

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	Derek James
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	██████████████████████████████

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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 Strat2 page 35

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.

The data used to calculate "housing needs" – referred to many times in SODC's Local Plan - are flawed because they are based on out of date information. As a result, your assessed needs are substantially in excess of the true needs of the District. This fundamental error undermines many of the basic tenets of SODC's Local Plan to 2034. Other respondents to this consultation have described in detail the nature of this error, so I will not repeat them here. I particularly recommend that you study the contribution by Mr David Bermingham dated 31 January 2019.

In Chapter 4 "Spatial Strategy" you correctly state (under 4.15 on page 30) that National Planning Policy is for local planning authorities to provide for the "objectively assessed needs" for housing in their area. I submit that your assessment of need is not objective and can be proved to be erroneously based. This nullifies many of the other points you make in your Plan. In other words, the starting point is just wrong.

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.

Rework the numbers.

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

Yes

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

Yes

Page 9: Part B - your comments

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: Housing in Larger villages (page91)

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.

The method used for calculating the level of new housing required in Larger Villages (Table 5f on page 93) is flawed in that it relies solely on mathematical formulae which take no account of the constraints mentioned elsewhere in the Plan. For example, the number of homes required of Goring (329 originally: 233 outstanding) takes no account of the fact that Goring is wholly within the Chilterns AONB; within the "setting" of the North Wessex Downs AONB; and is partly in the River Thames flood zone.

POLICY ENV1 "Landscape and countryside" (page 169) grants "the highest level of protection" to AONBs; rules out developments that do not conserve and, if possible enhance the beauty of AONBs; rules out major developments (which 233 new homes certainly would be) without being demonstrably in the public interest; and stipulates that any developments that could affect an AONB be supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).

There is no local need for 233 additional homes in Goring, which is already a vibrant and active community, and therefore there is no public interest in building such a large number of additional homes there. An LVIA was commissioned as part of the process of preparing the current GNP and that indicates that 94 additional homes is the maximum number that Goring can provide in the Plan period. SODC knows this because they have supported the preparation of the GNP in accordance with paragraph 5.10 on page 85.

POLICY EP4 "Flood Risk" (page 192) states that the risk and impact of flooding will be minimised by directing new development to "areas with the lowest probability of flooding". Parts of Goring are in flood zones 2 and 3 and therefore fully qualify for this level of protection. Sequential Testing is not only required but should be applied to the whole of the local planning authority's area (as stipulated in the NPPF) and not just to the site (as stated in the Local Plan). Safeguards to avoid flood risk extend to ensuring that any developments do not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

Paragraph 5.29 on page 92 envisages that some settlements may be unable to provide suitable and deliverable sites to accommodate the amount of development that has been calculated. Paragraph 5.30 also recognises that some villages have the sort of constraints that exist in Goring. It is therefore extraordinary that SODC should include in their Local Plan a requirement for additional housing in Goring when they know that these constraints exist and that an LVIA confirms this. The "detailed evidence base" (para 5.30) is included in the GNP, with which SODC have been deeply involved and supportive.

POLICY H16 "Infill development" (page 113) allows infill development to form part of the provision of new homes to meet the assessed need. References are also made in paragraph 5.4 et al to windfall and infill developments. Goring has a history of regular infill developments, as large single houses are sold on the death of the owner to be substituted with several smaller properties on the same site. This trend is likely to continue. This method of gradually increasing the housing stock in Goring is the correct way to deal with gradual population growth – not the imposition of artificially-calculated housing targets that take no account of local constraints.

Imposing 233 additional homes on Goring would be in breach of your Policies and Objectives as follows:

- "Vision for 2034" (page 19) "South Oxfordshire will remain a beautiful and prosperous place to live."
- "Strategic Objectives" (page 21) "A balance needs to be struck between the core pillars of sustainable development, including the protection of the environment and the need to provide sufficient development to meet the needs of the existing and future population."
- Objective 1.3 (page 21) "To meet identified housing needs (my italics)."
- Objective 5.2 (page 23) "Support development that respects the scale and character of our towns and villages, enhancing the special character of our historic settlements and the surrounding countryside."
- Objective 7.1 (page 23) "Protect and enhance the natural environment, including biodiversity, the landscape, green infrastructure and our waterways, placing particular importance on the value of ... our two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the River Thames."
- Objective 8.2 (page 23) "increase our resilience to the likely impact of climate change, especially flooding".

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.

Reduce the number of homes expected of Goring to read 94.

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

Yes

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

No

Page 106: Future contact preferences

Q354. As explained in our data protection statement, in line with statutory regulations you will be contacted by the programme officer (and where necessary the council) with relevant updates on the Local Plan. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have a shared planning policy database. If you would like to be added to our database to receive updates on other planning policy consultations, please tick the relevant district box(es) below:

I would like to be added to the database to receive planning policy updates for South Oxfordshire