Oxford Local Plan 2045

Submission Draft

COMMENT FORM

Part A

You only need to fill Part A in once

Your name: Claire Northrop

Organisation (if applicable): NatureSpace Partnership

Address: [redacted]

Email: [redacted]

Date: 10 March 2026

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.

	Yes	No
Do you wish to speak at the examination hearings? (Please note that the Inspector will decide who to invite to speak)	○	◉
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?	◉	○

GENERAL ADVICE

For advice on making a comment, please see the accompanying notes page. It is also available at www.oxford.gov.uk/oxford-local-plan-2045

When completing the form,

- You only need to complete Part A once
- Use Part B to make your specific comments. You may complete Part B multiple times to comment on different parts of the Oxford Local Plan 2045.
- Cover concisely all the information and evidence you feel supports or justifies your view, as this will normally be your only opportunity to tell us about it.
- Be as precise as possible.

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS

Please submit completed forms by email or post to:

planningpolicy@oxford.gov.uk

Planning Policy Team
Oxford City Council
Town Hall
St Aldate's
Oxford
OX1 1BX

If you have any questions please feel free to get in touch with the Planning Policy Team
T: 01865 252847
planningpolicy@oxford.gov.uk
www.oxford.gov.uk/localplan2040

Please ensure your comments reach us by **4.00pm on Friday 13th March 2026.**
Thank you for participating.

DETAILS OF YOUR COMMENT

Part B

Please use a new Part B for each point you are commenting on. Attach all completed forms to Part A.

Please read the accompanying notes before completing Part B. The notes explain what we mean by soundness and legal compliance. These are questions that we are expected to ask consultees.

Q1. Which part of the document do you wish to comment on? (please give the relevant paragraph or policy number)

Paragraph		Policies Map	
Policy Number	G6	Sustainability Appraisal	

Q2. Do you consider that the document:

(a) is legally compliant?	◉ Yes	○ No
(b) is sound?	◉ Yes	○ No
	○	○

Q3. Do you consider that the document is **unsound** because it is <u>not</u>: (tick as appropriate)

(a) positively prepared?	☐	(c) effective?	☐
(b) justified?	☐	(d) consistent with national policy?	☐

Q4. Please tell us below why you consider the document to be unsound or not legally compliant. If you do believe the document is sound or legally compliant, or complies you may use the box to explain why.

Please use an extra sheet if completing a paper copy.

Q5. What change(s) do you consider necessary to make the document sound or legally compliant? Please explain why this change will achieve soundness or legal compliance. It would be helpful if you could suggest revised wording for the policy or text in question.

We wrote to you during the previous preferred options consultation to see if it would be possible and appropriate to include something on your Council's Great Crested Newt District Licence within the new plan. This would help highlight the District Licence Scheme that Oxford City Council are a part of and can offer to developers, as well as how it is supporting great crested newt conservation by the creation of habitat. NatureSpace is the delivery partner of this scheme, working together with the Council to enable this.

We appreciate the plan is now at the latter stages of development, however we have worked with an LPA who was able to make a modification to include reference to the DL in their Plan before submission for examination. If there is still scope to include reference to the District Licence in the Local Plan this would be beneficial to raise awareness of the scheme and support sustainable development in your area where there is a risk to great crested newts. I attach some suggested wording on the District Licence Scheme which could be used within the accompanying text to your Biodiversity Policy: POLICY G6: PROTECTING OXFORD'S BIODIVERSITY INCLUDING THE ECOLOGICAL NETWORK. There is also a suggested Glossary definition.

(please see our email dated 10 March 2026 for attachment)

Please use an extra sheet if completing a paper copy.

This is the end of the comment form

Local Plan Consultations:
Suggested Supporting text for Biodiversity (or similar) Policy

Option 1

Great Crested Newt District Licence Scheme

XXX (name of LPA) holds a Great Crested Newt Organisational (or 'District') Licence granted by Natural England. The associated District Licensing Scheme, which is currently administered and managed by NatureSpace Partnership, provides an alternative licensing option for developers to address impacts on protected great crested newts by enabling a 'conservation payment' towards high quality habitat creation and long-term management and monitoring. In the District Licensing Scheme, developers can engage with NatureSpace at the pre-application stage or at the planning application stage. It is based on a great crested newt landscape-scale conservation strategy, which aims to focus the creation of new habitats where they will be of maximum benefit to the species, whilst also reducing risk and uncertainty through the planning process for developers and planning authorities. The strategy results in a range of other biodiversity benefits and contributes towards nature recovery at the landscape scale.

Option 2

Great Crested Newt District Licensing Scheme

XXX (name of LPA) holds a Great Crested Newt Organisational (or 'District') Licence granted by Natural England. The associated District Licensing Scheme is administered and managed by NatureSpace Partnership. It is based on a great crested newt landscape-scale conservation strategy, which aims to focus the creation of new habitats where they will be of maximum benefit to the species, whilst also reducing risk and uncertainty through the planning process for developers and planning authorities. The scheme provides an additional licensing option for developers, enabling new sustainable development whilst also conserving great crested newts.

In the District Licensing Scheme, developers pay for new habitats to be created based on the impacts arising from their proposed development. The scheme is based on a Species Conservation Strategy that ensures high-quality aquatic and terrestrial habitat provision in areas which represent the best places for great crested newts to thrive, delivering a strengthened network of new ponds for breeding and associated terrestrial habitats such as scrub, rough grassland and hedgerows. This means that the District Licensing Scheme is based on the Lawton principles of 'more, bigger, better and joined' complementing targets for biodiversity conservation and enhancement. The strategy results in a range of other biodiversity benefits and contributes towards nature recovery at the landscape scale.

Option 3

Great Crested Newt District Licence Scheme

The council holds a Great Crested Newt Organisational (or 'District') Licence, granted by Natural England (NE), that provides an alternative licensing option for developers to address impacts on protected great crested newts by enabling a 'conservation payment' towards high quality habitat creation and long-term management and monitoring. The District Licensing Scheme is a simpler process than the traditional licensing route and delivers landscape-scale conservation outcomes for the species according to a strategic Species Conservation Strategy, with wider biodiversity benefits and contributing to local nature recovery. The scheme is delivered by the NatureSpace Partnership on behalf of the council.

An evidence-based risk map has been published that shows the different risk zones for impacts on great crested newt. The zones are colour-coded, ranging from black (highest risk) to red, amber, green and white (lowest risk). Development falling within the black zone is excluded from the scheme and any impacts will need to be addressed under the traditional licensing route. For the other zones, information requirements in support of applications will vary:

- Red and amber zones – in all cases, assessment will be required to identify any impacts, with detail on how those impacts will be addressed (i.e., via use of the Council's District Licence or by following statutory Standing Advice for impact assessment and mitigation/compensation);
- Green or white zones – for cases where suitable great crested newt habitat is present onsite or has connectivity to suitable offsite habitat, information may be required to ascertain any impacts and how these will be dealt with.

Developers wishing to engage with the District Licensing Scheme can do so at the pre-application stage or at the planning application stage*, by submitting an application to NatureSpace (an informal enquiry can be made for an initial quote); planning applications using the District Licensing Scheme do not need to be supported by great crested newt survey information: entry into the Scheme confirms all great crested newt requirements have been satisfactorily addressed for the proposed development and use of the Council's District Licence is authorised as part of the planning process. Where the traditional licensing route is being followed, full survey information will be required at application stage, with a detailed mitigation and compensation strategy as necessary for assessment by the council prior to determination of the planning application, and a separate licence application is made to Natural England following planning approval.

*This wording depends upon the local validation requirements that XXX (name of LPA) have.

Suggested Glossary Definition of District Licence Scheme

District Licensing or DL is used to describe a new approach to authorising developments affecting great crested newts, by focusing conservation efforts where it will create maximum benefit for the species - whilst reducing delays, costs, risks and uncertainty for developers. XXX (name of LPA) holds a Great Crested Newt Organisational (or "District") Licence granted by Natural England so in this authority an additional licensing option for developers is available that enables new sustainable development whilst also conserving great crested newts (and wider biodiversity).