

COMMENTS ON LOCAL PLAN 2034 – FINAL PUBLICATION VERSION 2ND

General Comments

1. The consultation process on this version of the Local Plan was flawed, in fact there was nothing that could be described as a consultation. There was significant and lengthy consultation leading up to the Final Publication Version (1st) of October 2017. However this latest version is substantially different to the first yet there has been no meaningful opportunity for comment. Although interested parties were able to speak on the draft at the Scrutiny Committee on 13th December 2018, the Cabinet Meeting on 18th December 2018 and the Full Council Meeting on 20th December 2018, they should not have bothered. It was abundantly clear at the Cabinet and Full Council meetings that a majority of the Council members were not interested in any comments made and were going to proceed to the Final Publication Version (2nd) without amendment.
2. Of the strategic allocations in this Local Plan only one does not involve the removal of land from the Green Belt around Oxford. This would indicate that SODC have concentrated their thinking on meeting Oxford City's unproven and unjustified housing need and have paid little attention to the purposes of the Green Belt. The strategic sites at Grenoble Road (STRAT11), Northfield (STRAT12) and North of Bayswater Brook (STRAT13) all fall into the category of urban sprawl which the Green Belt was designed to prevent.

In the case of Grenoble Road it states in paragraph 4.95 that "The South Oxfordshire Strategic Sites Green Belt Study (November 2018) considered that the development of Grenoble Road would constitute urban sprawl..." However, having consistently resisted development at Grenoble Road for many years, SODC has done a u-turn and now ignored its own green belt study.

3. Densities

At a SODC briefing session on this Publication Version on 3rd January 2019 various slides were presented showing examples of densities in existing streets. These were Niagara Road, Henley (81dph), East Street, Thame (71dph) and St Mary's Street, Wallingford (66dph). Presumably these were shown to justify that 70dph was achievable. The problem is that, at all these locations, the terraced houses were built right up to the road with no provision for off-street parking or front gardens. It is unbelievable that SODC can suggest similar densities for the strategic allocations at Grenoble Road and Northfield and at Didcot, Oxford and Reading. Is this the type of design-led sustainable housing that the residents of parts of South Oxfordshire can look forward to where no provision for cars is to be made?