

Submitted to Oxford Local Plan 2045 Submission Draft (Regulation 19) Consultation
Submitted on 2026-03-13 14:45:42

Contact Information

1 Name

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5 Organisation Name (if applicable)

Organisation:

6 In what capacity are you responding to this consultation?

Individual/Member of the public

7 If you are commenting on behalf of someone else, please state their name here. If you are representing more than one person or group we suggest making a separate submission for each.

acting as agent?:

Data Protection Notice and Notification Options

8 Are you happy for the first line of your address and postcode to be published with your response(s)?

I do NOT want my address and postcode to be published with my response.

9 Do you wish to be notified when:

None of the above

10 If your representation is seeking a modification to the plan, do you consider it necessary to participate in examination hearing session(s)? Please note: while this will provide an initial indication of your wish to participate in hearing session(s), you may be asked at a later point to confirm your request to participate.

I am not sure

11 If you wish to participate in the hearing session(s), please tell us why you consider this to be necessary. Please note: the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate in hearing session(s). You may be asked to confirm your wish to participate when the Inspector has identified the matters and issues for examination.

reason to attend hearings:

Policy S1: Spatial Strategy and Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

12 Do you consider that policy S1 is sound?

Not Answered

13 If you do NOT consider policy S1 to be sound, please select your reasons why from the choices below. Please give precise details for your reasons in the box below - if you wish to support the soundness of the policy please also use this box to set out your comments.

reasons for unsoundness S1:

14 Do you consider that policy S1 is legally compliant? If you do NOT consider policy S1 to be legally compliant, please give precise details for your reasons in the box below - if you wish to support the legal compliance of the policy please also use this box to set out your comments.

Not Answered

S1 legal compliance comments:

15 Please set out, as precisely as possible, what change(s) you consider necessary to make the policy legally compliant and sound, in respect of any legal compliance or soundness matters you have identified above. You will need to say why the suggested change will make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text.

changes to make policy s1 sound:

Policy SPE14: Ruskin Field

451 Do you consider that Policy SPE14 is sound?

No

452 If you do NOT consider policy SPE14 to be sound, please select your reasons why from the choices below. Please give precise details for your reasons in the box below - if you wish to support the soundness of the policy please also use this box to set out your comments.

policy is NOT justified, policy is NOT consistent with national policy

spe14 comments:

Inclusion of SPE14 in the sites for which planning permission will be granted for residential development is unsound because it is contrary to Policy S1 c, f, g, h, i and j:

S1 c) It is not an area with opportunities for sustainable travel links

S1 f) It would be a new use in a location, the Old Headington Conservation Area (OHCA), where it will harm the amenity of existing neighbouring uses

S1 g) It would be a new development on a greenfield location where it would have a negative impact on an important green infrastructure network

S1 h) It would not take account of local historical context and respond appropriately to the heritage significance of OHCA

S1 i) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, para 20.d) requirement that strategic policies should make sufficient provision for conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure and NPPF policy (para 202) for the protection of heritage assets such as OHCA that these assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance provide clear reasons for refusing development on this site

S1 j) The policy in the NPPF (para 11.b.ii) that any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, applies to this site.

Policy S1c: Travel links. Development of this size would not be car-free. ChatGPT predicts over 200 additional car movements per day, more including deliveries. Oxfordshire County Council has consistently refused additional direct access from the A40 Northern Bypass, so all additional traffic would pass through Northway. Roads serving the proposed access off Foxwell Drive (Copse Lane, Dunstan Road, St Andrews Road, Saxon Way) are already overloaded at peak hours (formally documented for St Andrews Road). The current restricted access from the A40 to Foxwell Drive has already had serious accidents. Additional bus services on the residential roads in Northway would not materially reduce traffic.

Policy S1 f, h, i: Old Headington Conservation Area. Ruskin Field lies in this conservation area designated by Oxford City Council for which the appraisal (p. 2) states:

"The fragments of green fields within the conservation area contribute to the rural character of the village and provide a green setting . . . The importance of these fields to the green setting of the village was recognised by the acquisition of several of them by Oxford Preservation Trust and the retention of others as a public park at Dunstan Road. The attractive tree-lined bridleway leading from Stoke Place allows views over these fields." Their importance for preserving the character of OHCA and green views has grown with developments at Barton Park and Land North of Bayswater Brook. Several restrictive building covenants remain registered at Land Registry title ON269207.

Previous development attempts on Ruskin Field have all failed. The City Council ruled out development in the 1930s. A 1990s Green Belt Inspector found the land "should properly be kept permanently open to preserve the setting of the northern edge of Old Headington." In 2011-12, the Planning Inspector rejected the attempt to include Ruskin Field in the Barton Area Action Plan, finding it created "an important open setting to the tightly knit historic core of the Conservation Area that is fundamental to its intrinsic character" and that allocation for housing "would be inappropriate and unjustified, and would therefore be unsound." The northern two-thirds was rejected from the 2036 Local Plan and not allocated for development in the draft 2040 plan. The only apparent change since is the City Council's financially beneficial option agreement with Ruskin College for access via Foxwell Drive, which does not affect allocation of this site for development contravening Policy S1 f, h and i.

Policy S1g: Green Infrastructure. Ruskin Field is greenfield land, the development of which SA Objective 3 requires to be minimised. This field and the eastern end of Foxwell Drive are designated Supporting Green Spaces in the Oxford Green Infrastructure Network. They are part of a continuous green corridor from Dunstan Park to the Barton Triangle, providing wildlife access routes and local green views. The loss of this corridor could not conceivably be mitigated to the standard required by Policy G1B. Evidence from neighbouring sites strongly indicates the Field shares the spring-fed calcareous fen characteristics of the ridge, making historical peat deposits highly probable. Without an independent assessment to the contrary, development must be presumed contrary to Policy R6.

Policy S1j: Benefits and adverse impacts. It is inconceivable that the adverse impacts noted above would be outweighed by the benefit of adding 28 houses on Ruskin Field.

453 Do you consider that Policy SPE14 is legally compliant? If you do NOT consider policy SPE14 to be legally compliant, please give precise details for your reasons in the box below - if you wish to support the legal compliance of the policy please also use this box to set out your comments

Not Answered

spe14 legal compliance comments:

454 Please set out, as precisely as possible, what change(s) you consider necessary to make the policy legally compliant and sound, in respect of any legal compliance or soundness matters you have identified above. You will need to say why the suggested change will make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text.

suggested changes to make SPE14 sound:

The only way to make policy SPE14 sound in my view is to delete it from the list of sites for which planning permission will be granted for residential development.