



# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of an **INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION** will be held in 2nd Floor Landing Meeting Room - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **WEDNESDAY 10 JANUARY 2018 AT 9.10 AM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manjeet Gill'.

Manjeet Gill  
Interim Chief Executive  
Published on 2 January 2018

This meeting may be filmed for inclusion on the Council's website.

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# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Our Vision**

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

## **Our Priorities**

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

## **The Underpinning Principles**

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

**For consideration by**

**David Lee, Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Highways**

**Officers Present**

**Luciane Bowker, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist**

**James McCabe, Planning Officer, Strategy and Commissioning (Place)**

<b>IMD NO.</b>	<b>WARD</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	
1. IMD 2018/02	None Specific	<b>WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2011-2033</b>	<b>5 - 22</b>

**CONTACT OFFICER**

**Luciane Bowker**

**Tel**

**Email**

**Postal Address**

Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist

0118 974 6091

luciane.bowker@wokingham.gov.uk

Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN

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# Agenda Item IMD2

## INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REFERENCE IMD: 2017/02

<b>TITLE</b>	Wokingham Borough Council response to the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011-2033 – Final Publication Plan
<b>DECISION TO BE MADE BY</b>	Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Highways, Cllr David Lee
<b>DATE AND TIME</b>	Wednesday 10 January 2018 – 9.10am
<b>WARD</b>	None specific
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Interim Director of Environment, Josie Wragg; Director of Corporate Services, Graham Ebers

### **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

To ensure that South Oxfordshire District Council's (SODC) Local Plan has minimal negative impacts upon Wokingham Borough and that any positive benefits are maximised.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Highways agrees that Wokingham Borough Council submits the attached appendices as formal responses to the plan which:

- 1) Object to the plan on the basis of soundness in relation to:
  - a) The omission of a safeguarded route for a new Thames Crossing within the plan;
- 2) Support South Oxfordshire District Council's commitment to plan for its own housing need in full.
- 3) Support SODC's commitment to meeting a proportion of Oxford City Council's (OCC) unmet housing need as well as its commitment to an early review of this plan, which will ensure that the scale of OCC's unmet need, which will be quantified within a future local plan of its own, is fully met within the Housing Market Area.

### **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) has published the Local Plan 2011-2033 Publication Version (the Plan), which is intended to be the last version of the plan that is consulted upon (Regulation 19) before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. The consultation ran from 11 October to 30 November 2017. The Plan details the proposed policies and spatial vision for SODC.

SODC failed to notify Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) of the Plans publication. As WBC only became aware of the breach towards the end of the consultation period, an

objection to the Plan was submitted on the grounds that it had not been prepared in a legal compliant manner. WBC's response set out that it reserves the right to fully review the plan in adequate time and, upon a full reflection of the details of the plan, alter its position as necessary.

WBC has now been able to review the plan and this report with associated appendices outlines WBC's response to the planned housing provision within SODC and strategic transport schemes, in particular, a potential new crossing over the River Thames.

It is proposed that if SODC and the Planning Inspectorate are willing to accept the new representations as duly made, WBC would agree to the withdrawal of our objection on legal compliance.

### **Background:**

South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) published its Local Plan (2011-2033) Publication Version (hereafter referred to as the Plan) and invited representations between 11 October and 30 November 2017. This is a Regulation 19 consultation under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

SODC failed to notify Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) of the publication of the Plan as required by Regulation. As WBC only became aware of the breach towards the end of the consultation period, an objection to the Plan was submitted on the grounds that it had not been prepared in a legal compliant manner.

Whilst the publication period and opportunity to submit representations on the Plan has closed, WBC has undertaken a review with view to assisting the examination process into the Plan defining any key areas of support or objection. It is proposed that if SODC and the Planning Inspectorate are willing to accept the new representations as duly made, WBC would agree to the withdrawal of our objection on legal compliance. While it is a fact that regulatory procedures were not followed in full, on acceptance of the new representations, WBC is content that this did not unduly compromise WBC.

### **Analysis of Issues**

The publication version the Plan sets out the long term vision for the SODC, up until 2033 and includes proposed development management policies and proposed site allocations. SODC falls within the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area (HMA) along with Cherwell, Oxford, Vale of White Horse, and West Oxfordshire local authorities. All five authorities are working together to ensure that the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) of the whole of the Oxfordshire HMA is delivered.

#### Housing need

The Plan sets out that SODC will deliver 17,050 additional homes to meet its own identified need to 2033, as well as a further 3,750 new homes to meet some of Oxford City Council's unmet need. The Oxfordshire County Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) identified a range in housing need for SODC from 14,500 to 16,500 new homes for the period 2011-2031 which equates to a range of 725 – 825 homes per annum, of which the midpoint is 775. SODC have considered it

appropriate to plan for this midpoint and therefore, rolling this SHMA requirement forward 2 additional years to match the plan period to 2033, this has led to the identified 17,050 homes required to meet the need arising within its own area. The plan sets out how this need will be met in full and WBC welcomes this commitment.

The SHMA also recommends a range of 24,000 to 32,000 new homes for the Oxford City Council administrative area. Oxford City Council will be unable to meet its own need in full and there is therefore an assumption that 15,000 new homes will need to be accommodated in the other Oxfordshire County local authority areas. SODC are proposing to accommodate 3,750 houses of this unmet need which, in line with other Oxfordshire local authorities, will be based on a stepped trajectory that begins provision in the monitoring year 2021/22. WBC notes that until such a time as Oxford City Council finalises its own local plan, a definitive unmet need figure will not be known. Additionally, as the different Oxfordshire local authorities are at different stages of their plan making process, there is no definitive Oxfordshire wide agreement about exactly how this unmet need will be apportioned between the remaining four HMA local authorities. SODC has committed to reviewing its own local plan at such a time as Oxford City Council adopts its plan and WBC considers this to be a pragmatic approach. WBC however takes this opportunity to emphasise that all of Oxford City's unmet housing need should be met in full within the Oxfordshire County HMA itself and that SODC, or other Oxfordshire local authorities, should not look to WBC to accommodate any unmet need. WBC considers the plan to be sound as regards provision of housing.

See Appendix 1 for the recommended response on housing issues.

### Transport

WBC welcomes reference in Policy TRANS1 (Supporting Strategic Transport Investment) to a proposal for a new Thames crossing in the Reading area. This is a scheme of strategic importance that WBC considers would have positive transport implications for the borough. Though Wokingham Borough is mentioned in the plan's supporting Transport Topic Paper (TTP), the plan itself (and Policy TRANS1 in particular) does not specifically refer to Wokingham Borough. As is acknowledged in the TTP, a Strategic Outline Business Case has recently been produced for a new Thames crossing (in partnership between Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), OxLEP, Oxfordshire County Council, SODC, Reading Borough Council and WBC). The Business Case outlines a potential new crossing route extending into Thames Valley Park within the administrative area of WBC. WBC would therefore express a preference for specific mention of Wokingham Borough to be included within the plan itself given the proposed route would directly affect Wokingham Borough.

WBC notes that Policy TRANS3 (Safeguarding of Land for Strategic transport Schemes) safeguards land for a number of strategic transport schemes. This policy does not safeguard any land for a potential new Thames crossing. Given the importance of delivering this scheme as soon as is practicable, WBC would expect SODC to make provision for land to be safeguarded for this purpose in Policy TRANS3. WBC therefore objects to the omission of any safeguarded land for this purpose in Policy TRANS3 and considers the policy to be unsound on the basis that it is not 'effective' as per the national guidance. WBC would expect this policy

wording to be altered and land to be safeguarded on the policies map which could reflect the broad alignment set out within the Strategic Outline Business Case (found on the WBC website here: <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/parking-road-works-and-transport/transport-and-roads-guidance-and-plans/?categoryesctl91f252ff-550d-4cfa-a838-92ef2cb5f83c=10642>).

The delivery of a new Thames crossing would open up the potential for strategic cross boundary sustainable transport measures, in particular park and ride provision which could be coordinated with planned facilities within Wokingham Borough at Thames Valley Park. Policy TRANS1 currently has no reference to strategic cross boundary park and ride provision. WBC considers that the inclusion of cross boundary park and ride schemes within Policy TRANS1 would allow flexibility for mutually beneficial schemes to come forward in the future.

See Appendix 2 for the recommended response on transport issues.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION**

***The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil	Nil	Nil

<b>Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision</b>
None anticipated

<b>Cross-Council Implications</b>
Decisions in South Oxfordshire District Council on the location of sites for residential and other types of development could affect how the authority needs to resolve impacts on services such as transport, education, etc. within the borough.

<b>SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Director of Corporate Services</b>	No comments received
<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	No comments
<b>Leader of the Council</b>	No comments received

**List of Background Papers**

Appendix 1 – WBC Housing Response South Oxon Publication LP

Appendix 2 – WBC Transport Response South Oxon Publication LP

Information published by South Oxfordshire District Council relating to the Draft Local Plan – see <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/emerging-local-plan>

<b>Contact</b> James McCabe	<b>Service</b> Development Policy and Planning
<b>Telephone No</b> 0118 908 8333	<b>Email</b> <a href="mailto:james.mccabe@wokingham.gov.uk">james.mccabe@wokingham.gov.uk</a>
<b>Date</b> 5 December 2017	<b>Version No.</b> 4

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**South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2033**  
 Publication Version  
 Representation Form

Ref:

(For official use only)

**Name of the Local Plan to which this representation relates:**

South Oxfordshire  
 Local Plan 2033

**Please return by 5pm on Thursday 30 November 2017 to:** Planning Policy, South Oxfordshire District Council, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, Abingdon, OX14 4SB or email [planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk)

This form has two parts:

**Part A** – Personal Details

**Part B** – Your representation(s). Please fill in a separate sheet for each representation you wish to make.

**Part A**

**1. Personal Details\***

\*If an agent is appointed, please complete only the Title, Name and Organisation boxes below but complete the full contact details of the agent in 2.

**2. Agent's Details (if applicable)**

Title	Mr	
First Name	Ian	
Last Name	Bellinger	
Job Title (where relevant)	Growth and Delivery Manager	
Organisation representing (where relevant)	Wokingham Borough Council	
Address Line 1	PO Box 157	
Address Line 2	Shute End	
Address Line 3		
Postal Town	Wokingham	
Post Code	RG40 1WP	
Telephone Number	0118 974 6231	
Email Address	<a href="mailto:PolicyandPlans@wokingham.gov.uk">PolicyandPlans@wokingham.gov.uk</a>	

**Sharing your details:** please see page 3

## Part B – Please use a separate sheet for each representation

Name or organisation: Wokingham Borough Council

3. To which part of the Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph

Policy

STRAT  
2&3

Policies Map

4. Do you consider the Local Plan is: *(Please tick as appropriate)*

4. (1) Legally compliant

Yes

No

4. (2) Sound

Yes

No

4. (3) Complies with the Duty to Cooperate

Yes

No

5. Please provide details of why you consider the Local Plan is not legally compliant or is unsound or fails to comply with the Duty to Cooperate. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Local Plan or its compliance with the Duty to Cooperate, please also use this box to set out your comments.

### Background

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) on 30 November 2017 submitted an objection to the South Oxfordshire Local Plan Publication Version (the Plan) on the basis that the plan was not prepared in a legally compliant way due to WBC not being notified of the consultation in line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 Regulations. At that time WBC were unable to consider the soundness of the Plan.

Whilst the publication period and opportunity to submit representations has closed, WBC has undertaken a review of the Plan. If South Oxfordshire District Council and the Planning Inspectorate are willing to accept this new representations as duly made, WBC would agree to the withdrawal of our objection on the grounds of legal compliance. While it is a fact that regulatory procedures were not followed in full, on acceptance of the new representations, I am content that this did not unduly compromise WBC.

### Policy STRAT2

Policy STRAT2 considers the need for new development in South Oxfordshire and sets out that a minimum of 17,050 homes will be delivered over the plan period to meet the assessed need for the district.

Policy STRAT 3

Policy STRAT3 considers the housing provision that South Oxfordshire District Council will make through the Plan to meet unmet need from Oxford City Council. The Plan proposes to deliver 3,750 new homes from 2021/22 to meet unmet need from Oxford City Council.

WBC welcomes South Oxfordshire District Council's commitment to meet its own need in full and considers STRAT2 to be a sound policy.

Under Policy STRAT3, South Oxfordshire District Council commits to reviewing its own local plan at such a time as Oxford City Council adopts its plan. In light of divergent local plan programmes within Oxfordshire, WBC also considers this to be a pragmatic and sound approach.

WBC however takes this opportunity to emphasise that all of Oxford City Council's unmet housing need should be met in full within the Oxfordshire County Housing Market Area itself and that South Oxfordshire District Council, or other Oxfordshire authorities, should not look to WBC to accommodate any unmet need.

(Continue on page 4 /expand box if necessary)

6. Please set out what modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound, having regard to the matter you have identified at 5 above. (NB Please note that any non-compliance with the Duty to Cooperate is incapable of modification at examination). You will need to say why this modification will make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

N/A

(Continue on page 4 /expand box if necessary)

**Please note** your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested modification, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on the original representation at publication stage.

**After this stage, further submissions will be only at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.**

7. If your representation is seeking a modification, do you consider it necessary to participate at the oral part of the examination?

**No**, I do not wish to participate at the oral examination

**Yes**, I wish to participate at the oral examination

8. If you wish to participate at the oral part of the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

**Please note** the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the oral part of the examination.

Signature:

Ian Bellinger

Date:

04/12/17

### Sharing your personal details

Please be aware that, due to the process of having an Independent Examination, a name and means of contact is required for your representation to be considered. Respondent details and representations will be forwarded to the Inspector carrying out the examination of the Local Plan after the Publicity Period has ended. This data will be managed by a Programme Officer who acts as the point of contact between the council and the Inspector and respondents and the Inspector.

**Representations cannot be treated as confidential and will be published on our website alongside your name.** If you are responding as an individual rather than a company or organisation, we will not publish your contact details (email / postal address and telephone numbers) or signatures online, however the original representations are available for public viewing at our council office by prior appointment. All representations and related documents will be held by South Oxfordshire District Council for a period of 6 months after the Local Plan is adopted.

### Would you like to hear from us in the future?

I would like to be kept informed about the progress of the Local Plan

I would like to be added to the database to receive general planning updates

Please do not contact me again

**Further comment:** Please use this space to provide further comment on the relevant questions in this form. **You must state which question your comment relates to.**

**Alternative formats of this form are available on request.** Please contact our customer service team on 01235 422600 (Text phone users add 18001 before you dial) or email [planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk)

**Please return this form by 5pm on Thursday 30 November 2017 to:** Planning Policy, South Oxfordshire District Council, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, Abingdon, OX14 4SB or email [planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk)

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**Part A**

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**2. Agent's Details (if applicable)**

\*If an agent is appointed, please complete only the Title, Name and Organisation boxes below but complete the full contact details of the agent in 2.

Title	Mr	
First Name	Ian	
Last Name	Bellinger	
Job Title (where relevant)	Growth and Delivery Manager	
Organisation representing (where relevant)	Wokingham Borough Council	
Address Line 1	PO Box 157	
Address Line 2	Shute End	
Address Line 3		
Postal Town	Wokingham	
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## Part B – Please use a separate sheet for each representation

Name or organisation: Wokingham Borough Council

3. To which part of the Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph

Policy

Policies Map

4. Do you consider the Local Plan is: *(Please tick as appropriate)*

4. (1) Legally compliant

Yes

No

4. (2) Sound

Yes

No

4. (3) Complies with the Duty to Cooperate

Yes

No

5. Please provide details of why you consider the Local Plan is not legally compliant or is unsound or fails to comply with the Duty to Cooperate. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Local Plan or its compliance with the Duty to Cooperate, please also use this box to set out your comments.

### Background

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) on 30 November 2017 submitted an objection to the South Oxfordshire Local Plan Publication Version (the Plan) on the basis that the plan was not prepared in a legally compliant way due to WBC not being notified of the consultation in line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 Regulations. At that time WBC were unable to consider the soundness of the Plan.

Whilst the publication period and opportunity to submit representations has closed, WBC has undertaken a review of the Plan. If South Oxfordshire District Council and the Planning Inspectorate are willing to accept this new representations as duly made, WBC would agree to the withdrawal of our objection on the grounds of legal compliance. While it is a fact that regulatory procedures were not followed in full, on acceptance of the new representations, I am content that this did not unduly compromise WBC.

### Policy TRANS3

Policy TRANS3 sets out a number of safeguarded land areas for identified transport schemes. WBC considers that policy STRAT 3 is unsound on the grounds of 'effectiveness'.

While WBC welcomes reference in policy TRANS1 (Supporting Strategic Transport Investment) to a proposal for a new Thames crossing in the Reading area, WBC considers that this opportunity needs to be recognised and safeguarded through Policy TRANS3 (Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes). This is a scheme of strategic importance that WBC considers would have positive transport implications for the borough. Not safeguarding the opportunity through the route's omission from Policy TRANS3 and the Policies Map represents ineffective cross boundary cooperation.

(Continue on page 4 /expand box if necessary)

6. Please set out what modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound, having regard to the matter you have identified at 5 above. (NB Please note that any non-compliance with the Duty to Cooperate is incapable of modification at examination). You will need to say why this modification will make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

Provision should be made within the wording of TRANS3 for a new Thames crossing and a broad alignment for this should be included on the Policies Map. This could reflect the broad alignment set out within the Strategic Outline Business Case (see attached map and the full document can be found here:

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/parking-road-works-and-transport/transport-and-roads-guidance-and-plans/?categoryesctl91f252ff-550d-4cfa-a838-92ef2cb5f83c=10642>).

WBC proposes the following suggested wording to be included within the list of transport schemes set out in TRANS3:

- A new River Thames crossing in the Reading/Wokingham Borough administrative area.

(Continue on page 4 /expand box if necessary)

**Please note** your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested modification, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on the original representation at publication stage.

**After this stage, further submissions will be only at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.**

7. If your representation is seeking a modification, do you consider it necessary to participate at the oral part of the examination?

X

**No**, I do not wish to participate at the oral examination

**Yes**, I wish to participate at the oral examination

8. If you wish to participate at the oral part of the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

**Please note** the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the oral part of the examination.

Signature: Ian Bellinger

Date: 04/12/17

**Sharing your personal details**

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**Representations cannot be treated as confidential and will be published on our website alongside your name.** If you are responding as an individual rather than a company or organisation, we will not publish your contact details (email / postal address and telephone numbers) or signatures online, however the original representations are available for public viewing at our council office by prior appointment. All representations and related documents will be held by South Oxfordshire District Council for a period of 6 months after the Local Plan is adopted.

**Would you like to hear from us in the future?**

- I would like to be kept informed about the progress of the Local Plan X
- I would like to be added to the database to receive general planning updates X
- Please do not contact me again

**Further comment:** Please use this space to provide further comment on the relevant questions in this form. **You must state which question your comment relates to.**

WBC has noted that the plan complies with the Duty to Co-operate as there has been ongoing officer dialogue regarding a third Thames Crossing outside of the plan making process. However, South Oxfordshire District Council has failed to consult WBC on its Preferred Options stage and Second Preferred Options stage (both Regulation 18) prior to not notifying WBC about this current pre-submission consultation. WBC is happy to not object to the plan on grounds of the duty to co-operate, as long as there is adequate scope to discuss the comments set out in this response prior to the submission of the plan to the Secretary of State.

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