

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Scrutiny Committee

held on Wednesday, 20 September 2017 at 7.00 pm

at the Meeting Room 1, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB



Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Debby Hallett (Chairman), Alice Badcock (Vice-Chairman), Mike Badcock, Ed Blagrove, Vicky Jenkins, Mohinder Kainth, Chris Palmer and Judy Roberts.

Officers: Adrian Duffield, Andrew Maxted and Ron Schrieber

Also present: Councillors Roger Cox and Emily Smith

Sc.10 Apologies for absence

Councillor Sandy Lovatt submitted apologies.

Sc.11 Declarations of interest

None.

Sc.12 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None.

Sc.13 Public participation

One member of the public had registered to speak on the Local Plan Part 2 (see Minute 14 below).

Sc.14 Publication Version - Local Plan 2031 Part 2: Detailed Policies and Additional Sites

The committee considered the report of the head of planning services which provided an overview of the main changes proposed to the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 following consultation. An addendum report setting out a number of proposed further amendments had been circulated. This reflected ongoing work including collaborative working with key stakeholders such as Oxfordshire County Council.

Councillor Roger Cox, Cabinet member for planning, introduced the report. Also present to answer questions were Adrian Duffield, head of planning services and Andrew Maxted, planning policy project lead.

Vale of White Horse District Council – Scrutiny Committee minutes

Wednesday, 20 September 2017

Sc.1

Councillor Cox reported that it was the Council's intention to submit the Local Plan to the Secretary of State at the end of February 2018. As set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme, it was anticipated that the Local Plan would be examined in the summer of 2018 with adoption before the end of the year.

Jon Alsop, representing a landowner, addressed the committee regarding the removal of the proposed development at North-East Marcham. His points included:

- The development was in a sustainable location;
- Neighbouring sites had been granted planning permission;
- The site related well to the existing built up area of Marcham; and
- There was a lack of supporting evidence to justify the removal of the proposed development from the Local Plan.

In response to these comments, the Cabinet member and officers stated that the removal of the proposed development was in response to an objection raised by Oxfordshire County Council due to the site's proximity to an Air Quality Management Area within Marcham and the potential detrimental impact from development.

Councillor Emily Smith addressed the committee. Her points included:

- Whether the figures for Oxford City's unmet housing need should be revised downwards in the light of the recent Government White Paper;
- The transport infrastructure was inadequate to support the proposed Dalton Barracks development; and
- The proposed Lodge Hill Park and Ride was currently unfunded, was a low priority for the County Council and would not be operational before 2026. However, once operational, it would encourage commuters to drive to and from the Park and Ride rather than use public transport.

In response to these comments, the Cabinet member and officers stated that:

- The Government White Paper was a consultation document with any proposals to be published in the Spring. At this stage, there was no evidence to justify amending the figures for Oxford City's unmet housing need;
- The Local Plan was a strategic document. Details of supporting infrastructure, including traffic management measures, for Dalton Barracks and other sites would be considered as part of any planning application and S106 agreement; and
- The main public transport links for the Dalton Barracks development would be via the existing bus services.

The committee considered the report, addendum and supporting documents. In response to members' questions, the Cabinet member and officers stated that:

- Government guidance was that local authorities currently progressing their Local Plans should continue rather than delay. Even if the figures for unmet housing need were to change in the future, it would be preferable to go to the Examination with an over-supply of housing as there would need to be additional housing provided in future years.
- All the saved policies from the previous Local Plan had been replaced with the exception of Grove Airfield which continued to be saved.
- Officers were not aware of any anticipated changes in the level of housing need as a consequence of Brexit.
- The Council worked closely with the County Council to look at the impact of proposals and make best use of existing and future public transport provision to reduce congestion on major roads.

- Whilst the Local Plan sought to identify and meet the need for housing, the cost (and affordability) of this housing was determined by the market.
- The Local Plan took into account the designations of land such as Green Belt when determining housing need.
- No changes had been made to the safeguarding of land for strategic highway improvements within the Abingdon-On-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area.
- As far as officers were aware, the County Council had no plans to relocate the proposed Lodge Hill Park and Ride to Dalton Barracks.
- The Local Plan did not specify which housing developments would meet Oxford City's unmet housing need. However, the County and City Councils had agreed that North Abingdon sites were suitable to meet this need.
- The costs of the Local Plan process were being monitored.

During further discussion, the Committee agreed that:

- The section on spatial standards required further clarification;
- The numbering of the core policies needed checking;
- Sufficient land needed to be safeguarded to enable a viable public transport and cycle link between Dalton Barracks and the Lodge Hill Park and Ride site;
- Appendix I: Registered Parks and Gardens should be reviewed to ensure that all registered parks and gardens were listed;
- Appendices N and O needed to be completed; and
- Officers should review the Sustainable Transport Study to ensure consistency with the Local Plan.

The Committee also agreed to request officers to:

- Circulate information on recent traffic studies to Committee members; and
- Submit a report to a future meeting, after the Local Plan Examination, on the costs of the process.

RESOLVED:

(a) to advise Cabinet that:

- the section on spatial standards as set out in Chapter 3 of the Local Plan requires further clarification;
- the numbers of the core policies need to be checked to ensure that they are correct;
- further consideration should be given to ensuring that sufficient land is safeguarded to enable a viable public transport and cycle link between Dalton Barracks and the Lodge Hill Park and Ride site;
- Appendix I: Registered Parks and Gardens should be reviewed to ensure that all registered parks and gardens and, in particular, Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee sites are included;
- Appendices N & O need to be completed; and
- officers should review the Sustainable Transport Study to ensure consistency with the Local Plan.

(b) to request officers to:

- circulate information on recent traffic surveys to Committee members; and
- report to a future meeting, after the Local Plan Examination, on the costs of the process.

(c) to thank the officers for all their hard work and, in particular, for producing a Local Plan in plain English.

Sc.15 Work schedule and dates for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings

The committee considered its work programme and agreed:

- To assign dates to previously unscheduled items; and
- That, prior to an item coming to Scrutiny, members identify particular issues/information to be included in the report and who should be invited to attend.

An updated work programme would be circulated prior to the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm