

Planning

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West Berkshire Council

By Email:

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Your reference: West Berkshire Local Plan Review – Reg 18 Consultation

05 February 2021

Dear Planning Policy team,

West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2020 – 2037 Emerging Draft

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the emerging West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2037.

South Oxfordshire District Council supports the approach that the draft Plan takes to meeting future growth needs across West Berkshire. We support the underlying principles behind the proposed spatial distribution of development, particularly in the context of the physical constraints to development, with 74% of West Berkshire lying within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

We are supportive of Policy SP2 as drafted and are pleased to see that it is consistent with the spatial context and strategic objectives set out in the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2019-2024.

We note that Policy SP1 (Spatial Strategy) proposes '*appropriate and sustainable growth*' in the AONB that conserves and enhances its special landscape qualities, as set out in Policy SP2. Overall, the level of growth appears commensurate with the environmental constraints and the need for a higher level of landscape protection and enhancement within the AONB and its setting.

We are pleased to see the draft Plan's acknowledgement of the urgent need to respond to climate change, which is a high priority corporate objective shared with South Oxfordshire District Council. In particular, we support the criteria based approach to the assessment of development proposals set out in Policy SP5 (Responding to Climate Change).

We support the inclusion in Policy SP22 (Transport) of a requirement for development proposals of 60+ dwellings to be accompanied by a full Transport Assessment. We also support the need to mitigate the impact of planned growth on

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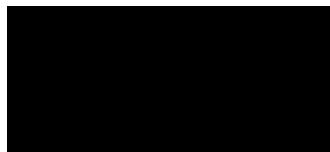
local transport networks and the strategic road network, particularly any impacts on the capacity and traffic flow of the A34.

Finally, we note the future shortfall in gypsy and traveller pitch provision identified in paragraph 11.30 and will look forward to understanding how this will be addressed through future versions of the Plan.

We are committed to working collaboratively with you and thank you again for the opportunity to review your consultation document. We hope that a positive working relationship between the two councils continues as you progress with your Local Plan Review to 2037.

Whilst we have no further comments to make on your emerging Plan at this stage, we may wish to make any further representations as your Plan progresses.

Yours faithfully,



Adrian Duffield
Head of Planning
South Oxfordshire District Council