

# South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2034

## Page 3: Part A - contact details

Q1. Are you responding as an:

Individual

## Page 4: Individual contact details

Q2. Due to the plan-making process including an independent examination, a name and means of contact is required for your comments to be considered:

Title	Mr
Full name	Achilleus Iheozor-Ejiofor
Business / Organisation name (if relevant)	-
Job title (if relevant)	-
Address line 1	██████████
Address line 2	-
Address line 3	-
Postal town	██████
Postcode	██████
Telephone number	-
Email address	██

## Page 7: Part B - your comments

Q5. For comments on the Local Plan, please provide the paragraph or policy to which your comments relates. You can view a list of policies here. If you wish to comment on one of the evidence documents or the policies maps, please state the document title as well as the paragraph or policy reference.

Document / Policy / Paragraph: Policy STRAT7 - Land at Chalgrove Airfield

Q6. Do you consider the Local Plan and supporting documents:

	Yes	No	Don't know	Not answered (OPTION HIDDEN FROM LIVE SURVEY)
are legally compliant?		X		
are sound?		X		
comply with the Duty to Co-operate?			X	

**Q7. Please provide further information in relation to the previous question. e.g. why you do or do not consider the Local Plan to be legally compliant or sound.**

With regard to the plans for Chalgrove Airfield, the Local Plan does not comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) or even with the conditions that SODC have themselves established for this Local Plan.

1. The NPPF stipulates that adequate infrastructure must be provided and the scheme for Chalgrove Airfield certainly does not. The transport infrastructure in and around Chalgrove is poor and the village is connected by a single B-road (the B480) with the rest of the routes being unclassified lanes and public transport is also very poor.

The Local Plan does not address these concerns which have been raised through previous rounds of consultation. In fact the plan to close the Chalgrove by-pass along the B480 will make the location less accessible and therefore less desirable for employers looking for locations to invest and will create unnecessary congestion and pollution. Routing the B480 right through the middle of the new town will also create a major safety hazard as it will mean unnecessary vehicle-pedestrian interaction which the existing bypass currently negates.

Chalgrove has poor public transport with a single bus service serving Oxford only, which is slow (approx. 50 minutes) and users need to make multiple changes to get to sites of employment (e.g. Oxford Business Park). There is no bus service to other main towns and centres of employment in the area such as Didcot or Thame and the nearest railway station is around 25 minutes by car. Cycling to centres of employment or leisure is not a viable option due to distances and the fact that there are no connected cycle routes.

Other infrastructure that should be present in a settlement of this size is also not included in the proposal. For example, no hospital, no library and very few retail outlets compared to established town in South Oxfordshire. This will create unnecessary journeys as six thousand new residents will need to drive to other towns to access these facilities.

The infrastructure proposals for Chalgrove in the Local Plan are completely inadequate and the new town will become a commuter dormitory with new residents having to rely on cars to get around. This will result in congestion and pollution which in turn will impact on resident's physical health, cause climate change. For these reasons Oxfordshire County Council who have responsibility for transport across the county and Oxford City Council are opposed to development at Chalgrove Airfield.

2. SODC's Local Plan also does not meet the requirements of the NPPF around flood risk. Chalgrove Airfield is located next to adjacent to land which has been classified as Flood Zone 2 & Flood Zone 3 by the Environment Agency reflecting the high risk of flooding. This land will be at a much higher risk of flooding if development takes place on Chalgrove Airfield contrary to NPPF rules.

3. The Local Plan also fails to meet NPPF requirements around journey times at Chalgrove Airfield. As above, the proposals do not include facilities that are commonplace in a settlement of this size and few retail outlets compared to established towns in South Oxfordshire. Chalgrove also offers very limited employment opportunities and there is no realistic prospect that these can be delivered as part of the new town due to its disadvantaged location compared to nearby towns with much better connections and business services (Oxford, Didcot, Culham, Abingdon, Thame, and Reading). This will create unnecessary journeys as people will have to drive to other towns access facilities and gain employment. This is an unsustainable and environmentally unsound proposal based on the use of private motor vehicles that will create congestion, air pollution, climate change and unnecessary road safety hazards. It will also result in a poor quality of life for residents having to endure pollution and adverse traffic conditions with no other viable option.

4. Chalgrove Airfield is not even available for development. Martin Baker Ltd occupy the site and hold the leasehold to the entire site for the next 45 years. They are vigorously opposed to the planned development as it would have a catastrophic impact on their business. The company make life-saving equipment for the UK Armed Forces and the international aircraft industry which involves extensive use of the runways they have built on the site and pyrotechnic tests with live explosives. This is obviously not compatible with having over 2,000 new homes right alongside these facilities and Martin Baker have asserted that it would be unsafe to continue their business so they would have to abandon the site at the loss of over 100 jobs and try to a new site which meets the very challenging requirements that their business demands.

The Local Plan itself acknowledges that no development could be delivered at Chalgrove Airfield within years one to five of the Local Plan which is a key requirement of the NPPF and is also one of the key objectives set out by SODC themselves for the Local Plan.

It is highly questionable if development can be delivered at Chalgrove Airfield at all since Martin Baker's consent as leaseholders is required for development to proceed. The company have asserted that they will not give their consent and will pursue legal action to defend their rights under the lease which runs for the next 45 years. Homes England have threatened to use Compulsory Purchase to force Martin Baker off the site, but to do so they would need to convince the courts that the development is necessary and in the Public Interest.

Necessity cannot be proved as the Local Plan will deliver more new homes than are actually needed under the Strategic Housing Market Allocation even if there is no development at Chalgrove Airfield whatsoever. I also think it unlikely that a court would rule in favour of development being in the Public Interest when it would jeopardise the business of a highly successful company like Martin Baker who supply vital equipment to our Armed Forces.

5. Development at Chalgrove Airfield would also go against the NPPF and the objectives set out by SODC themselves around community. The village of Chalgrove currently has a population of around 2,800, but the addition of over 2,000 homes would result in a three-fold increase and transmogrify it from a rural community into an urban area over a very short time period. This does not respect the scale and character of the existing communities or the model of Neighbourhood Development Plans (Chalgrove's was recently passed at referendum and has now been adopted), both of which are key objectives of the NPPF and the Local Plan.

Q8. Please set out any modifications you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound, having regard to your comments above. (NB - any non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination). It will be helpful if you could put forward your suggested wording of any policy or text as precisely as possible.

Chalgrove Airfield should be removed from the Local Plan.

Development at the site cannot be delivered within the time scales required by the NPPF and the objectives set out in the Plan due to the ongoing conflict between the leaseholders and the developers. If the developers do try to force Martin Baker from the site through a Compulsory Purchase this will result in a long drawn out legal battle and Homes England are very unlikely to succeed as they cannot prove that development is necessary when the Local Plan will already deliver more new homes than are actually needed under the Strategic Housing Market Allocation even if there is no development at Chalgrove Airfield whatsoever. They are also unlikely to be able to prove that forcing Martin Baker from the site and thereby jeopardising their entire business is in the Public Interest.

Development of Chalgrove Airfield which is a rural site with poor infrastructure would also create problems of pollution, congestion and long journey times. These problems can be avoided by development at those sites which are much closer to Oxford and other areas of job growth including Culham and Didcot.

For these reason Chalgrove Airfield should be removed from the Local Plan to ensure that it is sound, legal and compliant.

Q10. Would you like to participate at the oral part of the examination, which takes place as part of the examination process?

No

Q11. Would you like to comment on another policy or paragraph?

Yes

Q12. For comments on the Local Plan, please provide the paragraph or policy to which your comments relates. You can view a list of policies here. If you wish to comment on one of the evidence documents or the policies maps, please state the document title as well as the paragraph or policy reference.

**Document / Policy / Paragraph:** Policy STRAT 6 – The Green Belt

Q13. Do you consider the Local Plan and supporting documents:

	Yes	No	Don't know	Not answered (OPTION HIDDEN FROM LIVE SURVEY)
are legally compliant?		X		
are sound?		X		
comply with the Duty to Co-operate?			X	

Q14. Please provide further information in relation to the previous question. e.g. why you do or do not consider the Local Plan to be legally compliant or sound.

I support the objective to allow necessary development at sites within the Green Belt to deliver sustainable economic growth. Oxford faces a housing crisis and is clearly unable to deliver the numbers of homes required within its' own boundaries due to the constraints imposed by the Green Belt. It is far better that this development is delivered at sites next to the city where homes are needed than at sites miles away with poor public transport and road infrastructure.

I am very pleased to see that SODC, like the neighbouring authorities Cherwell and WODC have put the needs of people and the environment above Green Belt.

Q15. Please set out any modifications you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound, having regard to your comments above. (NB - any non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination). It will be helpful if you could put forward your suggested wording of any policy or text as precisely as possible.

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Q17. Would you like to participate at the oral part of the examination, which takes place as part of the examination process?

No

Q18. Would you like to comment on another policy or paragraph?

Yes

## Page 11: Part B - your comments

Q19. For comments on the Local Plan, please provide the paragraph or policy to which your comments relates. You can view a list of policies [here](#). If you wish to comment on one of the evidence documents or the policies maps, please state the document title as well as the paragraph or policy reference.

**Document / Policy / Paragraph:** Policy STRAT 1 - The Overall Strategy - Clause 4.14

Q20. Do you consider the Local Plan and supporting documents:

	Yes	No	Don't know	Not answered (OPTION HIDDEN FROM LIVE SURVEY)
are legally compliant?		X		
are sound?		X		
comply with the Duty to Co-operate?			X	

Q21. Please provide further information in relation to the previous question. e.g. why you do or do not consider the Local Plan to be legally compliant or sound.

I do support the stargety of the Local Plan except for Chalgrove Airfield which should not have been included as it is not a sustainable site and in any case development at the site cannot be delivered within the time scales required by the NPPF and the objectives set out in the Plan due to the ongoing conflict between the leaseholders and the developers.

If the developers do try to force Martin Baker from the site through a Compulsory Purchase this will result in a long drawn out legal battle and Homes England are very unlikely to succeed as they cannot prove that development is necessary when the Local Plan will already deliver more new homes than are actually needed under the Strategic Housing Market Allocation even if there is no development at Chalgrove Airfield whatsoever. They are also unlikely to be able to prove that forcing Martin Baker from the site and thereby jeopardising their entire business is in the Public Interest.

Q22. Please set out any modifications you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound, having regard to your comments above. (NB - any non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination). It will be helpful if you could put forward your suggested wording of any policy or text as precisely as possible.

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Q24. Would you like to participate at the oral part of the examination, which takes place as part of the examination process?

No

Q25. Would you like to comment on another policy or paragraph?

No