Board	Meetings held with the Integrated Care Board. Preparation of Statement of Common ground on how the Plan will seek to provide health facilities and promote health and well being and seek contributions towards health infrastructure.
The Environment Agency	Preparation of a Statement of Common ground which identifies that the Local Plan will avoid areas at risk of flooding by directing development away from areas at highest risk and where development is necessary, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.
Civil Aviation Authority	Preparation of Statement of Common Ground explaining that the Plan will ensure compliance with the Civil aviation authority's requirements in respect of its responsibilities.
Water companies	Consultation undertaken on a Water Cycle Study to inform the draft Plan.
Energy companies	Comments made to Local Plan consultations taken into account for the draft Local Plan.
Parish/Town Councils	Workshops/briefings undertaken with Parish Councils on draft Plan proposals.
Developers and Promoters	Meetings and site visits were undertaken with site promoters to inform site selection for the draft Plan and evidence base.

5.0 Mechanisms for Cooperation

Regular Partnership Meetings

5.1 Cherwell District Council is actively involved in several cross boundary and joint partnership relationships, which have shaped the early stages of the plan and will continue to inform the preparation of the Local Plan. Many of these are formalised, regular meetings or forums where a variety of topics are discussed, with some of these tailored for the purposes of producing the Local Plan. These partnerships are a mechanism for facilitating Duty to Cooperate discussions. They enable regular direct contact with a range of Duty to Cooperate bodies and other bodies relevant to strategic priorities. Table 2 details the regular partnership meetings that have a direct relevance to the Local Plan. The frequency of meetings may change depending upon issues arising and priorities.

Table 2: Regular partnership meetings

Group / meeting	Frequency (approx.)	Attendees	Role	Engagement/Meetings
Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FoP) (https://futureoxfordshirepartnership.org)	Every two months or when required	Oxfordshire authorities and non-voting members (Integrated Care Board, Environment Agency, Homes England, two universities, DEFRA, Oxfordshire Skills Board and Oxfordshire LEP). There is a Members Advisory Group, a Scrutiny panel and Chief Executive group. It is supported by four Advisory Sub-Groups (Infrastructure, Environment, and Housing, with a fourth – Planning – in development), who are tasked with delivering on elements of the Partnership’s work programme, supported by a small team of officers. The Planning Advisory Group provides a link to the production of Local Plans and identifies opportunities for joint working.	The partnership’s purpose is to deliver the aims of the Strategic Vision which all six councils have adopted and other projects. The FOP will: Coordinate local efforts to manage economic, housing and infrastructure development in a way that is inclusive and maximises local social and environmental benefits; Support the development of local planning policy that meets the UK Government’s stated aim of net zero carbon by 2050, and contributes towards biodiversity gain whilst embracing the changes needed for a low carbon world; and, Seek to secure funding in the pursuit of these aims and oversee the delivery of related work	Regular meetings held informing cross boundary strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.

Group / meeting	Frequency (approx.)	Attendees	Role	Engagement/Meetings
			<p>programmes delegated to it by the joint committee's constituent local authority members.</p> <p>It does this by overseeing the delivery of projects that the councils of Oxfordshire are seeking to deliver collaboratively in the fields of economic development and strategic planning. This cooperation has helped Oxfordshire to secure over £500m of additional investment, such as through the City Deal, Housing and Growth Deal, Housing Infrastructure Fund and the Oxfordshire Rail Connectivity Study. The Future Oxfordshire Partnership also has an important role in representing Oxfordshire on matters of regional interest.</p> <p>The councils have also agreed that continued collaborative working on spatial planning matters will be valuable.</p> <p>A Terms of Reference (June 2022) has been drawn up which outlines the FOP joint committee general functions and those relating to strategic planning .</p>	
Oxford-Cambridge Arc	Twice a year	Local authorities from across the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. Chief	Various groupings helped develop and co-ordinate the work	Regular meetings held informing cross boundary strategic

Group / meeting	Frequency (approx.)	Attendees	Role	Engagement/Meetings
Leadership Group		Executives and Leaders meet.	feeding into the government's planned Spatial Framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.	matters for the Local Plan Review.
Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (now ceased in August 2022)	Evidence Working Groups (Monthly) Planning Policy Manager (2 weekly) Group; Heads of Planning (monthly); Member Sub-group of the Growth Board (monthly)	All districts and city council in Oxfordshire and representatives of the County Council and LEP. Liaison Group of planning officers; Heads of Planning; and Member Sub-group.	These groups provided regular input, advice and leadership to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.	<p>Evidence Working groups discussed evidence to inform the Oxfordshire Plan including for: Flood Risk, Water Management, Gypsy and Traveller needs, Habitats Regulation Assessment, Transport, Green Belt, sustainability appraisal.</p> <p>The Planning Policy officers group discussed matters including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfordshire Plan and Evidence base funding • The production of Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment • The Oxfordshire Plan policies and options for growth <p>Most of this work is now being undertaken at the District level to inform Local Plans being produced by the Districts/City following the cessation of the Oxfordshire Plan.</p>
Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	Executive Board meets monthly	A body made up of representatives from business, academia and the wider public sector.	Business led with senior academic figures and local authority members. It provides leadership and champions growth and innovation, helping to break down barriers and providing support mechanisms. Prepared	<p>Meetings held informing strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.</p> <p>Meetings held between Cherwell and City Council officers and the LEP in relation to the OGNA and the Housing and Economic Needs</p>

Group / meeting	Frequency (approx.)	Attendees	Role	Engagement/Meetings
			the Local Industrial Strategy and Investment Plan.	Assessment commissioned by Oxford and Cherwell Councils.
The Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership	Regular Meetings	The Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership brings together over a hundred organisations – employers, business, education, community groups and local government.	Working to create opportunities for all people in Oxfordshire, making use of everyone’s potential, so that we can all benefit from Oxfordshire’s success. The aim is to create an environment and communities that can adapt to change, a region that is resilient in the face of shocks in the economy and a workforce that responds to different needs and different kinds of work in the future.	Meetings held informing strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.
Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	Quarterly	Board is made up of public, private and voluntary and community sector representatives.	Through the promotion of partnerships, the board maximises the contribution of each sector to improve the quality of life in Cherwell.	Meetings held informing strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.
Oxfordshire Skills Board	Every two months	Board is made up of public and private employers, secondary, further and higher education skills providers and stakeholder groups.	Responsible for understanding and communicating the needs of employers and providers in Oxfordshire relating to business development, employment and skills issues which impact on the economic wellbeing of the area. Works closely with the LEP.	Meetings held informing strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.
Health and Wellbeing Board	Every two months	Includes local GPs, District and County Councillors, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Healthwatch Oxfordshire, and senior council officers.	Seeks to provide strategic leadership for health and wellbeing across Oxfordshire, ensuring that plans are in place and that action is taken to realise those	Meetings held informing strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.

Group / meeting	Frequency (approx.)	Attendees	Role	Engagement/Meetings
			plans. The Board produces the Oxfordshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.	
Oxfordshire Leaders Group	Approximately six times a year	The Leaders of all the Oxfordshire authorities.	Key elements of the group's work include consideration of impacts of changes in government policy and guidance; agreement of county wide programmes; monitoring the impact on resources and services due to changes; implementing savings.	Meetings held informing strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.
Oxfordshire Chief Executive's Group	Approximately six times a year	The Chief Executives of all the Oxfordshire authorities.	Advises and supports the Oxfordshire Leaders Group on the above issues.	Meetings held informing cross boundary strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.
Oxfordshire Planning Policy Officers Meetings (OPPO)	Six times a year but more frequent if specific tasks required	Planning Policy Officers of all Oxfordshire authorities.	Regular forum for authorities to provide updates on plan progress and to discuss other cross boundary matters and joint evidence base including accommodating housing needs.	Meetings held informing cross boundary strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.
Heads of Planning (HoP)	Monthly and as required	Heads of Planning from the Oxfordshire Councils	Forum for authorities to provide update on plan progress and to discuss other cross boundary matters including previously providing direction on the Oxfordshire Plan.	Meetings held informing cross boundary strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.
OCC / CDC Liaison Meetings	Every month	Officers of Cherwell and Oxfordshire County Council	Used to discuss current work and emerging issues that affect both authorities, including County and District strategic matters and joint working.	Meetings held informing strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.
Integrated Care Board / CDC	Approximately every 3 months	Care Board locality and estates officers, planning officers.	Regular forum to provide updates and discussions relating to	Meetings held informing strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.

Group / meeting	Frequency (approx.)	Attendees	Role	Engagement/Meetings
Liaison Meetings			primary care strategy and provision, particularly in the context of development management decisions and development plan making.	
Oxfordshire Nature Partnership	Regular meetings as required.	Officers from the Oxfordshire authorities and other stakeholders	To bring together local organisations, businesses and people who want to improve their local natural environment.	Meetings held informing cross boundary strategic matters for the Local Plan Review.

Joint working on strategies and infrastructure planning

5.2 Many of the partnerships detailed above have produced and adopted/published joint strategies as part of their work. This illustrates that the process of engagement and cooperation has been effective in the sense that it has resulted in outcomes that all parties considered they could sign up to. Many of these strategies have direct relevance to the Local Plan. In addition, several of the partnerships have/will jointly commission studies or evidence base work which will influence the policies of the Local Plan. Table 3 details key jointly produced strategies and jointly commissioned studies.

Table 3: Joint working on strategies and infrastructure planning

Project / document	Produced by / involved	Role / purpose
Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (July 2019)	Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership	The Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) sets out an ambition for Oxfordshire to leverage its existing strengths to become one of the top three innovation ecosystems globally by 2040. It sets out how Oxfordshire's strengths and assets are to be built on, to deliver transformative growth, which is clean and sustainable and delivers prosperity for all communities across the county. The LIS is intended to deliver the aims of the National Industrial Strategy, which is the government's long-term plan to boost productivity. The LIS states ' <i>Oxfordshire has been at the centre of innovation in the UK for centuries. National and local investments have built up a network of science parks and innovative firms across the county, and now wider investments in the region offer the opportunity to cement the area's reputation as one of the best locations in the world to innovate.</i> '

Project / document	Produced by / involved	Role / purpose
Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy – Oxfordshire Investment Plan (August 2020)	Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership	Prepared by the LEP, it translates the ideas and aspirations of the Local Industrial Strategy into a programme of delivery and updates the LIS.
The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS)	Officers from the Oxfordshire authorities and other stakeholders	The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) was an Oxfordshire Growth Board (now FoP) commissioned project involving the county's six local authorities and OxLEP, with the purpose of prioritising our infrastructure requirements to 2040 and beyond.
Oxfordshire Strategic Vision	Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP)	The Future Oxfordshire Partnership has developed a Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire that sets out its ambition for the county. The Vision will be used to help create an agreed set of long-term, strategic economic, infrastructure and environmental priorities designed to deliver the outcomes that local people want.
Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal (2018)	All Oxfordshire councils and Oxfordshire LEP Approved and signed off by government (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government)	The Oxfordshire authorities signed a Housing and Growth Deal with the government which comprised £215 million of funding to be granted to support the ambition to plan for and deliver 100,000 homes in Oxfordshire by 2031. This was linked to a number of other commitments from government and the Oxfordshire authorities, on affordable housing and infrastructure delivery.
Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (April 2014) and Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA) (2021)	Jointly commissioned by all Oxfordshire districts with County Council in support.	The SHMA was a technical study to help the Oxfordshire districts understand how many homes will be needed in the period 2011-2031. It also considered the housing needs of specific groups such as older people, minority groups and people with disabilities. The OGNA (published in 2021) identified the housing and employment needs for Oxfordshire at this time. It has now been superseded by the HENA.
Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (December 2022)	Housing and Economic Needs Assessment commissioned by Oxford and Cherwell Councils	A study to provide an objective assessment of housing and employment needs in Oxfordshire.

Project / document	Produced by / involved	Role / purpose
	to inform their Local Plans.	
Evidence to support policies towards achieving net zero (January 2023)	Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell district Council and stakeholders.	Review of policy, legislation and best practice to inform the Local Plan and wider Council policies and strategies.
Gypsy and travellers needs assessment for Oxfordshire	Oxfordshire authorities	A study is being commissioned to identify the needs of Gypsy and travellers across Oxfordshire meeting the requirements of government planning policy to inform Local Plans.
Transport assessment and commissioning of modelling	Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council	A transport assessment to inform the Local Plan and modelling for the County.

Communication at formal stages of Local Plan production

5.3 The Duty to Cooperate bodies, as well as other relevant organisations and the wider public are invited to submit representations to inform the preparation of the Local Plan. The format and methods used will be detailed in the Consultation Statement which will also summarise the responses that have been received.

5.4 On 31 July 2020 the Council published a community involvement paper for a six-week period of consultation to 14 September 2020. The paper was prepared to engage with residents, businesses and other stakeholders to inform a review of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031. Written notifications were sent to the consultees listed in the 2016 Statement of Community Involvement and anyone who had registered on the Council's Planning Policy database on 30 July 2020. The database includes parish councils, adjacent authorities and parishes, planning agents, statutory consultees, local pressure groups and organisations as well as individuals. The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was published for consultation alongside the community involvement paper on 31 July 2020. The three consultation bodies under the SEA Regulations – Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency – were sent a separate email inviting comments on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.

5.5 On 29 September 2021 the Council published a community involvement paper 2 for a six-week period of consultation to 10 November 2021. The paper was prepared to engage with residents, businesses and other stakeholders to inform a review of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031. Written notifications were sent to the consultees listed in the 2021 Statement of Community Involvement and anyone who had registered on the Council's Planning Policy database on 28 September 2021. The database includes parish councils, adjacent authorities and parishes, planning agents, statutory consultees, local pressure groups and organisations as well as individuals. Details of the consultation that took place is outlined in the Consultation Statement published alongside the draft Cherwell Local Plan Review.

5.7 Table 4 summarises the communications about the Local Plan with external stakeholders at each formal stage of preparation, including planned future consultations. The Council’s Statement of Consultation sets out the representations, including from the Duty Cooperate bodies, that have been received at each stage and how these have been taken into account for draft Plan.

Table 4: Local Plan communications with external stakeholders at formal stages

Stage	Date	Communication	Partner organisation contacted / invited
Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report consultation	30 July – 14 September 2020	Notification of consultation	Environment Agency English Heritage Natural England National Highways Oxfordshire County Council
Consultation on Community Involvement Paper			
District-wide Issues consultation	30 July – 14 September 2020	Notification of consultation	Duty to Co-operate bodies Specific consultation bodies General consultation bodies Additional organisations / bodies
Consultation on Community Involvement paper 2			
District-wide Options consultation	Scheduled for 29 September – 10 November 2021	Notification of consultation	Duty to Co-operate bodies Specific consultation bodies General consultation bodies Additional organisations / bodies
Duty to Co-operate Background Paper	Scheduled for 29 September – 10 November 2021	Document circulated for consultation	Duty to Co-operate bodies Additional Local Planning Authorities
Draft Cherwell Local Plan			
Consultation on draft Plan and supporting documents	Scheduled for September 2023	Notification of consultation	Duty to Co-operate bodies Specific consultation bodies General consultation bodies Additional organisations / bodies
Proposed Submission Plan			
Consultation on Proposed Submission Plan	Scheduled for Summer 2024	Notification of consultation	Duty to Co-operate bodies Specific consultation bodies General consultation bodies Additional organisations / bodies

Cherwell Local Plan Review: Responses to Overview and Scrutiny 11 January 2023

O&S Comment	Topic/Area	Internal Officer Response	Actions
The balance of affordable housing included in the plan is not ambitious enough or adequate.	Housing Viability	<p>Officers tested the viability of the Draft Plan policies at an early stage of preparation. The purpose of the viability assessment is to test the policies to ensure they consider policy standards, affordable housing, and infrastructure needs whilst allowing development to be deliverable without further need for viability assessment at planning application stage.</p> <p>Affordable housing requirements ranging from 0 to 50% were tested alongside other emerging policy requirements. The draft policies proposed are set at a level where the Council does not compromise sustainable development, the policies are deliverable and able to stand to scrutiny.</p> <p>Viability evidence supporting the plan is complex and Members would benefit from a briefing with planning and housing officers aimed at exploring the effects of choosing different requirements of affordable housing on other policy areas to assist their understanding of the policy choices required.</p> <p>The HENA identifies affordable housing need for social rented, affordable rent and affordable home ownership. It recommends that a Council</p>	<p>No change to HEENA to look at affordable housing mix is required at this time. Clarifications sought from consultants on mix.</p> <p>Meeting with housing colleagues to discuss Scrutiny comments and their view on affordable housing delivery and other programmes.</p> <p>Consider potential for housing requirement topic paper to expand section for affordable housing for publication.</p> <p>Recommend Local Plan viability briefing with the Local Plan Members Advisory Group (MAG). This would explore how the different policy levers can be applied and allow Members the opportunity to prioritise policy.</p>

		<p>policy is not split between social and affordable rent in terms of % requirement.</p> <p>The HENA identifies an affordable housing need of 426 dwellings per annum (excluding existing households) in Cherwell. It shows that affordable housing provided at 30% would provide 303 dwellings per year of the 1009 dwelling need. Need would only be met at 45% provision. If the total amount of development identified in the plan is delivered then the identified AH need is met in full. Comparative figures can be provided in a briefing note (see actions)</p> <p>The report does not specifically recommend an affordable housing % for a policy. The report states that viability is a key consideration and viability evidence would be the key driver for identifying the % for a policy. The report also highlights that there are other means of delivering affordable housing other than through planning obligations for new dwellings.</p> <p>Housing colleagues have in the past expressed satisfaction with current % requirement in the policy as it generally delivers.</p>	
Clarity and assurance there is no change from the partial review of the Local Plan regarding Frieze Farm in Kidlington and its provision as an alternative Golf Course location.	Kidlington Area	Policies PR6b Land West of Oxford Road and Policy PR6c Land as Frieze Farm and all of their proposals are to be retained in the emerging Plan.	Improvements to the Plan with clear mapping of retained and proposed allocations and additional clarification text.
It is important that all infrastructure keeps pace with development	Infrastructure	The right type of development in the right place supported by appropriate infrastructure has	More clarity provided in the plan text regarding infrastructure requirements.

<p>as well as ensuring satisfactory integration between new developments and established communities.</p>		<p>been the central aim of the plan’s vision, the evidence to support the development of policies and the place focus approach within the emerging area strategies.</p> <p>There is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally specific evidence in the Transport Assessment and IDP which looks maximising public benefit (integration of existing and proposed communities). • Forthcoming Local Transport and Connectivity Plans • A range of realistic and viable policies to ensure contributions can be secured. • There is an important role for planning but there are limitations too and the need for a range wider stakeholders to deliver the vision in the plan and strengthen communities etc. • Importance of an up to date plan to avoid speculative development <p>The strategy as developed, would generate additional funding to help unlock essential infrastructure (for example at Bicester - where significant funding shortfalls exist) and to provide more negotiating opportunity in new funding bids.</p>	<p>An infrastructure briefing for MAG recommended. This could be combined with briefing on viability.</p>
<p>The importance of farming in the district has been recognised in the draft, but it should be given more prominence.</p>	<p>Rural Areas</p>	<p>The plan recognises the role of the rural economy, but references could be strengthened through minor amendments.</p>	<p>Additional references to agriculture added to text. Importance of farm diversification highlighted under the Rural Area Strategy.</p>
<p>Noting the reference to Bicester Strategic</p>	<p>Bicester Area/ Green Belt</p>	<p>Exceptional circumstances are required to designate new</p>	<p>No specific actions/changes are proposed to the plan.</p>

<p>Corridors, consideration should be given to creating a formal Green Belt around Bicester.</p>		<p>Green Belt. Officers do not consider that those circumstances exist.</p> <p>Additional landscape evidence is being commissioned to complement the GI Strategy.</p>	
<p>More should be done to maintain the Green Ring around Kidlington.</p>	<p>Kidlington Area</p>	<p>While preparing the Plan the Council commissioned a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy which includes Kidlington as one of its 5 focus areas. Workshops were held and participants included Kidlington Parish Council.</p> <p>The strategy proposes strategic projects for the wider Kidlington area and illustrates how these fit within the Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network which include the valuable areas of habitat and green space along the Oxford Canal and the River Cherwell in the Kidlington wider area.</p> <p>The strategy findings and proposals have been integrated within the emerging Draft Plan and three out of the ten plan priorities for Kidlington and the Kidlington Green and Blue Infrastructure Policy aims to protect and enhance the natural resource and landscape setting of the wider Kidlington area.</p> <p>The maps to accompany the Plan for publication intended to illustrate these and other proposals in a visual manner but it is recognised that more can be done to show visually within the Draft Plan the Green Infrastructure work supporting the policies and proposals.</p> <p>Site specific information needs to be proportionate to the stage of plan preparation (Regulation</p>	<p>Indicative maps added which illustrate our initial proposals for green and blue infrastructure. Further landscape evidence required and is being commissioned to inform Reg 19.</p>

		18). More detailed site-specific design will be prepared once sites are selected for plan Submission stage (Regulation 19).	
Rural allocation of housing should be equitable.		A background paper on the revised proposed settlement hierarchy will be published with the Reg 18 draft plan. The total rural allocation and its distribution across the villages is indicative only at this time. Further work is required before the Reg 19 plan, to finalise these figures, based on the consultation feedback we receive. Work is also progressing on assessing specific site proposals, but this has not yet been completed.	Plan text redrafted seeking views on rural allocations and numbers. The revised text makes it clear that we want to understand the preferences of local communities regarding the quantum and location of the rural housing requirements.
Executive to assure itself that the wording of policies included in the plan is strong enough, particularly those in relation to Climate Action and viability.		Under current NPPF (2021) planning applications compliant with the Plan are assumed viable but applicants can still submit viability assessments at planning application stage if they can demonstrate the circumstances exist to justify it. These may include whether the viability evidence supporting the Plan is up to date. Given the long-term nature of Local Plans, policies are often future proofed to ensure they can be applied if changes of local circumstance occur during the life of the Plan. Viability sentences in policies are not aimed at inviting challenge or weaken requirements but to future proof the Plan and its policies. The most effective protection is to set policy requirements at a level where their cumulative	No changes to these policies are proposed in the draft plan. However, the regulation 18 consultation will provide opportunities for interested parties and others to comment on the policies so that they can be refined as necessary. We are aware that the national picture is constantly under review and we are working closely with the Council's Climate Action Manager and consultants to ensure that the Reg 19 Plan reflects the most up to date best practice.

		<p>cost (i.e. the combined effect of policy requirements) does not undermine the deliverability of the plan.</p> <p>Having in place strong mechanisms to review, monitor and report delivery of development, local market conditions and contributions secured through development proposals also helps the Council to be prepared when a viability assessment is submitted at application stage to determine whether it is justified.</p>	
<p>That Members be given more opportunities to engage, provide feedback and comments during the Regulation 18 consultation.</p>		<p>Noted.</p>	<p>Members will have a number of opportunities, through MAG and O&S to influence the draft plan. Further engagement through the Reg 18 consultation has been included within the Local Plan consultation programme.</p> <p>The opportunity has also been taken to undertake a wider review of the scope and tone of the draft plan. It has been substantially redrafted with an emphasis on consultation. Feedback is actively encouraged and a number of specific questions have been added. Where possible the language has been made more accessible (less technical). In places information has also been reworked in a simpler, more understandable, and transparent way.</p> <p>The key message is that this is a consultation draft plan where no decisions have been finalised. Topics where further work is needed has also been highlighted.</p>

Appendix 8

Draft Local Plan 2040 (Regulation 18) Consultation

Comments from Overview and Scrutiny Committee 16 August 2023

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the draft plan at an extraordinary meeting on 16 August, and resolved to make the following comment to Executive:

That in line with the carried motion at February 2023 full Council meeting on housing affordability mix, the Local Plan be stronger in terms of the desirability of having more affordable housing in the allocated sites; and delegate to the Chairman to report detailed comments made by Committee to the Executive on the 4 September 2023.

The detailed comments and observations made by the members of the Committee were as follows:

Theme 1 – Climate Change and sustainability

1. Acronyms – not all appear to have been explained in full the first time they are used
2. Clarity requested on offsite offsetting for biodiversity, and the 30 year contribution to carbon offsetting fund
3. Appropriateness of solar farms to be considered
4. Consideration should be given to facilities to retain water, 'grey water storage'
5. During recent heavy rainfall and subsequent runoff there was an instance of large numbers of fish in the canal at Banbury dying due to deoxygenation. The possibility of this happening in future needs to be reduced.
6. Need to ensure the level of light pollution is reduced
7. Need to ensure the impact on air quality is kept to a minimum
8. Core policy 21 – sustainability transport and connectivity - issues for rural areas due to lack of public transport options
9. Housing density – if areas previously allocated as green belt land are removed and development is allowed, density of development in those areas should be increased.

Theme 2 – Maintaining and developing a sustainable local economy

10. Mixture of closed and open questions throughout the document, if open questions were used throughout this would encourage more detailed responses

Appendix 8

Theme 3 – Building healthy and sustainable communities

- 11. Maximising Affordable Housing, as detailed in the formal resolution
- 12. A question has been asked on the HENA

Banbury Area Strategy

- 13. Stronger wording throughout – use of ‘could’, ‘should’ needs to be removed or minimised
- 14. Preference for settlement gaps being protected e.g. Bodicote and Banbury where there is no longer a gap.

Bicester Area Strategy

- 15. J9 needs addressing by Highways England before any employment development starts

Kidlington Area Strategy

- 16. Yarnton, Begbroke, Gosford & Water Eaton – all are individual parishes and communities that need recognising. Some parts of the strategy seem to suggest they are all part of Kidlington

Heyford Area Strategy

- 17. No comments

Rural Area Strategy

- 18. Para 8.7 refers to sites but no specifics given, residents may want additional information to assist, when will details emerge?
- 19. Larger villages to take brunt of 500 additional dwellings, facilities in those villages are already at capacity and further work is needed. Being designated a large village doesn't mean ready to take additional houses immediately
- 20. Clarity that 500 additional houses in rural areas is a total over the next 17 years to 2040, not 500 each year

General comments

- 21. Plan is for the period to 2040, but mentions from 2020? Why does it not start from 2023?
- 22. Spelling of Stratfield Brake needs checking throughout

Appendix 9 – Proposed changes in response to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolution of 16 August 2023

Core Policy 36: Affordable Housing

3.196. Providing truly affordable housing is one of our highest priorities.

~~Cherwell has a high level of need for affordable housing.~~ Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF as comprising housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market, including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers.

3.197. Our Housing Strategy (2019-2024) has identified three strategic priorities, which includes the need to increase the supply and diversity of affordable housing to ensure the right types of housing are available in the right places. It highlights that home ownership is out of reach for households on low and average incomes, with social rent being the only truly affordable housing option for many local residents.

3.198. There are a number of ways that affordable homes can be delivered. 'First Homes' are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing designed for first time buyers. First Homes are the government's preferred type of discounted housing for ownership and its planning practice guidance explains that they should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations. They must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value and the discount, as a percentage of current market value, is passed on for each new occupier. Local authorities can apply a higher minimum discount of either 40% or 50% if a need can be demonstrated. The HENA analyses how first homes could be provided for and suggests that a 30% discount is reasonable, with the expectation that most First Homes will be 2-bedrooms.

3.199. The HENA analyses the need for affordable housing in terms of social/affordable rented housing and affordable home ownership. It identifies

a significant need for affordable housing in Cherwell, with a need of 660 social rented/affordable rented homes per year in Cherwell and a further 193 homes to meet affordable home ownership needs. We therefore have to provide as many affordable homes as possible to meet this need. The Council's interim Viability Assessment tested a range of requirements for affordable housing from 0 to 50% and for First Homes provided at 25%. It currently recommends an overall 30% affordable housing requirement on all sites on overall viability grounds.

3.200. We are currently therefore proposing that all future proposed developments that include 10 or more dwellings, or which would be provided on sites suitable for 10 or more dwellings, will be expected to provide at least 30% of new housing as affordable homes on site. However, with the help of this consultation and our evidence, we need to determine whether we can do more.

3.201. There were 178 net affordable housing completions during 2021/22. In recent previous years the number of affordable homes completed has been above the Council's affordable housing target of 190 dwellings per year, for example 295 in 2020/21. From the 178 affordable homes completed there were 101 were affordable rented, 7 social rented and 70 in shared ownership. There continues to be limited delivery of social rented homes. The Council's Housing Strategy explains how housing for social rent is the only truly affordable housing option for many people in Cherwell. The HENA does not recommend that there is a rigid policy for the split between social and affordable rented housing, although the analysis shows that both tenures of homes are likely to be required. The interim viability assessment tested a 70/30 split (affordable/social rent and affordable home ownership). We are proposing that 70% of affordable homes coming forward should be affordable/ social rented.

3.202. Housing proposals (for residential use type C3) will need to provide affordable housing where they meet the thresholds in the Policy. Where the number of dwellings proposed falls below the relevant threshold, or the number of dwellings is not specified, the Council will consider whether sites

reasonably have capacity to provide the number of dwellings that would trigger the requirement to provide affordable housing. The purpose of this is to ensure that the policy requirement is not being avoided through inappropriate planning such as ineffective or inefficient use of land or a mix of dwellings that does not reflect other housing policies or local needs.

3.203. We are proposing that affordable housing be met on site unless off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified and the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.

3.204. We will support proposals for community self-build or custom-build affordable housing particularly where it will result in suitable empty properties being brought into residential use.

3.205. There are requirements set out in the Partial Review policies (PR2, PR6 to PR9) for affordable housing, mix, house type and size. There is a separate mechanism (part of the Council's Housing Strategy) in place for ensuring that any affordable homes will be provided as part of the Cherwell contribution to unmet need for Oxford. It is proposed that at least 50 % of any additional unmet housing for Oxford being provided within this plan will be affordable homes.

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