

Supplementary Agenda



Listening Learning Leading

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Date: 1 March 2021

Website: www.southoxon.gov.uk

A MEETING OF THE

Scrutiny Committee

**WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY 8 MARCH 2021 AT 6.00 PM
THIS WILL BE A VIRTUAL, ONLINE MEETING.**

To watch this virtual meeting, follow this link to the council's YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTj2pCic8vzucpzlaSWE3UQ>

Members of the Committee:

Ian White (Chairman)

Mocky Khan (Vice-Chair)
Anna Badcock
Sam Casey-Rerhaye

Stefan Gawrysiak
Alexandrine Kantor
George Levy

Sue Roberts
David Turner

Substitutes

*Ken Arlett
David Bretherton
Peter Dragonetti
Elizabeth Gillespie
Sarah Gray*

*Kate Gregory
Victoria Haval
Lorraine Hillier
Kellie Hinton
Axel Macdonald*

*Jo Robb
Ian Snowdon
Alan Thompson
Celia Wilson*

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**REPORTS AND ISSUES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

6 A joint local plan (Pages 3 - 32)

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the attached report from the head of planning on a Joint Local Plan. Cabinet will consider this report on 18 March. Scrutiny committee are to decide whether it wishes to make any recommendations to Cabinet.

MARGARET REED

Head of Legal and Democratic

Cabinet Report



Listening Learning Leading

Report of Head of Planning

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Wards affected: ALL

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To: CABINET

Date: 18 March 2021

A Joint Local Plan

Recommendations

To recommend Council to:

(a) agree, subject to the agreement of Vale of White Horse District Council, the preparation and production of a Joint Local Plan with Vale of White Horse District Council.

(b) approve the Joint Local Development Scheme (March 2021) attached at Appendix 1; and delegate any updates to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning.

(c) agree the principle of governance to prepare and produce a Joint Local Plan under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and to delegate the detailed arrangements to the Head of Legal and Democratic, in consultation with the Head of Planning and the Cabinet Members for Planning and Legal and Democratic.

If (a) above is not supported, to recommend Council to:

agree the preparation and production of a South Oxfordshire Local Plan and to delegate the publication of a Local Development Scheme and any updates to it, to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning.

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the case for preparing a Joint Local Plan, instead of separate local plans for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils. During plan-preparation the current adopted Local Plans would continue to be in force as the development plan against which planning decisions are made, but the next plan would be prepared as a joint plan over the next 3 to 4 years. Upon adoption, the new Joint Local Plan would replace the separately adopted Local Plans for South and Vale.
2. The Appendix to this report provides a Joint Local Development Scheme (LDS), which contains a project plan for the proposed Joint Local Plan. The recommendations to Council seek a delegation to the relevant head of service in consultation with the Cabinet Members regarding the scoping and agreement of the detailed governance arrangements and updates to the LDS.

Corporate Objectives

3. The preparation of a new Joint Local Plan will help support all of the new Corporate Plan 2020-2024 themes. These are as follows:

South Oxfordshire Corporate Plan 2020-2024, adopted October 2020

- Protect and restore our natural world
- Openness and accountability
- Action on the climate emergency
- Improved economic and community well-being
- Homes and infrastructure that meet local needs
- Investment that rebuilds our financial viability

Vale of White Horse Corporate Plan 2020-2024, adopted October 2020

- Providing the homes people need
- Tackling the climate emergency
- Building healthy communities
- Building stable finances
- Working in partnership
- Working in an open and inclusive way

Background

4. Both councils have adopted local plans in place: Vale Local Plan 2031 Part 1 adopted December 2016, Vale Local Plan 2031 Part 2 adopted October 2019 and South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 adopted December 2020. However, planning policy does not stand still, and it takes several years to prepare, consult and go through an examination on a new plan, so work needs to start on the plan or plans that will replace the adopted plans. This is to ensure we have an up to date local plan, in line with government requirements.
5. There is a rare, and perhaps unique, opportunity to bring the plans together. The timing currently for the new plans align, and there is significant overlap and consensus in each council's new Corporate Plan (see paragraph 3 above).

6. Vale has an existing LDS adopted in February 2020 which sets out a timetable for preparing a new local plan for Vale, named the Vale Local Plan 2041. In 2020 work did not keep to timetable, because the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on staff resources, and in practical terms restricted the scope for consultations and events. During the summer of 2020 the Vale policy officers assisted with the South Oxfordshire Local Plan examination. In order for new policies and approaches to be developed, officers need to be guided by the Corporate Plan, which was adopted in October 2020. Although preliminary work has started on the evidence base for the new Vale local plan, such as the Vale Call for Sites (issued in April 2020), this can be transferred directly into the Joint Local Plan evidence base; therefore no work will be wasted.
7. For South, the existing LDS was adopted in March 2020 containing the timetable for the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035. This local plan was adopted in December 2020 and so this project has been completed. A decision on a new plan is needed, with a new LDS to project plan. On 18 July 2019 South's Council resolved to: "5. agree that as soon as practicable, alongside satisfactory progress being made on resolving issues in the emerging Local Plan, work on a subsequent Local Plan shall commence, strengthening climate change considerations." South also agreed its new Corporate Plan in October 2020.
8. There are several **advantages** to preparing a Joint Local Plan, including:
 - a) South and Vale both now have recently adopted local plans and for the first time, timetables align making a joint plan a possibility.
 - b) South and Vale have new Corporate Plans with a good degree of overlap and shared ambition. There is common ground, with numerous themes and issues in the Corporate Plans which are shared and can be addressed through common planning policy approaches, supported by a shared evidence base where necessary. Such an approach links to other policy areas where a joint approach is already in place, e.g. Joint Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, economic development and leisure strategies.
 - c) Planning challenges are similar across southern Oxfordshire, including climate change and affordable housing.
 - d) Opportunity to have one shared planning policy approach for South and Vale.
 - e) Developing one set of consistent policies would be more efficient for processing planning applications, appeals and enforcement work including the planning Specialists Team, but also for Land Charges and those dealing with public enquiries, including councillors.
 - f) Simpler for service users e.g. common community groups and local agents working across both councils.
 - g) Supports the development of a Joint Design Guide and Joint Design Codes.
 - h) Opportunity to plan Didcot and Science Vale comprehensively in one plan instead of two plans. Opportunity to resolve other strategic issues e.g. infrastructure deficiencies.
 - i) Opportunity to deal with common matters arising from the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, such as growth requirements directed to shared cross-boundary locations.

- j) Significant potential cost savings (see separate section below at paragraphs 27-29).
 - k) Opportunities for maximising commitment to effective strategic planning, supporting more certainty for communities and those investing in economic development.
 - l) Stronger position for strategic influencing the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 the Arc spatial framework and masterplanning – with the whole of southern Oxfordshire taking one approach.
 - m) Better able to engage with, and influence, developers at scale.
9. There are also a number of **disadvantages** to preparing a Joint Local Plan, including:
- a) A Joint Plan covers a larger area and could possibly be seen as less local (although we would continue to have a dedicated officer team supporting neighbourhood planning to provide fine-grained community-led planning).
 - b) Perception of being less democratic, with South or Vale Councillors effectively involved in influencing decisions on the other Council; political sovereignty.
 - c) Possible lack of appetite following recent position with the South local plan adoption process and the subsequent submitted case for judicial review.
 - d) The Councils' democratic processes are separate, but this can be resolved by establishing appropriate joint governance arrangements that are sustainable over the plan period (3 to 4 years) and based on common objectives.

Why the Council needs to revise/ undertake a new local plan

10. Vale's Local Plan Part 1 was adopted in 2016 and Vale Local Plan Part 2 in 2019, South Oxfordshire's Local Plan was adopted in December 2020. Planning regulations require Councils to review local plans at least once every 5 years from their adoption date to ensure that policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community. The National Planning Policy Framework states that policies in local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every 5 years. Having an up-to-date plan can assist the councils in defending planning appeals and housing land supply.
11. Local Plans normally take at least 3 - 5 years to prepare, examine and adopt, with evidence gathering, statutory consultation stages and examination. To meet the 5-year timetable we should be preparing new or revised local plans for both councils now. It is usual for councils to follow this practice. Both councils took 3 to 6 years to undertake their current adopted plans (Vale's being in two parts at around 3.5 years each part so a total of 7 years, South's in one document taking 6 years).
12. The existing adopted Local Plans for South and Vale were based on the previous Corporate Plans. The context for the plans is changing, with the new Corporate Plans and the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, which is being prepared and is scheduled for adoption in just over 2 years (June 2023) and updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019).

How a Joint Local Plan could work

- 13. This will be long term planning for the 2030s-40s. Growth is already planned for Vale until 2031 and for South until 2035. Furthermore, both existing plans have strategic sites which will deliver beyond their current plan periods (1,883 homes for Vale beyond 2031 and 2,815 homes for South beyond 2035).
- 14. The evidence base for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will be used for any new local plans and its preparation is already in progress. This will need to be supplemented by some additional local plan evidence base studies that give more local detail or cover non-strategic policy areas not being dealt with by Oxfordshire Plan.
- 15. A Joint Local Plan would be flexible to accommodate differing needs across both districts, and potentially adaptable to accommodate the Government’s planning reforms (whenever these are implemented).
- 16. A Joint Local Plan could incorporate district-specific elements as required. For example, it could have specific policies for separate spatial areas including South or Vale districts, Western Vale, Eastern Vale, the AONBs, etc. Policies could apply to both districts, or certain policies could apply to just one district, for example to achieve local distinctiveness or address a particular issue specific to one area or one district. The Joint Local Plan could have separate housing requirements for South and Vale, or for sub areas, which could be monitored against separately, in a (potentially joint) annual Authority Monitoring Report.
- 17. A Joint Local Plan would still provide a strong role for neighbourhood plans e.g. encouraging neighbourhood plans to contain land allocations, which is currently more common in South than Vale.

Timetable

- 18. The timetable for a Joint Local Plan is set out in the proposed Joint Local Development Scheme at Appendix 1. This Local Development Scheme contains the programme for planning policy work, including the Joint Local Plan, Community Infrastructure Levy updates, Statement of Community Involvement update, and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).
- 19. The timetable for the next local plan (whether separate or joint) must run in parallel with, but slightly behind, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 as that will contain the strategic decisions on scale and broad locations for development.
- 20. In summary the timetable for the production of a joint plan is proposed as follows:

Oxfordshire Plan 2050 timetable		Joint Local Plan timetable	
Reg 18 (part 2)	June/Jul 2021	Scoping (inc evidence base commissioning)	Spring- Autumn 2021
Reg 19	Feb/Mar 2022	Reg 18	Summer 2022
Submission	Sep 2022		
Inspector’s report	Feb 2023	Reg 19	Summer 2023

Adoption	June 2023	Submission	Winter 2023/24
		Adoption	Autumn 2024

- Governance influences resourcing
- Resource influences timetabling
- As does milestone being reached for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
- External factors – e.g. planning reforms may impact on timetable

Options

21. Options include preparing a Joint Local Plan for South and Vale, preparing two separate Local Plans, one for each council, or produce no plan at this stage.
22. A Joint Local Plan has advantages and disadvantages set out in paras 8-9 above. These are both planning advantages (e.g. more comprehensive planning for Didcot, simplicity for our service users) and also practical advantages (like cost savings and more efficient use of officer time).
23. Rejecting the joint plan recommendation and continuing with the status quo of preparing two separate Local Plans produces similar results (a new up-to-date plan) and reduces some risks of joint working but misses out on the cost savings and efficiencies and the opportunity for planning to be more joined up. Another option would be closer collaborative working on two local plans. For example commissioning joint evidence base studies (already doing this wherever possible) or a joint examination of two separate local plans.
24. If councillors choose not to do a Joint Local Plan, then officers would recommend we prepare a new South Oxfordshire Local Plan, as explained above. Hence an alternative recommendation is suggested.
25. 'No plan' is an option but it is not recommended because it risks first Vale, and then later South, falling into a situation of having no up-to-date local plan and being exposed to the presumption in favour of sustainable development in line with the NPPF and penalties imposed by Government. There is theoretically an option to leave the review of our Local Plans entirely to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 process, but the Oxfordshire Plan would then need to include all strategic policies and allocations, including allocations where neighbourhood plans do not allocate sufficiently. This approach is beginning to be used in some parts of the UK. However, covering both strategic and non-strategic matters is not the currently agreed scope of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, and if it was, there would be significant delays because of the scale of work involved, impacting on the delivery of the Oxfordshire Plan and its funding, which all parties would have to agree.
26. With the Joint Local Plan option there are two governance options, for an informal arrangement under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, or a formal committee including the County Council under section 29 of the same Act. These are explored further in the paragraphs below (paras. 30 – 33).

Financial Implications

27. A new Joint Local Plan offers significant savings over preparing two separate local plans.

28. The savings from working together would include some savings on the evidence base (with shared rather than separate consultancy commissions, in particular halving the costs of Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment), and one set of public consultations not two. More significant savings would arise from the examination stage, with one Inspector, one programme officer, and one QC. The cost for the examination of a joint local plan would be similar to a single local plan, but costs would be split 50:50 between the councils.
29. Recent experience has shown it has cost approximately £1 million per local plan per year of plan preparation to deliver a plan found sound at examination. Officers anticipate the costs could be reduced with a joint plan by approximately one third in total, excluding staff costs.

Legal Implications

30. There are two principal governance options for the preparation and adoption of a Joint Local Plan, which are set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sections 28 and 29. More information is available at www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making.
31. Section 28 allows two or more local planning authorities to prepare joint local development documents (LDDs – which includes local plans). Although the relevant county council in two-tier areas can be part of the plan-preparation process (if invited by the Local Planning Authorities (LPA)), they cannot be part of the formal decision-making as this remains the responsibility of the individual LPAs. Under Section 28, the final, formal decisions at key local plan stages (consultations, publication, submission, adoption) are made either separately by each council or via a voluntary joint committee.
32. Section 29 was introduced in the 2004 Act to enable County Councils to continue to have a strategic planning role working with Districts. Section 29 of the Act allows for the decision-making on joint local development documents to be conferred on a joint committee through an order of the Secretary of State. In two-tier areas like Oxfordshire, county councils are a formal partner in the joint committee and therefore would have equal membership on a committee formed under Section 29.
33. Given the context of Development Plan making across Oxfordshire, with a strategic Plan underway already (the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan), and a shared management and policy team already in place for South and Vale, officers recommend that in principle a Joint Local Plan is prepared in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This would involve either formal decisions at key local plan stages (consultations, publication, submission, adoption) being made separately by each council or via a voluntary joint committee. Delegated authority is sought for the Head of Legal and Democratic, in consultation with the Head of Planning and Cabinet Members for Planning and Legal and Democratic, to establish the appropriate detailed governance arrangements.

Risks

34. All local plans, whether single or joint, have risks involved in their preparation. They take several years to prepare, and the context is ever changing. For example, there can be changes to external factors such as Government policy, or changes to the local plan system itself through planning reforms, or local government reorganisation.

Changes to the council's priorities or administration can also bring need for revisions, which can be hard to deliver if a plan is at the post-submission stage. There can be risks if staff resources or budgets fall short. Many of these risks are the same whether a plan is separate or joint. We manage these risks by identifying them in a risk register, and preparing contingencies and mitigations to adapt to them if they materialise.

35. For a joint South and Vale local plan, some risks are set out in the disadvantages section at paragraph 9 above. The current application for a judicial review of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan could challenge priorities and resources. Local authority elections in May 2023 could also provide further challenges and thus a policy cross-party member steering group can reduce the risks. The drive to make fast progress on a new plan is a stronger imperative for Vale than South, due to the time that has passed since adoption. In summary, the key additional risk, over and above the risks from preparing separate local plans, is delivering a joint plan which both councils can agree on during plan preparation stages and can adopt at the end. This can be managed through good practices in member involvement, and it can be monitored using the risk register to track emerging or diminishing risks over time.

Other implications

How a Joint Local Plan fits with the Oxfordshire Plan 2050

36. Both South and Vale councils are already engaged in a joint plan – the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 – which is being prepared jointly by all Oxfordshire's Districts and Oxford City Council. This will contain Oxfordshire-wide strategic policies. It will identify the scale of future growth to the year 2050 and set development principles, as well as showing some broad locations for accommodating that growth (at a high level) and elements like nature recovery. It currently will not contain detailed land-use allocations.
37. A Joint Local Plan would implement and identify sites for the numbers and broad locations for growth set out in the forthcoming Oxfordshire Plan 2050. It would, for example, allocate land for housing, employment, renewable energy, green and community uses, as well as setting the brief for neighbourhood plans.
38. Preparation of a Joint Local Plan would be aligned with and follow closely behind the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The aim would be for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 to be examined first to establish the overall strategy for Oxfordshire before the Regulation 19 consultation stage (the last public engagement on the preferred plan) of the Joint Local Plan.
39. Preparing a Joint Local Plan would reduce duplication and increase the priority that the council could give to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 as it reaches important decision stages. It would also provide more scope for undertaking other important policy work in line with the Corporate Plans e.g. Community Infrastructure Levy updates, Infrastructure Delivery Plan updates, preparing Supplementary Planning Documents, and planning monitoring tasks.

Oxford - Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework

40. Following Government announcements in March 2020 and more recently on 18 February 2021, work is commencing, led by a specialist team at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), on a long-term spatial framework for the Ox-Cam Arc. Both South and Vale are within the geographic areas of

the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, which will cover the five counties of Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. The Spatial Framework will plan for growth in the Arc area, setting policies on the economy, the environment, transport, infrastructure and housing.

41. Once implemented, the Spatial Framework will have the status of national planning and transport policy, and therefore Local Planning Authorities will have to have regard to the Spatial Framework when making planning decisions. We will need to engage with this and address how future work on the Arc can feed into the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and Joint Local Plan. The larger geography of a Joint Local Plan could provide more scope for influencing emerging Arc thinking and provide a more joined up way of addressing opportunities and threats.

How it fits with Planning Reforms

42. The Government's planning reforms envisage plan-making outputs being not so much a document but as data. This data would be map-based and machine readable. Government has proposed there would be no generic development management policies set locally, these would be set nationally.
43. The new Joint Local Plan could aim to either follow the existing plan-making system or be ready for the next system (e.g. mapping growth/ renewal/protection areas, working on Design Guides and/or Design Codes). This would be subject to what the Government propose as transitional arrangements, including at what stage we were in the plan making process.
44. It should be noted that at this time the Government proposals are just that, i.e. proposals only. The Government made clear in a [Ministerial Statement](#) on 19 January 2021 that local planning authorities should not hold up work on local plans to wait for the planning reforms.

Conclusion

45. Officers recommend that the advantages of a Joint Local Plan outweigh the disadvantages (see paragraphs 8-9) and that a Joint Local Plan is progressed for South and Vale. Officers recommend that the Joint Local Plan is, in principle, prepared using the provisions of Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, with key decisions being made separately by each council or via a voluntary joint committee. Officers are seeking a decision on the principle of a joint local plan, with the governance arrangements to be established using delegated authority in consultation with the Cabinet member.

Background Papers

- Proposed Joint Local Development Scheme (Appendix 1)

Report checklist [This checklist must be completed and sent with your report to enable democratic services to issue the report]

REPORT TITLE: A JOINT LOCAL PLAN

Press Officer

Andy Roberts	Communications	Date	22.2.21
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Financial implications

Roger McLeod	Accountant	Date	18.2.21
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Legal implications

Vivien Williams	Solicitor	Date	22.2.21
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Other implications

Other than the above, I confirm that consideration has been given to the following. Any that impact on the item have been integrated in the report:

- Climate and biodiversity implications
- Equality and diversity implications
- Health and safety implications
- Human resource implications
- Crime and disorder implications (anti-social behaviour, harm to local environment and substance abuse)
- Outside organisations
- Sustainability implications
- Risk management implications
- Relevant ward councillors
- Union representatives

Lucy Murfett	Author signature	Date	12.2.21
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Style guide

Report is in accordance with style guide	Author signature	Date	12.2.21
Lucy Murfett			

Agreed by cabinet member (if appropriate)

Anne-Marie Simpson	Cabinet member	Date	24.2.21
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Exemption/confidentiality

Is report exempt/confidential? N If yes, state which paragraph of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972

Democratic services officer Date

Report checked and cleared for issue by head of service

Adrian Duffield Head of service Date 22.2.21

Note - Every report to the cabinet must be signed off by your head of service in advance of being submitted to democratic services.

Send this completed form to democratic services with final version of report

Local Development Scheme



What is the Local Development Scheme?

- 1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) requires local planning authorities to prepare, maintain and publish a Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- 2 The LDS sets out the timetable to produce the Development Plan Documents (DPDs), including key production and public consultation stages. It must be made available publicly and be kept up to date. This enables the community, businesses, developers, service and infrastructure providers and other interested organisations to know which DPDs are to be prepared for the area and when they are able to participate in their preparation¹.
- 3 This LDS updates the previous Local Development Schemes published in March 2019 by South Oxfordshire District Council and in February 2020 by Vale of White Horse District Council and combines this information into a singular LDS. This is the first joint LDS that covers South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils. It provides information about the Development Plans and other Planning Policy documents the Councils plan to prepare.
- 4 Authority Monitoring Reports produced by both Councils annually, monitors and reviews the implementation of the LDS.
- 5 Whilst not a formal requirement, for ease of reference the LDS also includes information about the main supporting and procedural documents that do or will accompany the Joint Local Plan.

Background to Local Planning Documents

- 6 The development plan for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse consists of a range of documents which guide development within the districts. The statutory Development Plan is the set of DPDs and Neighbourhood Development Plans that together form the statutory basis for determining planning applications for the Councils. Key elements of the **Development Plan** are:
 - **Local Plans** – Local Plans detail the planning strategies for development within the districts. This includes strategic and non-strategic policies to address the district's priorities for the development and use of land in its area, usually including the allocation of land for development, such as housing or employment and open spaces. These policies must be in general conformity with government guidance, in particular the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

¹ Public consultations will continue to be advertised and stakeholders notified when important documents are published for public consultation, in accordance with our published **Statements of Community Involvement** which for SODC is available here: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/our-development-plan/community-involvement> and for VOWH is available here: <https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-district-council/planning-and-development/local-plan-and-planning-policies/statement-of-community-involvement/>

- **Minerals and Waste Local Plans** - in areas that have County and District Councils, the County Council has the responsibility for producing Minerals and Waste Local Plans - such as is the case for Oxfordshire.
- **Oxfordshire Plan 2050** - in Oxfordshire, there is an additional development plan in preparation: the [Oxfordshire Plan 2050](#). Through the [Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal](#), the Councils have committed to preparing this plan, which is a Joint Strategic Spatial Plan (JSSP) with the other Oxfordshire authorities. This document will become part of the Development Plan following its Examination in Public and once the Councils adopt it. In November 2020, a revised timetable for the Oxfordshire Plan was published, which set out the following future milestones:

Key Milestones for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050	
Consultation on Spatial Growth Options (Regulation 18 Part II)	<i>Summer 2021</i>
Consultation on Submission (Draft) Plan (Regulation 19)	<i>Spring 2022</i>
Submission of Oxfordshire Plan 2050	<i>September 2022</i>
Examination of Plan	<i>November/December 2022</i>
Publication of the Inspectors Report	<i>February/March 2023</i>
Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Adoption (subject to examination)	<i>May/June 2023</i>

- **Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP)** are community-led plans for guiding future development and growth of a local area. Whilst they are not compulsory, once duly prepared and once they legally come into force, they become a statutory document that form part of the Development Plan. NDPs must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any Local Plan that covers their area. NDPs are prepared by qualifying bodies (parish or town councils in parished areas and neighbourhood forums in non-parished areas). They are prepared to a timescale that is set by the qualifying body, not the Councils, and therefore the timetable for their preparation is not contained within this LDS.
- 7 Although not part of the development plan, the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework is currently in development which will become an important planning document regionally:
- **Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework** - a Spatial Framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc – the area that spans the five counties of Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, is currently in development led by a specialist team in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The Spatial Framework will plan for growth in the Arc area, and in order to do so will set policies on the economy, the environment, transport, infrastructure and housing. Once implemented, the Spatial Framework will have the status

of national planning and transport policy, and therefore Local Planning Authorities such as ourselves will have to have regard to the Spatial Framework when making planning decisions.

Key Milestones for Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework	
Consultation on Spatial Framework vision	<i>Summer 2021</i>
Consultation on Spatial Framework options, entitled 'Towards a Spatial Framework'	<i>Spring 2022</i>
Consultation on draft Spatial Framework and evidence base	<i>Autumn 2022</i>
Publication and implementation of Spatial Framework	<i>Shortly after the draft Spatial Framework consultation</i>

The Statutory Development Plan – South Oxfordshire

8 The current Development Plan for South Oxfordshire comprises:

Name of DPD	Date Adopted	Under Review
South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035	December 2020	Yes – the Joint Local Plan with Vale of White Horse District Council will eventually supersede this Plan
Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Core Strategy ²	September 2017	No – although Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations is currently being drafted. The timetable for the Minerals and Waste Local Plans is set by the County Council and can be obtained from their website ³
Saved policies from the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan	July 1996	Yes – this will eventually be replaced by the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan that is being prepared in two parts: Core Strategy and Site Allocations. The Core Strategy was adopted on 12 September 2017, and Part 2: Site Allocations is currently being drafted
The Baldons Neighbourhood Development Plan	October 2018	No
Benson Neighbourhood Plan	August 2018	No
Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Plan	October 2019	No
Brightwell cum Sotwell Neighbourhood Development Plan	October 2017	No
Chalgrove Neighbourhood Development Plan	December 2018	No
Chinnor Neighbourhood Plan	October 2017	Yes – the Plan has been reviewed and has been independently examined. The District Council has made the decision to progress the plan for referendum which will take place in Spring 2021
Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan	April 2019	No

² <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/minerals-and-waste-core-strategy>

³ <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-policy/minerals-and-waste-policy/new-minerals-and-waste-plan#paragraph-638>

Dorchester on Thames Neighbourhood Development Plan	April 2018	No
East Hagbourne Neighbourhood Plan	April 2019	No
Goring Neighbourhood Plan	July 2019	No
Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan	April 2016	Yes – the parish council have now begun a review of the neighbourhood plan
Little Milton Neighbourhood Development Plan	December 2018	No
Long Wittenham Neighbourhood Development Plan	October 2017	Yes – the plan review is currently undergoing an independent examination. If successful at examination, it will and be put to a referendum due to the significant modifications proposed
Pyrton Neighbourhood Development Plan	April 2019	No
Sonning Common Neighbourhood Development Plan	October 2016	Yes – the parish council have now begun a review of the neighbourhood plan
Thame Neighbourhood Plan	July 2013	Yes – the parish council have now begun a review of the neighbourhood plan
Warborough and Shillingford Neighbourhood Plan	October 2018	No
Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan	August 2018	Yes – the parish council have now begun a review of the neighbourhood plan
Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan	May 2014	Yes – the parish council have now begun a review of the neighbourhood plan

9 Additionally, a number of **Neighbourhood Development Plans** are currently being prepared in South Oxfordshire. The following parish or town councils have all had their neighbourhood areas approved and are currently preparing their Neighbourhood Development Plans with their communities:

- Aston Rowant
- Beckley and Stowood

- Berinsfield
- Clifton Hampden
- Crowmarsh
- Cuddesdon and Denton*
- Culham
- Ewelme*
- Eye and Dunsden
- Garsington
- Horspath
- Kidmore End
- Lewknor
- Sandford-on-Thames
- Shiplake
- Stanton St John
- Sydenham*
- Tetsworth*
- Tiddington with Albury
- Towersey
- Wallingford*
- Wheatley*
- Whitchurch-on-Thames

*These Neighbourhood Development Plans are planned to go to referendum in Spring 2021.

10 Subject to them successfully completing the formal stages, some of these plans are expected to become part of the Development Plan this year.

The Statutory Development Plan – Vale of White Horse

11 The current Development Plan for Vale of White Horse comprises:

Name of DPD	Date Adopted	Under Review
Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1	December 2016	Yes – the Joint Local Plan with South Oxfordshire District Council will eventually supersede this Plan
Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2	October 2019	Yes – the Joint Local Plan with South Oxfordshire District Council will eventually supersede this Plan
Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Core Strategy	September 2017	No – although Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations is currently being drafted. The timetable for the Minerals and Waste Local Plans is set by the County Council and can be obtained from their website ⁴
Saved policies from the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan	July 1996	Yes – this will eventually be replaced by the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan that is being prepared in two parts: Core Strategy and Site Allocations. The Core Strategy was adopted on 12 September 2017, and Part 2: Site Allocations is currently being drafted
Drayton Neighbourhood Plan (made July 2015)	July 2015	No
Great Coxwell Neighbourhood Plan (made July 2015)	October 2020	Yes – The Parish Council undertook a minor (non-material) review and it was agreed at Council on 7 October 2020 that the revised neighbourhood plan would replace the version made in 2015. The parish council have now begun a more substantial review of the neighbourhood plan.
Longworth Neighbourhood Plan	October 2016	No
Blewbury Neighbourhood Plan	December 2016	No
Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan	December 2016	No
Radley Neighbourhood Plan	October 2018	No
Ashbury Neighbourhood Plan	July 2019	No

⁴ <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-policy/minerals-and-waste-policy/new-minerals-and-waste-plan#paragraph-638>

Uffington and Baulking Neighbourhood Plan	July 2019	No
Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan	December 2019	No

12 A number of **Neighbourhood Development Plans** are currently being prepared in Vale of White Horse. The following parish or town councils have all had their neighbourhood areas approved and are currently preparing their Neighbourhood Development Plans with their communities:

- Appleton with Eaton
- Chilton
- Cumnor
- East Challow
- East Hanney
- North Hinksey*
- Shellingford
- Shrivenham*
- Stanford in the Vale
- Steventon
- Sunningwell
- Sutton Courtenay
- Wantage
- West Hanney

* These Neighbourhood Plans are planned to go to referendum in Spring 2021.

13 Subject to them successfully completing the formal stages, some of these plans are expected to become part of the Development Plan this year.

14 In addition to those listed above, the statutory Development Plan for both Councils will also include the following once adopted or made:

- Oxfordshire Plan 2050
- Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations
- Any other “made” (adopted) Neighbourhood Development Plans.

Programme for the Local Plan Review

15 South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils are commencing work on a Joint Local Plan and associated documents. The following tables describe the content, coverage and timetable for the Development Plan Document, which is also illustrated in **Figure 1**, in context with other planning policy work. Further documents will be added to the LDS programme as the need for them becomes apparent and resources allow.

Joint Local Plan 2041	
Role & Subject - This document will set out the overall development strategy for the period up to 2041. It will include strategic policies as well as local level policies on environment and any allocations for housing and employment with any associated infrastructure requirements.	
Coverage - District-wide (South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Districts)	
Conformity - With the National Planning Policy Framework and the Oxfordshire Plan 2050	
Replaces – SODC Local Plan 2035 and VOWH Local Plan 2031 (Parts 1 and 2)	
Timetable - Key Stages	
Local Plan preparation and engagement	March 2021-July 2022
Public Consultation on Preferred Options/Draft Plan (Regulation 18)	July/August 2022
Public Consultation on Pre-Submission (Regulation 19)	July/August 2023
Submission to Secretary of State (Regulation 22)	January 2024
Examination in Public (Regulation 24)	June 2024
Inspector's report (Regulation 25)	September 2024
Adoption (Regulation 26)	October 2024
<i>(Regulation references taken from The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012)</i>	

Related documents supporting the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035

16 The current South Oxfordshire Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was adopted in 2016 and needs updating to align with the up to date Local Plan 2035. There will be a CIL Review in 2021, with consultation taking place on the draft Charging Schedule.

South Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (adopted February 2016)	
Role and Subject – This document will detail the types of development required to pay the Council a levy based on a cost per square metre of development. Collected funds will contribute to appropriate infrastructure to support new development.	
Coverage – South Oxfordshire district-wide	
Conformity – The Local Plan 2035, the National Planning Policy Framework and Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)	
Timetable – Key Stages	
Public Consultation	Summer 2021
Submission	Autumn 2021
Examination in Public	Autumn/Winter 2021
Inspector’s report	Winter 2021
Adoption	Early 2022

17 **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)** (and their predecessors, Supplementary Planning Guidance) complement or expand upon local plan policies, for example, describing in more detail how an allocated site should be developed. An SPD cannot allocate new sites for development, nor contain new policies for the use or development of land, and they must not conflict with the adopted Development Plan. South Oxfordshire currently has a number of adopted SPDs/SPG. Some of these SPDs/SPG have now served their purpose. On publication of this LDS, SPDs/SPG comprise:

Name of SPD/SPG	Description of SPD	Date Adopted	Review Target Completion Date
Traditional Shopfront Design Guide	Provides practical advice for those involved in the design of traditional shop fronts in South Oxfordshire. It is used for assessing shop front designs when they are presented for planning or other consents.	November 1995	No review planned

South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment SPG	A District-wide landscape assessment that sets out individual Character Areas, describing in detail their landscape and settlement character together with appropriate guidelines for landscape enhancement, planning and development.	July 2003	No review planned
Vauxhall Barracks Development Brief SPG	Informs the preparation and submission of Planning Applications on land known as Vauxhall Barracks, Didcot.	Feb 2004	No review planned
Affordable Housing SPG	Provides clear practical guidance on the delivery of affordable housing within the district.	Sept 2004	Plan to produce a district wide or potentially joint Affordable Housing SPD in the next year
Didcot Town Centre SPD	This document was adopted in May 2009 and provided planning guidance to aid the development of the Didcot Town Centre. It set out the Council's vision and strategic development principles for the expansion of the town centre. A new phase of Didcot Town Centre's Orchard Centre opened in 2018. New and updated policies for Didcot Garden Town are also included in the recently adopted South Oxfordshire Plan.	May 2009	No review planned
Section 106 Planning Obligations SPD	Provides guidance for negotiating planning obligations. Planning obligations enable a development's impact to be mitigated and are intended to make a development.	March 2016	The Council will prepare an update to the Developer Contributions SPD in tandem with an update to the CIL Charging Schedule. A draft SPD will be prepared in 2021

<p>South Oxfordshire Design Guide SPD</p>	<p>Provides practical, clear and coherent design guidance based on best practice urban design values and urban design principles. In the context of the significant growth planned for, the guide will help to ensure that we attain high quality and inclusive design for all developments, including individual buildings, public and private spaces.</p>	<p>November 2016</p>	<p>Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils are currently preparing a Joint Design Guide SPD to replace the 2015 Design Guide. A draft Guide will be produced for consultation in 2021.</p>
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Related documents supporting the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031

18 The Vale of White horse CIL was adopted in 2017 and needs updating to align with our up to date Local Plan 2031. There will be a CIL Review in 2021, with consultation taking place on the draft Charging Schedule.

Vale Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (adopted September 2017)	
Role and Subject – This document will detail the types of development required to pay the Council a levy based on a cost per square metre of development. Collected funds will contribute to appropriate infrastructure to support new development.	
Coverage – Vale of White Horse district-wide	
Conformity – The Local Plan 2031, the National Planning Policy Framework and Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)	
Timetable – Key Stages	
Public Consultation	Completed (Jan-Feb 2021)
Submission	Spring 2021
Examination in Public	Summer 2021
Inspector's report	Summer/Autumn 2021
Adoption	Autumn 2021

19 Current and planned **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)** for Vale of White Horse District Council are set out below:

Name of SPD	Description of SPD	Date Approved	Review Target Completion Date
Vale of White Horse Design Guide	Provides practical, clear and coherent design guidance based on best practice urban design values and urban design principles and will provide guidance to help with Climate Change.	March 2015	Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils are currently preparing a Joint Design Guide SPD to replace the 2015 Design Guide. A draft Guide will be produced for consultation in 2021.

Abbey Shopping Centre and Character Area	Provides a guide to detailed applications and possible future development options for the area	December 2011	No review planned
Botley Centre	Provides clear guidance on how development could come forward in this Local Service Centre.	January 2016	No review planned – development under construction
Developer Contributions SPD	Provides guidance for negotiating planning obligations. Planning obligations enable a development's impact to be mitigated and are intended to make a development acceptable when it would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms.	June 2017	Autumn 2021 The Council is preparing an update to the Developer Contributions SPD in tandem with an update to the CIL Charging Schedule. A draft SPD was consulted upon in early 2021.
Dalton Barracks	It will set out a strong vision for a new mixed-use development that is highly accessible, incorporating sustainable transport initiatives and being sensitive to Cothill Fen Special Area of Conservation through provision of parkland. It will provide further detail on how development will need to consider the landscape, ecology, pollution, transport, historic environment, facilities capacity, phasing of development and how Garden Village Principles will be delivered to achieve the exemplar design.	N/A	Autumn/Winter 2021
Affordable Housing SPD	This would provide clear practical guidance on the delivery of affordable housing within the district.	N/A	Plan to produce a district wide or potentially joint Affordable Housing SPD in the next year

20 **Local Development Orders (LDO)** are policy instruments that extend permitted development rights for certain forms of development that the local authority considers to be suitable, either in general or limited to defined areas. LDOs are intended to simplify the process for development. Development that conforms to an LDO would not require planning permission. An LDO was adopted for Milton (Business) Park in 2012 and committed to undertaking a review every 5 years. As part of preparing the next local plan, a review of the LDO will be undertaken. Local Plan 2031 Part 2 proposes that an LDO for Harwell Campus will be prepared to facilitate the effective and accelerated planning of proposals coming forward on the campus. LDO's may also be produced to support Didcot Garden Town. An LDO for Didcot Technology Park is currently in preparation.

Statement of Community Involvement

21 The South Oxfordshire **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** was adopted on 15 June 2017. The Vale of White Horse **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** was adopted in September 2020.

22 The SCI is a code of practice that shows how and when the Councils will involve different groups, organisations and communities in the production of planning documents, including the Local Plan. It also sets out how the Councils will involve people when assessing and deciding on planning applications for development. It describes the Council's overall approach to community engagement and people's involvement in the planning process, as well as how people can become involved with planning applications.

23 South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils will be preparing a joint SCI. Information is provided in the table below:

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2021	
Role & Subject - This document will set out the ways in which local residents, businesses, organisations and statutory consultees can be involved in our planning processes. This covers both the preparation and production of planning policy documents and how the community will be involved in decisions relating to planning applications.	
Coverage - District-wide (South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils)	
Conformity - With the National Planning Policy Framework (2019)	
Timetable - Key Stages/Milestones	
Public Consultation	Summer 2021
Adoption	Autumn 2021

Monitoring and Review

24 The Councils are required to monitor annually how effective their policies and proposals are. An Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) will be published by the Councils each year to inform LDS reviews and will be made public.

25 As part of the monitoring process, the Councils will assess:

- whether they are meeting, or are on target to meet, the milestones set out in the LDS and, if not, what the reasons are
- what impact Local Development Documents are having on other national and locally set targets
- whether any policies need to be reviewed, or replaced to meet sustainable development objectives
- what action needs to be taken if policies need to be replaced.

26 As a result of the monitoring, the Councils will consider what changes, if any, need to be made. If changes are appropriate these will be brought forward through the review of the LDS.

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