

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2
Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031
Statement of Common Ground
between
Vale of White Horse District Council
and
Cherwell District Council
27 April 2018

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared by Vale of White Horse District Council (VOWH) and Cherwell District Council hereafter referred to as “the parties”. It documents those matters agreed by the parties with regard to the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 and the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031.
- 1.2. This SoCG reflects and confirms the current position agreed by both parties with regard to the Duty to Cooperate, the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and the apportionment of Oxford’s unmet housing need.
- 1.3. This statement is provided without prejudice to other matters of detail that the parties may wish to raise during their respective examinations.

2. Background

- 2.1. VoWH and Cherwell District Council have a long history of working effectively together and have been working closely together on a number of matters of strategic cross boundary importance in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate.
- 2.2. At a strategic level the Councils are members of the Oxfordshire Growth Board (OGB) and its supporting Executive Officers Group established in 2014.
- 2.3. The purpose of the Growth Board is to:
 - facilitate and enable collaboration between local authorities on economic development, strategic planning and growth
 - to deliver cross boundary programmes of work, and
 - to bid for the allocation of resources to support growth.

- 2.4. Prior to the establishment of the OGB, the authorities were also members of the Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP) which had begun the process of formal cooperation including for the Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal and the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014).
- 2.5. At the strategic level, the authorities also collaborate on economic matters through the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP), which prepares the Strategic Economic Plan.
- 2.6. A particular focus of joint working has been on housing matters including the commissioning of the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) as well as a series of different projects under what has been collectively referred to as the 'Post-SHMA process'. The Councils are both parties to the Oxfordshire Statement of Cooperation¹ which confirms the scope of the joint working arrangements.
- 2.7. In particular, both authorities have been consistently and actively engaged (including senior officers and members) in a programme of joint work to assess the level of unmet housing need from Oxford and how it should be apportioned. Both authorities have sought to ensure timely progress in the joint working so that the programme timelines agreed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board could be met.
- 2.8. The positive approach of both authorities and commitment to find a workable solution to such a difficult strategic issue is evidenced by the effective outcomes that have been reached.

3. Matters on which the parties agree

Duty to Cooperate

- 3.1. Both Councils have continuously engaged with each other through the evolution of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031: Part 2 and the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 on a number of cross boundary issues, more information and details of this engagement can be found in VoWH's Topic Paper 1: Duty to Cooperate and Cherwell's Duty to Cooperate Statement (February 2018).
- 3.2. It is agreed that the parties will continue to work together on cross boundary issues to ensure a coherent strategy that supports the delivery of proposals including the appropriate mitigation.
- 3.3. The parties agree that Vale of White Horse and Cherwell District Councils have engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going- basis to secure

¹<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/communityandliving/ourworkwithcommunities/oxfordshirepartnership/spatialplanninginfrastructure/OxfordshireStatementofCooperation.pdf>

effective cooperation on strategic cross boundary matters when preparing their respective Local Plans.

VoWH and CDC Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) and Housing Requirement

- 3.4. The parties agree that they have made full, planned provision for the quantum of development required to meet the objectively assessed housing needs (2011-2031) of each district in their respective, adopted Local Plans: 1,028 homes per year (20,560 homes in total) for VoWH and 1,142 per year (22,840 in total) for Cherwell as set out in the Oxfordshire SHMA (2014).

Quantum of 'unmet' housing need to be planned for

- 3.5. The parties agree that, in accordance with the decision of the Oxfordshire Growth Board on 19 November 2015, 15,000 homes is the appropriate figure to plan for within the Oxfordshire HMA in meeting Oxford's unmet housing need to 2031.
- 3.6. 15,000 is the agreed 'working assumption' that has formed the basis of the joint evidence base and apportionment process to consider how the unmet need should be distributed across the Oxfordshire HMA.

The Process and Evidence for the Apportionment of Unmet housing need

- 3.7. The parties agree that the process which has been undertaken through the OGB to inform the apportionment of Oxford's unmet need across the Oxfordshire HMA has been objective and based on a proportionate evidence base which the parties have endorsed.
- 3.8. The parties agree that the apportionment of Oxford's unmet housing need as agreed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board on 26 September 2016 is an appropriate basis for distributing that need, subject to testing through individual local plans. The agreed apportionment of unmet housing need across Oxfordshire HMA is shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Apportionment of Oxford City's Unmet Housing Need

Authority	Proportion of unmet need apportioned
Cherwell DC	4,400
Oxford City Council	550
South Oxfordshire DC	4,950
Vale of White Horse DC	2,200
West Oxfordshire DC	2,750

Total	14,850
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Note: South Oxfordshire District Council did not agree to the apportionment.

- 3.9. The parties agree that should any individual Oxfordshire authority not be able or willing to meet the Growth Board's apportionment of unmet need (following the completion of that authority's Local Plan) the implications would need to be considered on a joint and multi-lateral basis through the Growth Board.

Quantum of provision being made in Vale of White Horse for Oxford City's Unmet Housing Needs to 2031

- 3.10. The parties agree that it is appropriate for VoWH's Local Plan 2031 Part 2 to provide for 2,200 homes (by 2031) to contribute to meeting the unmet housing needs of Oxford. The parties agree that it is appropriate that the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan provides for 4,400 homes (by 2031) to contribute in meeting the unmet housing needs of Oxford.
- 3.11 The two authorities are working together on HRA (Habitats Regulations Assessment) related matters which will be set out in a separate Statement of Common Ground.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1. The parties agree that:
- They have a positive working relationship and a demonstrable track record of successful collaborative joint working with effective outcomes,
 - Through the Oxfordshire Growth Board, its working groups and bi-lateral meetings the authorities will continue to work cooperatively on matters of mutual interest and cross-boundary strategic importance, including implementing/ delivering the agreed apportionment of Oxford's unmet housing needs, and
 - Both authorities would welcome the adoption of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2 and the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan at the earliest opportunity.

Signatures

Signed on behalf of Vale of White Horse District Council



Adrian Duffield
Head of Planning

27 April 2018

Signed on behalf of Cherwell District Council



Adrian Colwell
Executive Director for Place and Growth

27 April 2018