

## Oxford Local Plan EIP GreenWay Submission

### Matter 1: The housing requirement

GreenWayOxfordshire is a group of members of North Oxford Golf Course opposing plans to develop the Course for housing. The Course has been allocated in the submitted Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review to meet alleged Oxford housing need, contrary to Green Belt and Recreation/Health policies in the NPPF.

GreenWay is part of the Cherwell Development Watch Alliance (CDWA) and endorses its separate submissions.

I was in charge (inter alia) of strategic planning in Oxfordshire until my retirement in 2003. I think that I retain an overview of what is happening in Oxfordshire.

1 For the three decades that I was in charge, successive Secretaries of State for the Environment of both major parties in approving Oxfordshire Structure Plans, sought to limit the growth of the City to achieve a better balance of movement and activity throughout the County – and critically to protect the gem that is Oxford. For instance in approving Alterations to the Structure Plan in 1987 the SoS stated “*The unique character of Oxford and its setting in its natural environment should be conserved and protected and ... the growth of the City should not continue indefinitely... there is now only limited scope for development in and around the City*”

This is now at risk.

2 Evidence given by CDWA (and ORS – a very experienced independent housing market assessment specialist consultant) makes it clear that the figure of 1400 dpa is roughly double the actual need. This therefore means that the 28,000 houses identified in the Oxford area in the Growth Deal is predicated on a figure which does not stand scrutiny.

3 My understanding is that the City Council seeks to justify retaining this figure by saying that the Growth Deal agreed with Government justifies the original 1400 figure - but this is a circular argument as the incorrectly determined need is part of the justification for the Growth Deal. In any event the Growth Deal is not area specific - and certainly cannot be used to justify Green Belt incursions.

4 It is therefore wholly inappropriate for the Local Plan to seek to justify an approach that differs from the standard method.

5 This is of course not simply an academic exercise. GreenWay believes it important that I draw the Inspectors’ attention to the consequences which result. For instance, the Cherwell Partial Review is set to allocate all its 4400 share of Oxford’s housing ‘overspill’ into the Green Belt. This fills in much of the ‘Kidlington Gap’ a nationally recognised strategic gap which is part of the Oxford Green Belt, and which epitomises all 5 purposes set out in the NPPF. It also threatens to remove a thriving 112 year old ‘green lung’ golf course of highly significant health and well being value. (1)

6 Something is surely wrong with a planning system which (despite assurances from government ministers about the pivotal importance of Green Belt) can allow this to happen. My years of experience in planning tell me that the predominantly market price houses which will be built in this sort of location will do very little to help local affordable housing need.

7 The Plan as it stands is therefore unsound and at least should be paused until a correctly calculated figure of housing need can be agreed.

David Young on behalf of GreenWay 7/11/19

(1) It is of note that City representations (January 2019 Matter 4) on the Cherwell Partial Review supported the development of the North Oxford Golf Course (PR 6b), whereas the City Council supported retaining the Oxford (Southfield) Golf Course inside the City, praying in aid its recreational function. This might be read in conjunction with my Para 4 under Matter 2 Housing capacity in Oxford.