

Planning

HEAD OF SERVICE: ADRIAN DUFFIELD



Listening Learning Leading

SENT VIA EMAIL

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Planning Inspector

Mr Nick Fagan
Planning Inspector

c/o Mr Ian Kemp
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Textphone users add 18001 before you dial

Your reference:

Our reference:

20 August 2019

Dear Ian,

Re: Examination in Public of the Emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan (2034)

I am writing to update yourself and the appointed Planning Inspectors on matters relating to the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan (2034). I would be grateful if you would share this letter with our two appointed Inspectors.

The details of the Council meetings in June/July and the outcome were shared to assist the Inspectors with our current position. The Council resolution of 18 July was to:

- (1) express its determination to maintain its housing land supply and avoid speculative development;*
- (2) express its continued support for the Housing and Infrastructure Fund (HIF) funding and infrastructure projects that could be delivered by it;*
- (3) ask officers to explore with Oxfordshire County Council, Homes England and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government options for protecting the HIF funding whilst enabling the council to address concerns about the current emerging Local Plan 2034 including (but not limited to) climate change issues, Oxford City's unmet housing need, and to report back to Cabinet and Council;*
- (4) recognising that the Climate Change Emergency is all too real and is recognised to be of key and statutory importance under the Climate Change Act 2008 and the associated objective of "zero carbon by 2050", express its wish to do all that it can to respond through the Local Plan process;*
- (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.*

Since that decision, officers have been focussed on the third part of the decision and have been working with partners to seek to protect HIF whilst considering concerns raised by the new administration. As part of this exploratory work and dialogue, it was identified in discussions with officials from MHCLG that it would be more timely to

move the committee meetings we had scheduled for September in order that further discussion could be had in relation to the Housing and Infrastructure Fund and feed into those papers. We have thus responded by moving our schedule of meetings to October, but I'm conscious that this means that there is further delay to our ability to confirm the future of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan.

I had understood from our earlier correspondence that the Inspectors were focussed on progressing the hearings for the Oxford City Local Plan, which were likely to take place in the Autumn and that those hearings were likely to take place before those of South Oxfordshire. We had therefore anticipated that our minor delay to accommodate our new administration's requirements and to ensure that we were able to include input from MHCLG would not create any difficulty for the progression of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan.

Councillors will be considering options regarding the progression of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan at the following meetings.

- Scrutiny Committee 1 October 2019
- Cabinet Meeting on 3 October 2019
- Council on 10 October 2019

I will update you on the outcome of the Council meeting. If you or the two appointed Planning Inspectors require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "H. Jones".

Holly Jones
Planning Policy Manager
South Oxfordshire District Council