

Senior Management Team



Adrianna Partridge
South Oxfordshire District Council

135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park,
Milton, Abingdon OX14 4SB

By email

8 October 2019

Dear Adrianna

SODC local plan

Further to the publication of the cabinet report to consider the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan, I write to you as the Acting Deputy Chief Executive – Partnership and Planning, on behalf of Vale of White Horse District Council.

I have read the officer report relating to the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and welcome the clear officer recommendation and rationale to continue with the Local Plan through its examination – ‘Option A’. I am conscious, however, that Cabinet has recommended to Council that the South Oxfordshire Local Plan be withdrawn, with a final decision expected on Thursday 10 October.

The Leader of the Vale of White Horse has already expressed her concerns relating to the risks associated with the potential loss of Housing and Infrastructure Fund and the possible impacts upon the five year housing land supply for the Vale. As you know, the Vale’s Local Plan Part 1 is to a significant extent reliant on this funding for delivery of the infrastructure in order to support committed housing. For example, there would likely be concerns raised by Oxfordshire County Council to Valley Park in relation to impacts to the highway network. Moreover, the delivery of 5,000 homes in the Vale of White Horse would be put at risk as a result of lack of funding for the Didcot Garden Town HIF and its necessary infrastructure, and with a significant adverse effect on the five year housing land supply.

If homes cannot be delivered in Vale owing to the consequences of a withdrawal of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan, would the revised or new South Local Plan include, above your own housing need, allocations for the homes that Vale cannot then immediately deliver - a further source of unmet housing need?

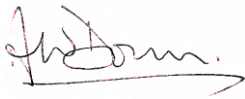
In the event that the Local Plan is withdrawn, it is unlikely that South Oxfordshire District Council would be able to continue to be a signatory to the existing Statements of Common Ground with the other Oxfordshire authorities, as is acknowledged in the recommendations made to Council for consideration on 10 October. South

Oxfordshire District Council would, however, need to demonstrate how it has complied with the Duty to Co-operate from this point forward.

All relevant material considerations, including the negative planning consequences of a decision to withdraw and the consequences of the decision must be considered in any Council decision. This includes the severity of housing need, including unmet need from the City, the Duty to Cooperate, the impact upon neighbouring authorities, and the impact upon Didcot Garden Town.

I would be grateful if you would keep me updated on the decision of South Oxfordshire District Council on its Local Plan.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Down', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew Down
Acting Deputy Chief Executive – Partnership and Planning