

Oxford Local Plan 2045

Submission Draft COMMENT FORM

Part A

You only need to
fill Part A in once

Your name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Address:

Email:

Date:

Data protection:

Please note that your response will be made available for inspection by the public in paper form at the Council's offices, or other locations as appropriate for the purpose of facilitating public access.

Your personal details will be properly safeguarded and processed in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. Your information will be used for The Oxford Local Plan 2045 Proposed Submission Consultation only, and we will only store your data until the Oxford Local Plan 2045 is accepted. Information you give in this form could be shared with the Independent Examiner at the examination stage of the Local Plan process.

We cannot accept anonymous comments.

☒ If you are happy for us to state your name and the first line of your address and postcode when publishing your response(s), please tick this box.

☐ If you would rather all personal details except your name and a non-specific address (e.g. Oxford) to be obscured, please tick this box.

Do you wish to speak at the examination hearings?

(Please note that the Inspector will decide who to invite to speak)

Yes ☒ No ☐

Do you wish to be notified when:

the Council submit the Oxford Local Plan 2045 to the Government?

☒ ☐

the Inspector's Report is published?

☒ ☐

the Oxford Local Plan 2045 is adopted by the Council?

☒ ☐

Sent: 02 March 2026 15:38
To: Planning Policy <planningpolicy@oxford.gov.uk>
Subject: Oxford Local Plan consultation

PLANNING POLICY TEAM

OXFORD LOCAL PLAN 2045 CONSULTATION

I have the following comments on the draft Local Plan:

POLICIES HD1 & HD2

77.1 HD1: Unsound; b. not justified

Both these policies are good, but I am concerned that they clash with each other.

Most of Oxford inside the ring road and outside the historic centre has good transport links and access to amenities and is therefore highly sustainable. This makes large swathes of the city suitable for much higher density development than is there now. And away from the Conservation Areas it is comprised of low density housing of no distinctive character; and should therefore be suitable for redevelopment at higher density which "creates local distinctiveness" rather than having to kowtow to local character.

But we have found that planning officers use Policy HD1 and the local Character Assessments to prevent development that is different in style or scale from the (normally banal and profoundly undistinctive) context. So they use HD1 to trump HD2. The result is that the approaches to Oxford and the outersuburbs do not get developed, and if anything is built there it is low density and low quality.

77.1 HD1: suggested changes

I propose HD1 should be changed so that it explicitly states that, in all areas outside Conservation Areas, the target densities in policy HD2 take priority over respecting local character, as long as the proposed development meets the other criteria for high quality design.

77.2 HD2: Unsound; b. not justified

The problem is that new designs which only make incremental changes (e.g. only one extra storey) are not sufficient to make redevelopment viable, and as a result the London Road, for instance, is a string of low-grade, two storey interwar houses or sheltered housing which has been the same for decades and is a terrible entrance to a world-class city. London Road could be a truly distinctive parade of urban-scale villas and housing blocks of high density leading from Headington roundabout to Oxford Brookes, but only if policy encourages or requires all new buildings along the road to be four storeys minimum.

I propose HD2 should require that outside the Conservation Areas any new development should be a minimum of three storeys and any development along the arterial roads should be a minimum of four storeys.

77.2 HD2: suggested changes

These two policy changes combined would lead to a renaissance of housing development within the city boundaries where it is most needed, without causing harm to any heritage sites, and greatly improving the approaches to this wonderful city. Yes it would lead to changes to the characters of Oxford's interwar suburbs, but that is all for the good.

POLICY HD8

The final sentence should be removed. The rest of the policy places measurable limits on what is permitted to prevent buildings being overbearing. Then the last sentence gives officers a subjective catch-all if they think something is a bit too big. It is unnecessary and too open to interpretation.

POLICY E3

77.4 E3: unsound; b. not justified

I have responded previously on this. It is a really commendable policy which is entirely justifiable to make the city economically sustainable.

I have said before that it should explicitly state that construction jobs means not just the jobs required for the construction itself but also all the associated consultancy that is required to get a building on site and monitor it for health and safety and build quality.

And that the best way to provide apprenticeships and training, as well as the best way to sustain the local economy is to engage local businesses, both construction firms and consultancy firms, who should be there long after the individual construction job has finished.

I propose the policy is amended to specifically state

a) Securing construction jobs, including the associated consultancy roles, for local residents and businesses;

b) Providing construction and consultancy apprenticeships and/or training opportunities for local residents in local businesses;

77.4 E3: suggested changes

Adrian James
Director

