

Scrutiny Panel Response.

Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation (February - March 2019)

	Topic	Responses from individual councillors
<p><b>Foreword</b></p> <p><b>Q1</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Introducing the Oxfordshire Plan 2050</b></p> <p>This Plan will be a step change in our approach to securing the best Oxfordshire for 2050. It will set the framework for future decision making on big issues like development, infrastructure and placemaking. The Plan will be aspirational and use the opportunity of growth as a positive to improve the quality of life for everyone. We will engage with stakeholders and communities across Oxfordshire, and work through the plan making process collaboratively establishing a common purpose and vision for the county. We recognise the many assets and strengths of Oxfordshire, it is a very desirable place in which to live, work, study, visit and invest. There are real opportunities for continuing our economic success, enhancing the quality of the built and natural environment, improving quality of life, adapting to climate change and reducing inequalities. With a long-term focus, we hope to capture these opportunities and plan collectively for a sustainable future to the benefit of all in the county. There are many steps in the process of developing this plan and we are looking to engage with all those interested in the future of Oxfordshire to help shape it. This consultation document is intended to start a conversation which we hope will develop and continue throughout the process and lead to a plan for Oxfordshire that we can be proud of. Please get involved in and sign up to be kept informed throughout.</p> <p>The local authorities of Oxfordshire are working together to produce the Oxfordshire Plan. This project offers the chance to plan co-operatively, tackle complex issues that cross our individual boundaries, and draw up a strategic vision to 2050.</p>	<p><i>“The problem we identified with the document is that Climate is tucked away under other headings when it really should be front and centre, the main issue that this plan should be trying to address. Climate change should be one of the key aspirations for the plan.”</i></p> <p><i>“The baseline for the 2050 plan should be 2031 (or when the current local plans are delivered) There is a need to not just plan infrastructure to support growth but also infrastructure to support existing residents and businesses”</i></p> <p><i>“Placemaking really needs to be defined. As it stands it will be jibber jabber to many”</i></p> <p><i>“My concern is that much appears to be things being done to Oxfordshire not for Oxfordshire. Houses for commuters, they are advertised as such at developments around Banbury with timings to Marylebone. When what we want is housing for people already here. This must be retained as a focus of the Board.”</i></p> <p><i>“OK, stresses working together.”</i></p> <p><i>“Grammar on page 1. 'place in which to visit' needs to be changed. 'Adapting to climate change' isn't the whole thing, it's not enough. We must also reduce our contribution to</i></p>

*climate change, by zero carbon developments and transport changes. 'benefit to all in the county' I'm therefore expecting this plan to adequately address our three biggest concerns to local people (after climate change); roads are over capacity, houses are unaffordable to average and lower earners, and inequality."*

#### **Consolidated Scrutiny Response**

**That the Growth Board redrafts the Regulation 18 consultation document to be more consistent with international, national and local policies and targets concerning climate change and other likely future trends.**

**This should include:**

- a) alignment with the Government's definition of 'growth' as contained with the Clean Growth Strategy 2018.**
- b) a greater recognition of the importance of climate change and its relationship with the forward planning of our housing, transport, health, wellbeing and economic infrastructure.**
- c) a greater recognition of the 'mega-trends' that are expected to affect the demographic, climatic and technological environment [see Note 1]**
- d) a 'SMART' target for greenhouse gas reductions against which all the aspirations and objectives are judged.**

**Note 1: A good reference source for these is this Business in the Community document on UK trends in the built environment**

[https://www.bitc.org.uk/system/files/bitc future trends document - final.pdf](https://www.bitc.org.uk/system/files/bitc_future_trends_document_-_final.pdf)

**There is a need to emphasise the continued protection of not only the Green Belt but also the AONB and Rural Oxfordshire by adding it to the principles of the Oxon Plan 2050 vision and by including it as a part of the Green Belt review reinforcing the existing policies in the NPPF. In addition, the existing allocation of development sites within the Green Belt by local authorities is factored in to the Oxon Plan 2050 Green Belt review.**

**One of the main objectives of the Oxon Plan 2050 should be to plan infrastructure to support existing residents and businesses using plan 2031 and other local plans as a stepping stone in addition to the infrastructure plans for 2050.**

**Placemaking needs to be more well-defined for e.g. using this opportunity for the development of country parks within developments to facilitate sustainable living.**

**There seems to be a lot of focus on housing in places like Banbury for commuters to London Marylebone instead of focusing on the housing needs of Oxfordshire as a county.**

**More needs to be done to ensure that the local needs of individual districts are met with a focus on developing such documents for consultation collaboratively.**

**'Adapting to climate change' needs to transform into strategic visions with a holistic view on climate change, addition of Carbon Sequestration, Zero Carbon Strategies and Reforestation to the environmental infrastructure would play an important role in mitigating climate change and the**

		<p><b>provision of such infrastructure within local development plans.</b></p>
<p><b>Q2</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Introducing the Oxfordshire Plan 2050</b></p> <p><b>1)</b> The Oxfordshire Plan will cover the administrative county area of Oxfordshire. This will comprise the local planning authorities of: Cherwell District Council Oxford City Council South Oxfordshire District Council Vale of White Horse District Council West Oxfordshire District Council</p> <p><b>2)</b> In 2018 the Oxfordshire authorities signed the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal with the government. In return for guaranteed funding for affordable housing, infrastructure and economic growth, the Oxfordshire authorities have committed to submit a Local Plan for each district, to plan for the delivery of 100,000 new homes to 2031 (through those Local Plans) and to produce the Oxfordshire Plan. The scope of the Oxfordshire Plan was developed in the Scoping Document which was agreed by the partner authorities in October 2018 and endorsed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board</p> <p><b>3)</b> The Growth Deal commits to an Oxfordshire Plan that covers the period to 2050. This is a significantly longer period than is typical with a Local Plan and is important in this strategic context. A significant amount of joint work across the Oxfordshire authorities has already taken place which has fed into the current and emerging round of Local Plans. These Local Plans cover the period from 2011 to 2031, 2034 or 2036. There is therefore a good deal of detail and certainty around that period as plans are well advanced. The latter period of the Oxfordshire Plan to 2050 will be based on a new evidence base produced specifically for the project. Future Local Plans will sit within the framework defined by the Oxfordshire Plan.</p>	<p><i>“The evidence base must include a full review of the Oxford green belt and this review must be open to separate public consultation.”</i></p> <p><i>“So, the focus will be on new evidence relevant to the growth expected from about 2035 forward to 2050. Of course, we are supposed to do it this way, but in reality, isn’t the planned Ox-Cam Expressway prescribing a growth rate unprecedented in our history? That isn’t evidence based; it’s aspirational from the government.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Consolidated Scrutiny Response</b></p> <p><b>There is a need to capture the different evidence base between needed growth and government’s aspirations for growth considering The Oxford-Cambridge Arc: government ambition and joint declaration between government and local partners.</b></p>
<p><b>Q3</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>VISION FOR THE OXFORDSHIRE PLAN</b></p> <p><b>4)</b> In 2050 the people of Oxfordshire are living in sustainable communities with a high quality of life and strong sense of community. The integrity and richness of the county's historic character and natural environment are valued and conserved. A wide range of secure and good quality housing options are within reach for all. Existing and new communities are well connected</p>	<p><i>“Climate change needs to be higher up the list of priorities. It is THE biggest challenge this county faces and should be central to the Plan 2050.”</i></p> <p><i>“Should there be some mention of environmental issues, especially with reference to air quality? “</i></p>

	<p>integrated, distinct, attractive and desirable places to live; their design and layouts facilitate healthy lifestyles and sustainable travel options. Productivity has increased and residents are well-skilled and able to access a wide range of high-value job opportunities and share in wealth creation. The private and public sector continue to have the confidence to invest in the county. Oxfordshire has embraced the technological, demographic and lifestyle changes of recent decades and new developments are fit for the future and resilient to climate change. The wellbeing of residents and workers is enhanced through being part of this special place.</p>	<p><i>“Is everyone going to be well-skilled? In “Brave New World” the range was greater from alpha to gamma.”</i></p> <p><i>“sustainable communities’ must include water, power, transport, communications, health services, education, employment, natural environment, air quality, housing that people can afford to buy or rent. Add home working. Especially add not contributing to global warming. Throughout all these docs I’ve only read that we need to be resilient to climate change, which ignores the fact that we are all contributors to it, and that must stop. We need our new built environments to be zero carbon or less.”</i></p> <p><b>Consolidated Scrutiny Response</b></p> <p><b>The Vision for Oxon Plan 2050 does not encapsulate a visionary strategy as far mitigating climate change is concerned. Considering climate change is the biggest challenge we face but there is no mention of environmental issues such as Air Quality.</b></p> <p><b>The panel feels in order to achieve the vision listed in this section specific and in-depth strategies must be developed for sustainable communities which include water, power transport, communications, health services, education, employment, natural environment, air quality, zero carbon technologies and affordable housing.</b></p>
<p><b>Q4</b></p>	<p><b>OXFORDSHIRE CONTEXT</b></p> <p><b>5) There are many complex and interlinked factors that make Oxfordshire a desirable place to live, work, study, visit and invest. The following section provides an outline of the main factors. In some cases, these factors are real strengths and provide opportunities for the future, in others they are more</b></p>	<p>None</p>

	<p>challenging and in the most part they provide both opportunities and constraints.</p>	
<p><b>Q5</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Quality of life context</b></p> <p><b>6)</b> Oxfordshire is generally regarded as a high-quality place to live. The attractive environment, accessible countryside, good employment prospects, high educational attainment, long life expectancy, safety and security, cultural richness and access to services and facilities are all factors which contribute to the quality of life in Oxfordshire.</p> <p><b>7)</b> Oxfordshire or individual Oxfordshire authorities frequently perform very highly in rankings that aim to measure quality of life. The Office of National Statistics collects data on people's self-assessed levels of life satisfaction, worth, happiness and anxiety. In 2017/18 the average ranking of Oxfordshire's residents is 7.87 out of 10 for life satisfaction, compared to a South-East average of 7.76 and an England average of 7.68.</p> <p><b>8)</b> There are areas of deprivation however, with notable differences in life opportunities and quality of life even within relatively small geographic areas. In those more deprived areas (which can be found in each of the districts of Oxfordshire) residents often have lower wages and skills, educational attainment is lower and health is poorer. There are usually combinations of factors causing such inequalities to exist between areas.</p>	<p><i>“you've introduced "low skills"... hope you haven't forgotten them later.”</i></p> <p><i>“Homelessness is growing. Deaths of homeless people have shocked residents. Poverty is growing too. This plan should have something in it to address and arrest these trends. There is no mention of the impact of Brexit on the economic outlook for Oxon for the years up to 2050. If retail is the biggest employer, this plan should include steps to help retail workers have housing they can afford near to their work, to cut down on commuting and the resultant congestion and air pollution. We have below average attainment in writing and maths. This should be addressed if for no other reason than the children leaving school will lack the skills necessary for local employment. I think it's good that the intention is to have this plan assess the overall Green Belt strategy in Oxfordshire. For too long it's been left to individual authorities to nibble away at Green belt land as they are minded to. 'Oxford is the least affordable place to live in the UK'; this is not a quality of a world class city. WE need to address it in this plan. 'Long term solution to the A34 congestion' should be addressed in this plan. Let's find a way for all the councils to keep the roadsides litter free. The condition of the A34 and the ring road (eastern bypass especially) is awful. Public transport (buses or trams) are essential for improving air quality, reducing road congestion, particularly with 100,000 new homes coming in these early years (to 2036). Assess our public transport strategy and find a way to drastically decrease the number of cars on the roads. I know there is LPT4, but there has been no improvement to the congestion on our roads, and I feel no confidence the next strategy of the same type will do much if anything. I think this plan should demand better transport.</i></p>

		<p><i>many of our planning applications define 'sustainability' as being within 400m of a bus stop. So, hundreds of houses are built, and everyone uses their cars, and so the buses fail to profit and are cut. That's not a good system."</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Consolidated Scrutiny Response</b></p> <p><b>The issues of homelessness especially with the worsening economic trend and impact of Brexit on the economy has not been addressed in the Plan 2050.</b></p> <p><b>Low skilled workers in the retail section should have access to affordable housing close to retail centres and hubs to reduce air pollution and congestion.</b></p> <p><b>The panel welcomes the overall Green Belt strategy as the green belt has been encroached by local authorities to considerable extent.</b></p> <p><b>There also needs to be a strategy to ease the A34 congestion. Public transport should play a major part especially with the addition of 100,000 homes till 2036. We need to think beyond the LPT4 of the current public transport strategy.</b></p>
<p><b>Q6</b></p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 15</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Economic context</b></p> <p><b>9)</b> Oxfordshire has a fast-growing economy focussed on innovation, technology, life sciences and education. Science Vale UK has the highest concentration of science research facilities in Western Europe and Harwell Campus is home to the largest space cluster in Europe. Oxford University is the number one-ranked University in the World and it generates more technology spin-outs than any other UK university.</p> <p><b>10)</b> Oxfordshire has one of the strongest economies in the UK, it is one of only three net contributors to the treasury, delivering £21 billion per year to national output. The ambition of the Local Industrial Strategy (currently being</p>	<p><i>"We have a huge shortage of labour in Oxfordshire and this is likely to become a bigger problem after Brexit. Vocational education is not recognised highly enough nationwide but this impacts on Oxfordshire significantly because we have high employment levels. The cost of living and housing in particular, is a barrier to economic growth and health and well-being."</i></p> <p><i>"Oxfordshire does not have high educational attainment. Our schools do not perform well compared to other counties. Air quality is poor and needs tackling urgently"</i></p>

	<p>prepared by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership) is to position Oxfordshire as one of the top-three global innovation ecosystems by building on the region's world-leading science and technology clusters, by ensuring there is the business and research space needed to continue to be at the forefront of innovation.</p> <p><b>11)</b> Oxfordshire's Labour Market Profile shows that it has high levels of employment with 81.6% of economically active people in employment and the largest employment sectors in Oxfordshire are wholesale and retail; professional scientific and technical; education; human health and social work; manufacturing; accommodation and food services. The level of educational attainment is higher in Oxfordshire than the national average with 50.7% of people having a level 4 or higher qualification (e.g. degree) with only 3.8% having no qualification. 63% of primary school pupils in Oxfordshire are meeting expected standards, with average scores in reading and below average in writing and maths. 46.3% of secondary school pupils in Oxfordshire achieved Grade 5 (high grade C/low B) or above in GCSE English and maths, above the England average. Educational qualifications alone are only one indicator, more broadly skills levels and availability of people with the right skills to match the needs of local employers is as important.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Consolidated Scrutiny Response</b></p> <p><b>There is a need for a prudent labour force strategy post Brexit. Vocational education needs to be recognised on a national level. Cost of living and housing has a major to play in economic growth, health and well-being.</b></p>
<p><b>Q7</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Natural and built environment context</b></p> <p><b>12)</b> Oxfordshire has an attractive and diverse urban and rural landscape. The underlying geology criss-crossed by eight river systems including the Thames and its tributaries combined with a long history of agricultural use gives the County a gentle, yet complex, landscape character. In addition to extensive areas of farmland the county supports important wildlife habitats including woodlands, wetlands and riverside meadows and the means for active travel and recreation using the public rights of way and accessible countryside and greenspace network.</p> <p><b>13)</b> Many parts of the county are protected at national and international level for their nature conservation value. Oxfordshire has 7 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) that fall partly or entirely within the county. These are Oxford Meadows, Cothill Fen, Little Wittenham, Aston Rowant, Chilterns</p>	<p><i>“Green belt revision must be subject to public consultation... not just a desk top exercise. Any changes must have public buy-in to ensure the new green belt is permanent. The Thames Valley water needs are not necessarily relevant to this plan, the proposed reservoir south of Abingdon would not serve our county at all, yet we would suffer the negative impacts.”</i></p> <p><i>“I am extremely concerned at the water situation. The prescribed growth along the Ox-Cam corridor will bring a level of growth unprecedented in all our history. Water sources need to be assessed, as well as renewable energy sources. Electric cars will mean an infrastructure change so that enough power is available in the right places to power these vehicles. How does the OxPlan2050 fit in with the Ox-Cam corridor with one</i></p>



Beechwoods, Hackpen Hill and Hartslock Wood. There are 111 Sites of Special Scientific Interest in Oxfordshire, covering 4,495 hectares, which are protected at national level representative of the country's best habitats. There are many other sites identified for their ecological and geological interest including 362 Local Wildlife Sites and 46 Local Geological Sites.

**14)** Oxfordshire has many protected and highly valued landscapes, including the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the Cotswolds AONB and the North Wessex Downs AONB. The county also has a wealth of built environment assets. The county's historic market towns, picturesque villages and Oxford's dreaming spires draw in visitors from around the world. There are around 13,000 listed buildings and structures in Oxfordshire and over 200 conservation areas. There is a world heritage site at Blenheim Palace and many designated and non-designated heritage assets throughout the county.

**15)** Oxfordshire's natural environment provides the setting for the city of Oxford and the county's towns and villages and provides places for leisure and recreation. The natural environment also provides a wide range of ecosystems services that benefit people including clean air, fresh water, surface water management and flood alleviation, food and forestry products, carbon capture and storage and the potential for renewable energy generation. There is a strong link between the natural environment and the health and well-being of people in Oxfordshire. The extent and condition of many of our environmental assets has been declining over the course of decades, with major challenges including climate change, air and water pollution, land contamination, fragmentation of habitats and a decline in biodiversity.

**16)** The Oxford Green Belt covers a significant area of the county. Green Belt is not a designation that recognises inherent biodiversity or landscape value in the same way as SSSI's or AONB's, but is designed to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The Oxfordshire Plan offers an opportunity to assess the overall Oxford Green Belt strategy.

*million new homes? I think this may be one of the most concerning parts of this plan. We are a dry county; where will we get water for the anticipated HUGE increase in our population? The planned reservoir in Vale is being challenged by all councils. What will we do?"*

#### **Consolidated Scrutiny Response**

**Green Belt revision should have a separate public consultation and not just be a desk top exercise with a focus on reallocation of Green Belt sites and require public buy-in.**

**In addition, the protection of water resources with regards to the Abingdon reservoir plan needs to be assessed. The increase in population with the Ox-Cam corridor would further stretch our water resources. All the councils need to debate the pros and cons of the Abingdon reservoir considering the differing views on the matter.**

**The protection of world heritage sites such as Blenheim estate should be considered within Oxon Plan 2050.**

	<p><b>17)</b> The future requirement for water in the Thames Water catchment area is likely to be very much greater than they are today due to an increasing population and to support economic growth. The impact of climate change means that there is a need to protect the environment and strengthen our resilience to more severe drought.</p>	
<p><b>Q8)</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Housing context</b></p> <p><b>18)</b> Housing costs in Oxfordshire are high, with both purchasing and renting costs above average. Although incomes and disposable incomes are above average, the wage to house price ratio is still very poor, making Oxfordshire one of the least affordable parts of the Country in which to live. Affordability ratios are 12.3 in Oxford, 11.86 in South Oxfordshire, 11.24 in West Oxfordshire, 9.75 in Cherwell and 8.93 in the Vale of White Horse. This compares to a ratio of 7.9 in England as a whole and 10.3 in the South East. The Centre for Cities Outlook states Oxford as the least affordable city in the UK.</p> <p><b>19)</b> High house prices threaten quality of life and wellbeing in Oxfordshire with issues such as overcrowding and homelessness on the rise. There are also implications for local businesses and the economy with large employers in health and education and social care sectors having problems with staff recruitment and retention due to the high cost of living.</p> <p><b>20)</b> There are variations in house prices and availability across the county with district market towns and villages providing relatively affordable housing compared to the city. Many people choose to commute from areas where housing is relatively affordable to higher paid jobs elsewhere causing congestion on Oxfordshire's constrained transport network with knock on implications for the environment, economic productivity, air pollution and quality of life.</p>	<p><i>“There is a contradiction in the plan. If the plan is to create jobs growth, the housing problem will get worse. We need to find a balance here.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“The contentious part.”</i></p> <p><i>“People who work here must be able to have a home here. Otherwise, our roads are worse and air quality suffers. Just notice how much better things are during half term? Parents aren’t driving their children to school and we can all get around and breathe more deeply. I'd like to see this plan address this issue.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Consolidated Scrutiny response</b></p> <p><b>A balance needs to be found between creation of jobs – growth and housing costs. There is a fundamental link between creation of jobs, housing and traffic congestion as they are all inter-dependent and not to forget air quality.</b></p>
<p><b>Q9)</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Health and wellbeing context</b></p> <p><b>21)</b> The health of people in Oxfordshire and life expectancy is generally better than the England average although there are significant issues. The population is ageing and the number of people living with chronic and complex diseases is</p>	<p><i>“Health services are not just those provided by CCGs. Children’s centres, youth centres, schools, etc. all provide health services and should be involved in this section.”</i></p>

	<p>increasing. There are also inequalities of health and wellbeing across the county. Those in the most deprived areas of the county have poorer health and lower levels of life satisfaction and lower life expectancy.</p> <p><b>22)</b> In terms of living healthy lifestyles, statistics show that Oxfordshire's residents have higher levels of physical activity and lower levels of adult obesity and smoking than the England averages although there are clearly still issues to be addressed. Ease of access to healthcare provision varies across the county; in rural areas, this can be difficult for less mobile residents.</p> <p><b>23)</b> The cluster of hospitals in Oxford link clinical practice strongly with university research, which means cutting-edge clinical practice is available to residents albeit difficult to access due to congestion and accessibility issues. Primary healthcare is under pressure across the whole country, including Oxfordshire. A growing and ageing population means that access to primary healthcare will be increasingly important. The Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group published the Oxfordshire Primary Care Framework in 2017 sets out a model of primary and community care, to ensure it remains effective. It is focused on the roles general practice should play in the community, including supporting public health initiatives and promoting schemes which reduce variation in health inequalities.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Consolidated Scrutiny response</b></p> <p><b>Health services in this section must include Children’s centres, youth centres and schools as they all provide health services.</b></p>
<p><b>Q10)</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Transport and connectivity context</b></p> <p><b>24)</b> Oxfordshire sits on the busy road and rail transport corridor between the south coast ports, the Midlands and the North. It benefits from transport connections to London and the West Midlands via the M40 and close proximity to the M4 providing connections to the West and London. Many of Oxfordshire's roads are at or approaching capacity at peak times. The M40 carries the most traffic, particularly on the stretch between junctions 9 and 10, which links the A34 via the A43 to the M1 carrying over 100,000 vehicles per day. The A34 carries up to 70,000 vehicles per day, including a large proportion of lorries. The county relies heavily on the A34 for local journeys and the route forms part of the Oxford ring road. The A34 is particularly vulnerable to disruption, as there is a lack of alternative North-South routes for journeys both within and through the county. The A40 is a major through</p>	<p><i>“Cycling in Oxford need huge investment to get up to the Gilligan standards which the County have signed up to. Cycle provision elsewhere is poor and we need a comprehensive cycle plan for the whole county. We need to find ways to get people out of private cars and on to public transport.”</i></p> <p><i>“OK. Sets the parameters. Cycling on narrow country roads... too risky”</i></p> <p><i>“Ageing populations need smaller spaces to live in that are more linked by easy to use public transport to health and social services. I live in Botley and it takes hours for me to get to Oxford hospitals by public transport. It may be brag-worthy</i></p>

route linking Gloucester and London and intersects with three key radial routes to the North of Oxford, where it forms part of Oxford's ring road. The route suffers from serious delays between Witney and Oxford due to the volume of through traffic, freight movements and commuter traffic which uses the route. The A420 is another important principal route running through our county, linking Oxford with Swindon, which is congested in some areas at peak times.

**25)** The Oxford-Cambridge Expressway linking Oxfordshire to Milton Keynes and onto Cambridgeshire is likely to further increase demand for through travel, so a long-term solution to congestion on the A34 is important. The route of the Ox-Cam Expressway will have implications for local highway conditions as well as shaping the spatial strategy for the Oxfordshire Plan.

**26)** Within Oxford there is a very comprehensive bus network and this represents the mode of choice for 48% of people travelling to the city centre however, public transport links within the eastern arc of the city, is not so comprehensive. There is a network of frequent bus services linking the county's towns with Oxford although bus provision linking smaller rural settlements to urban areas is very limited. With limited bus priority measures into Oxford, the reliability of inter-urban bus routes are affected by traffic congestion and so often the simpler choice for residents of the towns and rural areas and therefore the preference, is to travel by car. This is partially mitigated by the very popular Park & Ride schemes on the edge of Oxford, which have been developed since the 1970s in conjunction with restrictions on access to the city centre.

**27)** The rail network is very well used and provides frequent connections between several of Oxfordshire's main towns and beyond to London, Birmingham and Bristol. Recently the new link from Oxford Parkway to Marylebone opened up an alternative mainline link with London. A significant level of freight also passes through the county on route to the South coast ports. The network is operating close to capacity, so significant work to signals and doubling of lines is required increase it. London Oxford Airport located at Kidlington offers primary regional and business aviation services.

*cutting edge care, but it's really hard to get there and not enough parking when you do arrive."*

### **Consolidated Scrutiny Response**

**Rail network in Oxfordshire have successful links to Marylebone but no plans for the train connectivity in the Oxford-Cambridge arc. Broadband speeds remain low in many parts of Oxfordshire and the panel disagreed that technologies would be advanced enough to remove the need for rush hour commute as population growth had not been considered appropriately.**

**Cycling routes need a masterplan living up to Gilligan standards for the entire county with a focus on safety and encouraging public to use public transport especially having closer links to health and social services for ageing populations.**

	<p><b>28)</b> Oxford is well known for its high levels of cycling and there are some cycle connections between other towns and areas of employment but this is far from comprehensive. Outside the city walking and cycling are not always seen as feasible or desirable modes of travel especially for commuting despite the health and environmental benefits they offer.</p>	
<p><b>Q11)</b></p>	<p><b>29)</b> Localised effects are felt from emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NOx), which cause respiratory illness. Air quality is regularly monitored at many locations across Oxfordshire. At some locations air quality is at levels where legal intervention is required by Local Authorities. There are currently 13 AQMAs in Oxfordshire, where the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide is being exceeded (four in Cherwell, one covering the whole of Oxford city, three in South Oxfordshire, three in Vale of White Horse and two in West Oxfordshire). There are also Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in Oxfordshire which are particularly vulnerable to air pollution. Rail electrification should improve air quality adjacent to rail lines and around stations.</p> <p><b>30)</b> Oxfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 aimed to ensure that the county's transport systems were fit to support population and economic growth. It is anticipated that the LTP will be reviewed and updated in line with the Oxfordshire Plan.</p> <p><b>31)</b> The Oxfordshire County Council led programme for improving broadband infrastructure has already achieved its December 2017 target of achieving 95% of premises having access to superfast broadband, and is set to out-turn 97% coverage by 2019. A barometer of how important this is to Oxfordshire is evidenced by very high adoption of fibre broadband in the county, where 50% of premises enabled by the Better Broadband programme have already taken up new fibre services. Early planning is now underway to find solutions for the remaining very rural premises, focussing on enhancing the fibre footprint to reach agricultural businesses, as well as enhancing the availability of cost effective very high speed fibre services for businesses and public sector across the county. Strategic convergence of mobile and fixed data networks is</p>	<p><i>“AQMAs need effective strategies for improving air quality. My experience of the districts' efforts is that they seem to use the excuse that solutions are complex and involve several agencies as a reason to do nothing. This plan can do better. County's previous LPTs have done little or nothing to improve the congestion on our roads. I have low confidence in any more of the same sort of thing to do any better. Lets' see if there's a new way of approaching our transport planning. Broadband projects have been ongoing, but I have to admit I have never seen an improvement in my internet connection. So, what's been missed out?”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Consolidated Scrutiny response</b></p> <p><b>Effective Air Quality Management Strategies need to be in place. In the past districts, have expressed the co-ordination between several agencies to be complex. Local public transport strategies have been ineffective and new strategies are needed.</b></p> <p><b>Broadband speeds within Oxfordshire have not seen any improvements.</b></p>

	<p>expected to develop commercially over the next five to ten years, as 5G mobile data standards are confirmed.</p>	
<p><b>Q12)</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ASPIRATIONS</b></p> <p><b>32)</b> When considering the future of Oxfordshire over such a long timeframe it is important to first make some important choices in terms of the aspirations of the plan based on an understanding of where we are today and what is proposed in current and emerging Local Plans. At this stage of the process in producing the Oxfordshire Plan we are keen to explore those aspirations to ensure that the underlying assumptions for the policies are sound and reflect the needs and desires of the communities of the people of the county.</p> <p><b>33)</b> Each of these aspirations would offer real benefits to future generations if embraced in the plan. Some of them however if taken to the extreme, or taken in isolation, would also likely result in real issues or have knock-on impacts for other elements of the plan.</p> <p><b>34)</b> These are not simple either /or choices. They interlink and in some cases, are interdependent on each other. As with all complex planning issues there are choices to be made and balances that need to be struck. It is likely that different degrees of these aspirations, in combination, will be required and difficult decisions need to be made between them.</p> <p><b>35)</b> We are keen to explore these issues so that we can decide where the appropriate balances may lie. The discussion on aspirations will lead to some objectives for the plan; below draft objectives are suggested and we welcome views on those.</p>	<p><i>“Climate change should be the number one aspiration, as per the Stakeholder launch event”</i></p> <p><i>“An honest assessment of our population growth over the period should be part of this plan. We have out of date and much too high SHMA figures driving housing numbers in the districts. I read that this OxPlan50 will use the new calculations. Then a realistic assessment of the housing figures actually needed would be a good starting point. Whether there is then more added on for aspirational economic growth seems to be disputable and certainly a matter of political will. Local people don’t want the numbers of housing that come with the expressway, especially not at the expense of beautiful wild and open spaces. So, to counteract the impact of the expressway, I think we would all benefit from some rewilding programmes across the county.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Consolidated Scrutiny response</b></p> <p><b>As per the stakeholder launch event for Oxon Plan 2050, mitigating climate change should be the number one aspiration with a focus on rewilding parts of the county.</b></p> <p><b>Population growth figures are out of date and SHMA figures seems to be too high. There is an understanding the Plan 2050 will use new figures.</b></p>
<p><b>Q13)</b></p>	<p><b>36)</b> Oxfordshire has an attractive and diverse landscape with high quality built and natural assets. The heritage of places such as Oxford city centre and Blenheim Palace and the character of historic market towns and villages are real assets to the county. The county has substantial areas of internationally and nationally valued habitats and landscapes set within a mosaic of other</p>	<p><i>“Item 39. Yes, AND we must responsibly reduce drastically our contribution to climate change. We aren't just passive victims. Out planning policies can help. I've seen these sorts of objectives included in lots of planning policy docs, but when it comes down to permissions, growth trumps protection.”</i></p>

areas of important wildlife habitat, high quality landscape, productive agricultural land, significant rivers and wetlands. Oxfordshire's farmed, rural and settled landscapes are valued for being accessible through the extensive public rights of way network.

**37)** These aspects are in large part what makes Oxfordshire so special and make it a desirable place to live and work. It is a key aspect of the tourism economy in the county, attracting visitors and supporting jobs. It is likely that the quality of the environment in Oxfordshire sets it apart from other "competitor" economies in the UK and further afield. This plays a large part in attracting investment and employees to help grow local businesses.

**38)** There is a long-term responsibility on us to ensure that these environmental and cultural assets are maintained and enhanced for the benefit of future generations of Oxfordshire residents. There is also a clear short to medium term benefit in terms of preserving our quality of life and the county's distinctive character.

**39)** The implication of this aspiration is that consideration (based on a clear understanding) of the environmental assets of the county should be fundamental to the choices made in the plan. Choices such as the locations of new developments should be led and guided by information on the value and quality of the environment. This may mean that development options that provide opportunities for improvement to and enhancement of the natural and built environment (and access for them to be enjoyed where appropriate) would be favoured. Future development will have to be designed to anticipate and mitigate climate change.

**Draft Objective 1**

To maintain and enhance the historic built and natural environment of the county through strategic investment and high quality design and to capitalise on the benefits these assets contribute to quality of life and economic success

**Draft Objective 2**

**Consolidated Scrutiny Response**

**The panel agrees with the aspiration item 39 but also, points out that these aspirations have always been a part of planning policy without any material effect in practice, as growth needs supersede such aspirations.**

	<p>To protect and enhance the County's distinctive landscape character, recreational and biodiversity value by considering the benefits these assets bring when selecting areas for growth, by optimising densities, by improving connectivity between environmental assets and securing a net gain for biodiversity.</p>	
<p><b>Q14)</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Aspiration 2 - Strong and healthy communities</b></p> <p><b>40)</b> Oxfordshire is a very diverse county with areas of deprivation in amongst areas where residents have a higher quality of life. There are many aspects that effect inequalities including skills, employment, security of housing and health. These factors link and combine to result in people facing different life opportunities. Disparities are also emerging between the generations (in particular linked to housing) and to some extent between urban and rural communities (in particular linked to digital and public transport connectivity).</p> <p><b>41)</b> Long term planning presents an exceptional opportunity to shape healthy and thriving places where the right policies, environment and partnership working are adopted to empower individuals, communities and organisations to make healthier choices and reduce the burden of long term illness or disability and create inclusive communities. Our ambition is to plan for and shape communities to actively promote health and wellbeing and make it easier for people to enjoy healthy and sustainable lives.</p> <p><b>42)</b> There is a clear benefit to ensure that all residents of Oxfordshire have a good quality of life and that they are able to access jobs, secure housing, health and social care. This will enable everyone to fully play a part and make their contribution in making the county a sustainable community with the services it needs. The Plan could provide an opportunity to ensure a long-term and co-ordinated approach to healthy place-making across Oxfordshire building on the good practice of the Healthy New Towns projects in Barton and Bicester.</p> <p><b>43)</b> The implications of this aspiration for the Oxfordshire Plan are less direct than several of the others but it would affect the way in which a range of</p>	<p><i>“Are our new communities having allotments provided there? What can local government do to ensure bus services and access are available ongoingly? (Every week we seem to hear of another bus service stopping. This is moving the wrong way. Cycle aspirations aren't showing up really. In my area of Botley we still have too many accidents where cyclists are forced to join the road network for short distances. If we have nearly full employment, but are severely short of affordable housing, the choice seems clear that we need more houses, but Oxford still wants more jobs. How to smooth that out? “</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Consolidated Scrutiny Response</b></p> <p><b>Communities need to have allotments provided. Local government needs to ensure sufficient public transport especially bus services which seem to be dwindling. Cycling routes should be more independent and not join existing road networks for safety.</b></p>



	<p>policies are framed. For example, it could mean that greater emphasis is placed on providing a range of different housing options to suit different parts of the community. It could mean that economic policies are framed to try and ensure that the benefits of economic growth are shared widely throughout the community rather than focused on particular sectors. It could mean including policies that seek to address inequality of access to local services or public transport. More broadly it could mean making sure that choices taken in the plan are based on considerations of health and wellbeing for example.</p> <p><b>44)</b> The international, national and local policies and targets around mitigating and adapting to climate change requires a response in how we design new homes and businesses, structure our economy, build our communities and move goods and people.</p> <p><b>Draft Objective 3</b></p> <p>To improve health and wellbeing by enabling independence, encouraging healthy lifestyles, facilitating social interaction and creating inclusive and safe communities</p> <p><b>Draft Objective 4</b></p> <p>To create sustainable communities by providing good access to employment, housing, open space, transport, education, services and facilities to meet identified needs and that respond to the challenges of climate change.</p>	
<p><b>Q15)</b></p>	<p><b>45)</b> Oxfordshire's economy is vibrant and dynamic, even though difficult economic times, local businesses have continued to emerge and grow and our employment rates are good. We have strengths in a range of sciences and research and development sectors which provide large numbers of high value jobs. The government has recognised these strengths and sees Oxfordshire as a key contributor to their industrial strategy for the future. The Local Industrial Strategy is a response to this and establishes a plan for building on our current strengths and taking opportunities that are presenting themselves to Oxfordshire businesses.</p>	<p><i>“Too much focus on high level jobs growth. Is that what we really need? Isn’t that exacerbating our vacancy rates, inequality and high house prices?”</i></p> <p><i>“Clearly future workers would benefit enormously from joined up schooling and training. I’m surprised to see the below average educational attainment in critical subjects of writing and maths. So, if our largest employment sector is retail, what are we doing to ensure school leavers are employable and that once employed here they will be able to afford a place to live?”</i></p>

**46)** It is clearly desirable that future generations of Oxfordshire residents will be able to access high value, quality jobs in the future. Decisions taken in the Oxfordshire Plan will have an important impact on the opportunities for economic growth and investor confidence in the county. Maximising the creation of wealth in the county will help address infrastructure challenges and tackle inequalities. The Oxfordshire Plan needs to recognise the strengths and ambitions of the government and of local businesses and will have a role in helping to achieve some of those. Oxfordshire has an ambition to develop a number of Living Labs to develop and test technological and sustainability solutions in real-life situations to support our role as a world leader in these research areas.

**47)** The implication of this aspiration is that the Oxfordshire Plan makes provision for growth in order to help support the local economy and maintain Oxfordshire's role in the national economy. Even without the Oxfordshire Plan, additional economic capacity will need to be provided in the period to 2050 as national policy states that plans need to "set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies".

**48)** The vitality of town centres have been negatively affected by the development in the 1990s-2000s of out-of-town shopping centres with free parking, the diverse range goods available at supermarkets and online retailing. Some of our market towns have seen new town centre shopping developments come forward in the last 10 years and the Oxfordshire Plan should build on this to continue to bring activity and spend back to town centres to support local businesses and foster vibrant communities.

**49)** As with housing numbers, it is for Oxfordshire to determine (in the light of the evidence available) the appropriate level of economic growth over the plan period.

**Draft Objective 5**

**Consolidated Scrutiny response**

**The focus seems to be on high level jobs which would exacerbate our vacancy rates, inequality and high housing prices.**

**A major part of the economy seems to be dependent on retail jobs. Educational levels seem to be below par on maths and literature which needs improved.**

	<p>To establish the right conditions to sustain and strengthen the role of Oxfordshire in the UK economy by building on our key strengths and assets</p> <p><b>Draft Objective 6</b></p> <p>To create a prosperous, successful and enterprising economy with benefits felt by all.</p>	
<p><b>Q16)</b></p>	<p><b>Aspiration 4 - Improve housing availability and affordability</b></p> <p><b>50)</b> Oxfordshire has very real issues of housing availability and affordability with local people who grew up in the county finding it increasingly difficult to establish themselves in their local area. Key service providers (such as the NHS and schools) and a wide range of employers’ report difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff due to living costs, and affordability issues mean that for some parts the community both home ownership and renting has become out of reach.</p> <p><b>51)</b> A clear aspiration for the Oxfordshire Plan is to try and address these issues, to try and ensure that a wide range of housing options are available and truly affordable to those who want to live and work here; whether that be due to local family ties, because they are employed in key roles in the county or because they recognise what a special place Oxfordshire is.</p> <p><b>52)</b> The implication of this aspiration is that the Plan makes provision for the delivery of additional housing beyond the 100,000 provided in current and emerging Local Plans. Even without the Oxfordshire Plan, additional housing will need to be provided in the period up to 2050 and national policy is that plans need to make provision for the housing needs of their area.</p> <p><b>Draft Objective 7</b></p> <p>To meet the county's identified housing needs, particularly affordable housing and support our selected economic aspirations</p>	<p><i>“When we say ‘affordable’ we need to mean something other than what we mean today (80% of market price). If the outlying districts are required to supply housing for the Oxford employment market, then, since Oxford is absolutely the most unaffordable city, we need alternative housing schemes that work to provide a safe and desirable community in which to live that is also conveniently linked to Oxford's employment centres. All I see is market developers working to maximise their profit and build executive homes selling for a million pounds. That won't solve our problems, we need innovative schemes to bring forward, that probably DO NOT involve market developers. They aren't the solution to our housing affordability problem. For instance, is there anywhere a person can buy or rent a home for an amount that's based on their ability to pay?”</i></p> <p><b>Consolidated Scrutiny response</b></p> <p><b>At the moment, affordable housing these days is 80% of market housing price, this needs to be lower. If districts on the outskirts of Oxford are to supply the housing demand alternative housing schemes need to be developed to provide safe and desirable communities with transport links to employment areas in Oxford.</b></p>

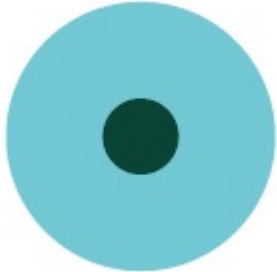
	<p><b>Draft Objective 8</b></p> <p>To ensure that a range of housing options are available that will cater for a variety of needs and are built for adaptability, energy efficiency and to a high quality.</p>	<p><b>Innovative housing schemes need to be developed with a focus on discouraging developers to build houses at market prices.</b></p>
<p><b>Q17)</b></p>	<p><b>Aspiration 5 - Improve connectivity and movement</b></p> <p><b>53)</b> Much of Oxfordshire benefits from good connections to other parts of the county, into neighbouring areas and to important centres for employment. Other parts of the county are much less well connected both physically and virtually (i.e. broadband facilities). There are also pressures on the current networks that will need to be considered when planning for the next round of growth. Investment in new networks and connections is often very expensive and much of that is funded by the development that it unlocks; in essence this means that providing significant new pieces of infrastructure is only usually realistic where new development is delivered.</p> <p><b>54)</b> As the Oxfordshire Plan, will look towards 2050, it is important that we don't simply assess proposals against an understanding of current lifestyles, technologies or practice. Whilst we will need to make sure that choices are evidenced and deliverable, we will need to provide some flexibility for adaptations to be made as technological advances occur and habits change. For example, in the earlier part of the plan it is reasonable to assume that a piece of highway infrastructure will serve bus and private car travel; in the later part of the plan it is likely that technologies will have changed offering different mass and personal travel choices and that lifestyles will also have adapted making a rush-hour commute, for example, a thing of the past. This will mean the same piece of highways infrastructure will need to adapt its function and opportunities are likely to arise out of that. Digital infrastructure is already vital to the way businesses and homes operate and this is likely to intensify in the future. It is possible that digital infrastructure will become as or more important than highways infrastructure in the future.</p> <p><b>55)</b> The implication of this aspiration is that choices such as the location of new development should be informed by the ability for them to connect into</p>	<p><i>“Yes. I'm waiting to see where this plan looks at renewable energy sources.”</i></p> <p><b>Consolidated Scrutiny Response</b></p> <p><b>The panel disagreed that technologies would be advanced enough to remove the need for rush hour commute as population growth had not been considered appropriately.</b></p>

	<p>existing networks or be planned at a scale that would support new effective connections or networks. For example, this might mean that development that can either connect into existing transport networks, or which is of a scale that can support its own new public transport connections should be favoured over those which are poorly located or of a scale that wouldn't support the required investment. The plan will need to factor in changing technologies and lifestyles and where possible make provision for more digital connectivity.</p> <p><b>Draft Objective 9</b></p> <p>To reduce the need to travel and provide better travel choices, ensuring that walking and cycling are convenient and attractive, and that public transport is preferred by residents to private car ownership and use.</p> <p><b>Draft Objective 10</b></p> <p>To promote development in the most sustainable locations and co-locating homes and jobs; then connecting those less sustainable locations through improved public transport and digital networks</p>	
<p><b>Q18)</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>POTENTIAL SPATIAL SCENARIOS</b></p> <p><b>56)</b> The Oxfordshire Plan will identify broad locations for housing and economic growth but will not allocate sites except at the request of the relevant local planning authority. This will follow through separate plans produced at the local level. It will be a challenge to settle on the best locations for growth. Decisions around where housing will be located for example will be difficult and are likely to be emotive; specific local concerns will need to be considered alongside the strategic need for homes and employment opportunities.</p> <p><b>57)</b> The following section presents a range of options that may be available in Oxfordshire for accommodating new development. The broad scenarios that follow are, at this stage, deliberately conceptual, and are presented here to offer an opportunity to explore their merits and drawbacks. At later stages of</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“The fact that existing roads are at capacity is the elephant in the room. This MUST be addressed.”</i></p>


Plan production, these will be explored in more depth, in particular, how they might apply within Oxfordshire's geography and context.

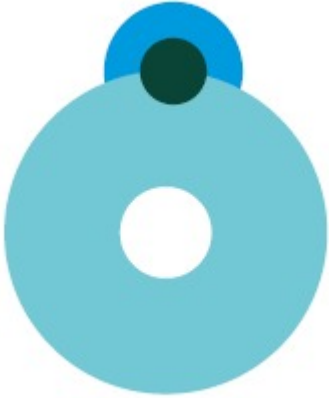
**58)** The spatial form of development that emerges in the Plan is likely to follow a combination of the broad scenarios outlined here. These overarching scenarios are not necessarily mutually exclusive and the preferred scenario is likely to involve a combination of these options: Intensification of city, town and district centres Commonly encouraged in Local Plans in line with the NPPF but unlikely to be enough to meet needs Focus on housing and economy may conflict with other important functions of these centres Townscape character may be affected There are usually good existing transport links, although they may already be at capacity.

Intensification of city, town and district centres



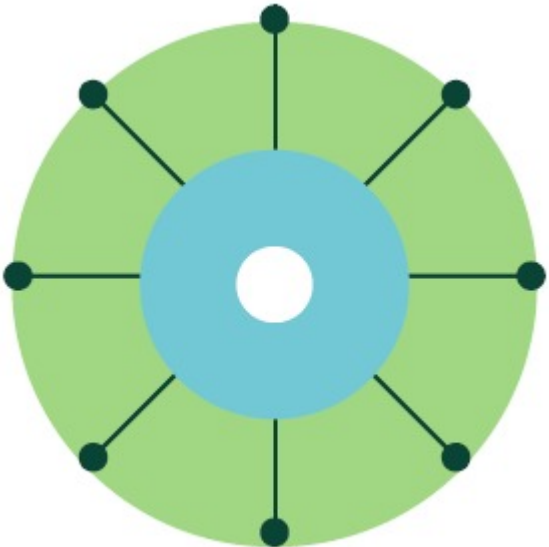
Commonly encouraged in Local Plans in line with the NPPF but unlikely to be enough to meet needs Focus on housing and economy may conflict with other important functions of these centres Townscape character may be affected There are usually good

			<p>existing transport links, although they may already be at capacity</p>	
	<p>Intensification of development within existing suburbs</p>		<p>Land assembly is challenging with multiple landowners Highly disruptive for existing residents Focuses development close to, and supports, existing services and connections</p>	

	<p>Intensification around the edges of larger settlements and strategic extensions</p>		<p>Can link into existing public transport networks Focuses development close to, and supports, existing services and connections These locations may be in the Green Belt and development may affect the purposes of the Green Belt</p>	
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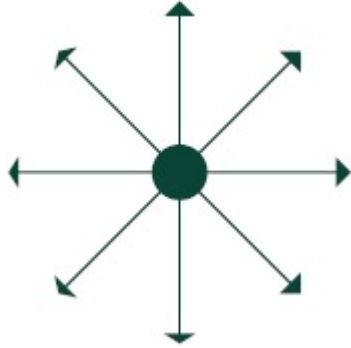


Spoke and hub  
  
(Continue to focus on Oxford and key corridors in to Oxford)

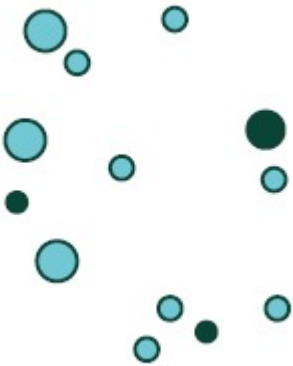


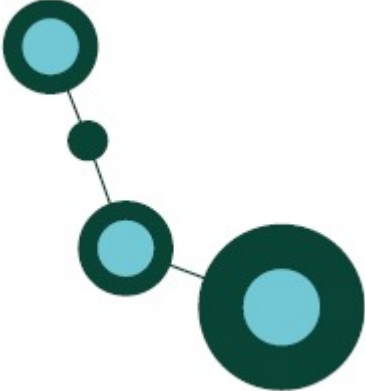
Concentrate s transport along routes that are already at high capacity  
May offer opportunitie s for funding to enhance strategic corridors  
This would not help 'spread the load' of new development, but would mean improving existing infrastructure, which might be efficient, but much will depend on the potential of existing infrastructure to be improved to take new development

New settlement/s

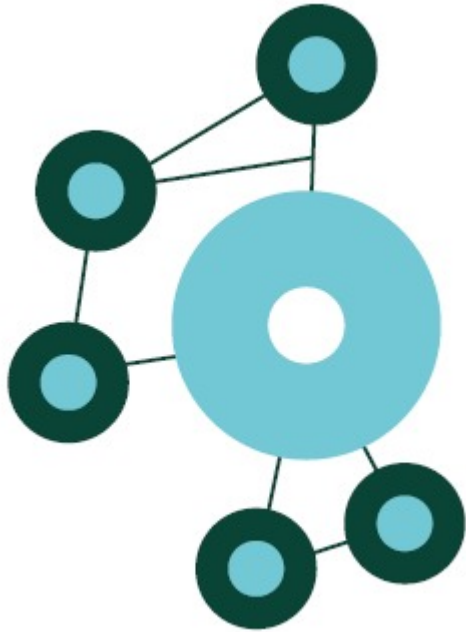


Depending on location, it may or may not be close to existing high quality transport corridors. Would need to be of a sufficient scale to support provision of sufficient new infrastructure. May have a negative environmental impacts and but could be designed to deliver environmental gains. Designing a settlement from scratch provides opportunities for urban design principles to be followed throughout, such as

		<p>Garden Town principles A new settlement would take a long time to be delivered</p>	
<p>Dispersal  (This would involve spreading new development evenly across the county, including in smaller settlements)</p>		<p>Small sites are unlikely to generate infrastructure needs alone, so are unlikely to significantly contribute to improvements to infrastructure  The character of a smaller settlements might be adversely affected by new development  Expanding some smaller settlements can support local shops,</p>	

			<p>pubs and bus services Smaller sites may improve deliverability rates due to competing developers Dispersal is unlikely to meet the employment land needs of the county - larger businesses often need large sites and there are advantages to clustering</p>	
	<p>'String' settlement / settlement cluster  (Development focused on a number of linked settlements. It could involve new and/or existing/expanded settlements)</p>	 <p>The diagram illustrates a 'String' settlement cluster. It consists of four circular nodes connected by thin lines. The nodes vary in size: the top-left node is medium-sized, the middle node is the smallest, the bottom-left node is medium-sized, and the bottom-right node is the largest. The nodes are arranged in a roughly diagonal line from top-left to bottom-right.</p>	<p>May or may not be close to existing high quality transport corridors Relies on there being suitable broad locations available for this type of development</p>	

			<p>This may involve promoting development at some existing, currently small, settlements, which may significantly change their character</p> <p>A number of smaller settlements could collectively, be of sufficient scale to be served by shared infrastructure</p>	
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	<p>'Wheel' settlement cluster</p> <p>(Focus on Oxford and the existing larger towns and the key corridors in to Oxford and between the towns)</p>		<p>This could be a variation on the spoke and hub approach but with the added benefits of stronger links between the towns</p> <p>Could take some of the pressure off the corridors into Oxford</p>	
<p><b>Q19)</b></p>	<p><b>59)</b> This Plan aims to make the process understandable and transparent to all potential interested parties. It will explore all reasonable options for locating new development, exploring to what degree the options meet the objectives of the Oxfordshire Plan so that whatever decisions are taken, they are clearly justified. How locations perform in sustainability terms and potential capacities will be assessed at the next stage of the plan-making process. The views of communities and stakeholders arising from this consultation will also be taken into consideration when refining options.</p>	<p><i>“Off the top of my head and in a first glance, I have no preference for one of these scenarios over any other. I suppose it's dependent on where they're located. However, really large developments (say 100+ houses) have not supplied any new road capacity and have gridlocked roads that used to be barely coping. Is there a team keeping track of current road and on street parking capacity?”</i></p>		
<p><b>Q20)</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>INFRASTRUCTURE CONSIDERATIONS</b></p> <p><b>60)</b> It is vital that when planning for a sustainable future, full account is taken of the infrastructure needs associated with new development and infrastructure required to improve existing networks to accommodate growth.</p> <p><b>61)</b> The successful delivery of the housing and economic growth within the Oxfordshire Plan will require a strategic approach with infrastructure delivery, particularly transport and environmental planning. Many towns and roads in Oxfordshire struggle during peak times with average annual traffic flows</p>	<p><i>“New housing estates bring new problems that should have been foreseen and mitigated. Near me, 130 new home with one entrance to the estate has brought unimaginable parking problems on the main roads leading to the entrance to this estate. That, coupled with commuters who use residential streets in my area as a free park and ride or park and bike, make it worse for everyone. So, I question the adequacy of our current method for assessing transport impacts of new housing</i></p>		

	<p>increasing year on year. The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OXIS) was prepared on behalf of the Oxfordshire Growth Board to provide a view of emerging development and infrastructure requirements to support growth from 2016 to 2031 and beyond. This work will be reviewed alongside the production of the Plan.</p> <p><b>62)</b> Improving connectivity, digital access, public transport networks, high quality walking and cycling access to transport hubs and reducing congestion are critical to delivering a highly functioning transport network in Oxfordshire which will in turn support economic growth by improving the movement of people and commercial goods. We must also acknowledge the importance of wider community infrastructure including schools, health and leisure facilities and basic utilities including water, sewerage and energy.</p> <p><b>Key regional projects</b></p> <p><b>63)</b> During the period of the plan there are several large-scale infrastructure projects that are likely to come forward including the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway, East-West rail and the projects emerging from Thames Water's strategy for improving water supply, particularly the South East Strategic Reservoir Option for Oxfordshire.</p> <p><b>64)</b> Decisions on each of these will have an impact upon how and in what way Oxfordshire should and is able to grow. The big challenge for the Oxfordshire Plan is the different timescales of these projects and how the Plan should respond to them or how the Plan can influence them. We are working with decision makers to identify the ways in which projects can relate and interlink with the Oxfordshire Plan.</p>	<p><i>developments. Let's consult on this and assess how well we perform today. Then change to improve for tomorrow."</i></p> <p><b>Consolidated Scrutiny response</b></p> <p><b>Parking seems to be a major issue with newer developments. Inadequate spaces coupled with commuters using spaces for park and ride purposes add to the problem.</b></p>
<p><b>Q21)</b></p>	<p><b>Transport connectivity</b></p> <p><b>65)</b> Planned transport infrastructure in Oxfordshire (for the earlier part of the Oxfordshire Plan) is set out in the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan and reflected in the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy. This facilitates movements of different modes of transport around the county's road and rail network and is aimed at increasing the capacity of the network, improving cycle networks</p>	<p><i>"If officers are confident a good plan will unlock infrastructure funding, then go for it. I myself am doubtful. I have seen no improvements in last many years. For example, how did the City plan help? Roads are more congested than ever with no remedy in sight. I believe the expressway will just being more</i></p>

and mitigating the impact of vehicular traffic on the local environment. These planned interventions will contribute to addressing existing issues of congestion and poor air quality and mitigate the impact of 100,000 new homes already planned for in existing and emerging Local Plans.

**66)** However, there is still a funding gap and deliverability issues for many strategic projects and so their delivery is not guaranteed. A bold, forward thinking Oxfordshire Plan that sets a clear vision for growth is more likely to release opportunities for Government funding and will help direct local authority funding and developer funding (Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106) income to the projects that are priorities for supporting growth. The Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal also states that the Oxfordshire authorities will explore the potential for a countywide Strategic Infrastructure Tariff, to increase the flexibility of the developer contribution system, and encourage cross boundary planning to support the delivery of strategic infrastructure.

**67)** The Plan should recognise that technology will differ dramatically later in the plan period than it does now and this is likely to have a significant bearing on lifestyle choices and opportunities to travel in different ways. Electric vehicle use is already expanding and is likely to be common place by the 2030's. Innovation is already taking place in the development of autonomous vehicles which are likely to become a feature on the highway network in the coming years.

**68)** However, the Plan and the decisions on supporting infrastructure also needs to get the basics right as well as planning for future technologies. Public transport (in whatever form might be available in the future) must be able to function efficiently and reliably with priority at junctions and on shared road spaces and utilising smart technology. The design of developments should encourage the use of public transport and provide connections to encourage people to walk and cycle to jobs, services and transport hubs and improve connectivity to the county's accessible greenspaces.

**Digital connectivity**

*cars and more congestion and that a different solution is necessary.”*

**Consolidated Scrutiny Response**

**Concrete plans need to be developed aimed at Bus and Rail connectivity. Broadband speeds show no improvement and needs to be addressed.**



	<p><b>69)</b> Digital connectivity of people, things and places through broadband and mobile telecommunications has increased and improved dramatically in recent years. The ability for people to access services and perform tasks from anywhere at any time via connected devices has meant a dramatic change in human behaviour. Further growth in these technologies will require improved capacity.</p> <p><b>70)</b> With planned rollout of fibre networks to rural areas around Oxfordshire, communities will be better connected than ever before. By 2050, digital connectivity improvements in tandem with other technological advances are likely to have transformational effects on lifestyles, employment, access to services and the way in which people interact with one another.</p> <p><b>71)</b> The Oxfordshire Plan should be mindful of such transformational technology as it is likely to affect the way in which people physically move around the county, with potential implications for land use patterns and the design of homes and offices in both urban and rural areas. To support connected and included communities the Oxfordshire Plan should push for consistently being at the cutting edge of world-leading digital connectivity.</p>	
<p><b>Q22)</b></p>	<p><b>Energy</b></p> <p><b>72)</b> With technological advancements in transport and digital connectivity, more houses, businesses and an increasing population, the supply and demand of energy across the county is a key issue to be addressed. In addition to this, tighter environmental regulations mean that the energy generated must be greener to reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p><b>73)</b> The existing grid for distributing energy around the county is constrained and the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy is considering ways in which the network can be strengthened. In the future energy networks, will be based around decentralised and community energy provision. The Oxfordshire Plan must therefore facilitate a shift towards lower energy demand and low carbon forms of energy development.</p>	<p><i>“Energy: we need to assess how we can use renewable energy to accommodate housing and population growth and still reduce carbon emissions to zero. I'd like to see this plan commit to that. Social infrastructure is straining after years of austerity. We don't have enough school funding, NHS funding, police funding, social care funding. I'm sure there's more. It feels unlikely that the OxPlan50 will be able to realistically plan for what we need, when central government isn't inclined to fund it at all. In fact, this is most discouraging. They gave us very little money to be getting on with, and not any assurance that there will be more forthcoming.”</i></p> <p><b>Consolidated Scrutiny Response</b></p>

**74)** Much of the development in Oxfordshire to 2050 will be comprised of residential development so opportunities must be sought to improve the energy efficiency of homes and reduce energy demands of households. It will be important for new developments to maximise energy efficiency whilst integrating renewable and smart energy technologies in order to minimise energy demand.

**Social infrastructure**

**75)** Planning for school places and health services are critical elements of delivering successful places. Population growth if not planned carefully, can add pressure on services for new and existing residents. There is a strong level of provision of school places (and special needs school places) throughout Oxfordshire with existing schools being extended and new schools being planned to support growth. Cherwell in particular has the largest available capacity of the five local authorities. The highest concentrations of primary schools are within Oxford, and the main towns including Didcot, Banbury and Bicester. In certain settlements (e.g. Witney, Bicester, and Oxford City) there are clusters of schools which either have a current deficit of provision, or have fewer than 10 places available and where new schools are being planned.

**76)** There are some areas of the County which geographically show a lack of secondary education providers (e.g. North West Oxfordshire), however given wider catchments for secondary schools, and that secondary age pupils can be expected to travel further to access schools; there is good access to secondary education provision across the County. Notably, there is very little evidence of deficiency in provision, with only one area (Oxford City) which has a school with a deficit in secondary places, and three others (one in South Oxfordshire and two in Cherwell) which have less than ten places available.

**77)** The Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group oversees GP and other primary and acute healthcare, they anticipate delivering new primary care services 'at scale' rather than through a number of small practice sites. This offers more opportunities to deliver more services, although it should be noted that there will be strategic sites where a smaller GP practice will be

**Clean energy strategy needs to focus on windfarms throughout the county. The local energy strategy needs to focus on energy efficiency to accommodate housing and the rising population. The Oxon Plan 2050 needs to commit heavily to renewable sources of energy reducing our carbon footprint which it lacks.**

essential. It will also be necessary for the traditional GP to change to adapt to the demands of modern healthcare.

**78)** One of the biggest impacts on social care services is likely to be from an ageing population. Oxfordshire's Joint Health & Wellbeing Board have an aspiration to shift the focus of care from nursing homes to the assisted living (extra care) approach. There are already 13 schemes opened or under construction between 2011 and 2016 delivering an additional 656 extra care flats and a further 18 schemes proposed between 2016 and 2020 at a feasibility stage with the potential to deliver a further 1,238 extra care flats. This Board have an aspiration to deliver a considerable number of additional extra care housing places to meet the needs of Oxfordshire residents and to help to shift the focus of care from nursing homes to the assisted living approach.