



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Kit Malthouse MP
Minister of State for Housing

*Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local
Government*
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Cllr Sue Cooper, Leader,
South Oxfordshire District Council
135 Eastern Avenue
Milton Park
Abingdon
OX14 4SB

Tel: 0303 444 3430
Email: kit.malthouse@communities.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/mhclg

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Dear Cllr Cooper,

I am writing regarding the decision by your Full Council on Thursday 18 July which has effectively signalled your intention to pause progress on the South Oxfordshire Local Plan.

I am concerned about the delay and uncertainty that this will cause, both to the local community and the wider implications across Oxfordshire. Having an up-to-date, sufficiently ambitious plan is essential to planning for our housing requirements, and this is particularly crucial for Oxfordshire.

South Oxfordshire District Council, along with other Oxfordshire authorities, signed a Housing and Growth Deal in March 2018 which committed the Councils to deliver 100,000 new homes by 2031. In order to achieve this, the Deal committed the Oxfordshire authorities to submit their local plans for examination by 1 April 2019 and I am pleased that you met that commitment. In addition, the Government recently awarded £218m of grant funding to Oxfordshire County Council via the Housing Infrastructure Fund on the premise of unlocking both housing sites with existing permissions and new sites in the emerging local plan.

Whilst I accept that you appear to require a period of reflection to discuss any emerging issues with key stakeholders, I am nonetheless writing to reiterate that I expect progress on the Local Plan as part of your delivery on the above commitments and to access funding from the Housing Infrastructure Fund.

I have asked my officials to contact both you and the Chief Executive of Oxfordshire County Council, as the accountable body for the Growth Board, to ensure that we understand your proposed next steps and that you are aware of the potential implications for the choices your Council can make going forward.

I look forward to an early resolution of these matters so that progress towards the examination and adoption of the submitted Local Plan can take place.

Yours sincerely

KIT MALTHOUSE MP