

Oxford Local Plan 2036

Examination Hearings

Written Statement by Vale of White Horse District Council in relation to:

Matter 2 Housing Capacity in Oxford

Whether the capacity-based housing requirement for Oxford of 10,884 (544 dwellings per annum over 20 years) set out in OCC1.B is realistic.

Whether the policies of the Plan adequately promote housing delivery, and whether the Plan provides an adequate basis for ensuring that the best use would be made of land within Oxford to maximise housing provision.

Whether the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) is a reliable indication of the capacity of the city for housing and whether greater clarity is required for the numbers to be provided on housing sites and mixed-use sites

1. As highlighted in the Council's response to the Regulation 19 consultation, no stone should be left unturned by Oxford City in seeking to address their housing need. This means that every effort should be made to bring forward sites identified as deliverable or developable to ensure the capacity of the City is maximised.
2. The Oxford City Council HELAA 2017 (HOU.1) and 2019 (PSD.1 HELAA main report) set out the approach to determining the capacity of the City. The capacity of sites has been assessed by developing proposed density bandings for development typologies or using up to date delivery information on sites. The HELAA does state these density bandings are not to be used as guides for developments.
3. As the HELAA 2019 states, a conservative approach has been taken with the lowest figure in the capacity density banding range being used to estimate capacity. The site capacity tables provided in PSD.2 Appendix B provides the estimated capacities of sites, however they do not detail how these have been calculated, either from developer information or through using the minimum density figure for the typology of development. It would aid clarity if an explanation of how the capacity was calculated were to be added to the site capacity table.
4. The Council consider that minimum housing numbers should be provided in Local Plan policies SP1 to SP7, SP12 to SP19, SP23 to SP60, SP62 to SP66, especially as the HELAA states the bandings used are not to be used as

guides for development. This would provide greater clarity on estimated capacity of housing in the Oxford City Local Plan.