

From Lisa Buchan – Elsfield Residents Group

The new Lib-Dem and Green leaders of SODC are reviewing the Local Plan 2034. On Thursday 18 July there will be a full meeting of the Council to pass a resolution about changes to it.

See <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/news/2019/2019-06/south-oxfordshire-councillors-consider-local-plan-options>

They are looking at four options.

- **Option one** – make no changes to the plan and allow it to continue to be examined by the government’s independent inspectors.
- **Option two** – allow the plan to continue to be examined by the government’s inspectors but recommend a series of main modifications that will be considered by the inspectors.
- **Option three** – withdraw the plan, revise it, and then resubmit the revised plan following an additional public consultation.
- **Option four** - withdraw the plan and start the whole plan-making process from the beginning.

This is our chance to influence the debate: please tell the councillors which option you think they should choose. *They want to hear from us.*

Write in particular to the cabinet members: sue.cooper@southoxon.gov.uk, (new leader);
david.turner@southoxon.gov.uk; Sue.Roberts@southoxon.gov.uk;
Robin.Bennett@southoxon.gov.uk, Leigh.Rawlins@southoxon.gov.uk;
David.Rouane@southoxon.gov.uk.

Also write to , sarah.gray@southoxon.gov.uk and alexandrine.kantor@southoxon.gov.uk . For emails of other councillors, see <http://democratic.southoxon.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1>

Options 2,3,4 are bound to involve a reduction in the housing delivery figures found in the current Local Plan: 28,465 dwellings up to 2034. That is twice as many as required to meet the future housing needs of SODC.

(for more information, see LP 2034

http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=999354516&CODE=8326364FDD B13B6DFA2E373E5AFF5A00, Table 5c p.86 and for the objectively assessed housing needs of SODC <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2019-01-10%20Housing%20Topic%20Paper.pdf>, p.8-9)

The councillors will consider taking out some or all of the six Green Belt strategic allocations which are set to provide 8,350 new homes by 2034. (see the above link to LP 2034 for individual site descriptions, pp 46-76)

Tell them which of the Green Belt sites you want removed from the plan: Culham Science Centre - **1,850**; Berinsfield - **1,600** (total 1,700 long term); Wheatley Campus - **300**; South of Grenoble Road – **1,700** (total 3,000 long term); Northfield - **1,800**; Land North of Bayswater Road (formerly known as Elsfield/Wick Farm) - **1,100**. There is also one *non-Green Belt Strategic Allocation* (Chalgrove Air Field) which would deliver **2,025** dwellings (total 3000 long term).

If LNBB affects you, please remind councillors that last December, SODC planning officers advised that in the case of LNBB, 'There is significant risk about the ability of us being able to demonstrate the deliverability of this strategic allocation.' (see <http://democratic.southoxon.gov.uk/documents/g2275/Public%20reports%20pack%20Thursday%2013-Dec-2018%2018.30%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=10>, p.17).

Write about all the drawbacks to developing LNBB: additional traffic & air pollution; loss of biodiversity, valuable farmland, open fields in the Green Belt and the traditional view of Oxford's 'dreaming spires' from Elsfield. For the main disadvantages which stakeholders have already outlined to the SODC, see <http://democratic.southoxon.gov.uk/documents/b7053/Local%20Plan%20additional%20Correspondence%20Thursday%2013-Dec-2018%2018.30%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=9>, pp.7-8, p. 18-20, p.26-27)

SODC also could scale back or eliminate its contribution towards Oxford's unmet housing need – 4,950 homes to be built mainly on Green Belt sites (2021-2031). Inspectors, appointed to examine both the Oxford and SODC local plans, are questioning how Oxford's unmet housing need has been calculated, especially the use of out of date statistics which have inflated the city's housing requirement. For more information, see [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/1084/021_ic - inspectors correspondence p.2](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/1084/021_ic_-_inspectors_correspondence_p.2))

Whatever route the new SODC leaders takes, we need to support our councillors and encourage them to stick to their convictions. If they end up by withdrawing the local plan, we can wait another year for them to draw up a new one that will help to tackle climate change and preserve biodiversity while planning realistically for affordable housing in our area. After all, we have lived without a functioning central government for the past three years because of Brexit.