

South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) will be taking a vote on their Emerging Local Plan on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018. The Plan could have huge ramifications for my ward in terms of encroachment into the Green Belt and I wanted the residents to be informed in order to be able to comment during the consultation process.

Once adopted, the Local Plan will set out policies and guidance for the development of the district over the next 15 years to 2034. SODC District Councillors voted in favour of a Local Plan in Sept 2017 with 4 strategic housing development sites at Culham, Berinsfield, Chalgrove and Wheatley. However, following a change of Leadership at SODC in May of this year, the Plan was pulled and all of the strategic sites were reassessed and a number of other sites came forward to be assessed. All District Councillors have recently been informed that there are now 7 strategic housing sites being put forward for the Local Plan, 6 of which are in the Green Belt. The strategic sites are:

Grenoble Road – 1700 houses  
Land adjacent to Culham Science Centre – 1850 houses  
Berinsfield – 1600 houses  
Chalgrove Airfield – 2025 houses  
Northfield – 1800 houses ( this site sits next to Grenoble Road)  
Land North of Bayswater Brook – 1100 houses  
Wheatley Campus - 300 houses  
Total number of houses proposed across the strategic sites – 10,375

This is in addition to houses which have already been completed from 2011, (when SODC adopted its previous Local Plan) plus commitments, plus housing coming forward in Neighbourhood Plans for towns and villages and windfalls. In total, SODC are looking at 28,419 new homes between 2011 – 2034.

How does this affect my ward? Well, the strategic sites at Grenoble Road, Culham and Berinsfield could form a triangle with one key arterial road going North and South. That road is the A4074. There is already a proposed new road from North Didcot with a new bridge crossing the river at Culham and a bypass around Clifton Hampden which will pop out somewhere before the Golden Balls roundabout. There is also a proposed new Park & Ride slightly to the North of Nuneham Courtney on the A4074. I am extremely concerned that surrounding rural villages are going to experience substantially increased traffic and encroachment from the city and I am keen that residents are informed and can comment before the Local Plan is submitted to the Inspector.

If the majority of District Councillors vote in favour of the plan on 20<sup>th</sup> December, then the next stage will allow for people to submit their comments to SODC from 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019 – 18<sup>th</sup> February 2019. I would urge you to go onto the SODC website and furnish yourselves with as much information as you can about the Plan and then submit your comments. Following this consultation period, SODC will submit the Plan along with all of the comments received to the Inspector for a decision.

I have long been a supporter of preserving the Green Belt around Oxford and this Plan contravenes the NPPF Green Belt Policies. The government clearly stated this year that they have enhanced their protection of the green belt however, this Plan flies in the face of government policies and instead looks to run roughshod over what should be protected land. The NPPF July 2018 states that, 'the fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open'. It also safeguards the countryside from encroachment.

I will be speaking and voting against the Plan at the Council meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018. I would urge you as a resident to look at the Plan and draw your own conclusions as to the affect this could have upon your village. Sending your comments to SODC during the consultation period will be key if you would like to be a part of the Inspectors considerations.

Many thanks

Best Regards

Sue Lawson

District Councillor Sandford and the Wittenhams Ward