

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN 2034

EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

WRITTEN SUBMISSION TO EXAMINATION JUNE 2020

Mr John Walsh

Matter 1 Is the housing requirement soundly based?

Issue c

Is there an appropriate component within the stated housing requirement for meeting the unmet needs arising from Oxford City, having regard to the findings of the Inspector's report into the submitted Oxford City Local Plan? What should that figure be?

The proportion of unmet need from Oxford City assigned to South Oxfordshire district is considered too high. At 4,950 out of a total of 14,300 it represents 34.6%, while SODC only represents 26% of the population and 27% of the land area of the four districts (Cherwell, Vale of White Horse, West Oxfordshire and South Oxfordshire).

While Oxford is the main commuting destination from the other three districts, SODC's commuters mainly head East to Reading and towards London. It is therefore illogical to divide the total in this way. Occupants of the new houses are likely to head up the M40 to London rather than commuting sustainably into Oxford.

During the Oxford Plan Examination Inspectors increased the number of houses that Oxford could itself provide (MM6) from 8,620 to 10,884. This provides an opportunity for the Inspector to reduce the numbers in SODC's plan to 3,000 out of 12,350, 24% of the total.

Summary

The calculation method used to assign increased housing number to SODC should be revised to reflect population and land area.

The Inspector is requested to consider reducing the total number of houses to meet the unmet need of Oxford City to reflect the increased number of houses provided within the adopted Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

The figure of 4,950 additional dwelling was a working assumption at the time of preparation of the Local Plan. However now that the Oxford Local Plan has been adopted and the unmet need is less, the additional housing required for South Oxfordshire is no longer justified and should be reduced.