

Publicity period guidance note

We have designed this guidance note to help you respond to the publicity period on the Joint Local Plan 2041. You can find out more at:

southandvale.gov.uk/JLP

What is this stage about?

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse have been working on a new Joint Local Plan to shape the future of the district. Following extensive consultation and gathering of evidence, we have now prepared an updated Joint Local Plan which we are ready to publish prior to this being submitted for independent examination. Before we do, we are carrying out a six-week publicity period to find out whether the plan is sound and complies with legislation. This next stage is formally referred to as the **Regulation 19 publicity period**.

We have carried out two previous consultations on our plan, including a Regulation 18 (Preferred Options) consultation in January and February 2024. The councils have since reviewed all the comments received and prepared an updated version of the Joint Local Plan.

After the publicity period, we will submit the plan, evidence and responses received to this publication stage (also known as representations) directly to the Secretary of State, who will appoint a Planning Inspector to carry out an independent examination. At this stage, we have to ask very specific questions. Partly based on the answers given, a Planning Inspector will make a decision on whether our Local Plan is “sound”, “legally compliant” and if it complies with the “duty to cooperate”. These terms are explained further in this guidance note.

The Planning Inspector will give more weight to representations that relate to these points. You need to provide representations on the prescribed form and submit it between **1 October and 11.59pm on 12 November 2024**. Please be advised that we cannot accept late responses, nor grant any extensions.

On our website you can find our evidence base studies and a series of Topic Papers which set out the background to the sites and policies in our Local Plan. You may find it helpful to review these documents when considering your response.

The plan and supporting documents are available at:

southandvale.gov.uk/JLP

Hard copies of the documents and response forms are available at the locations listed on page two, during their usual opening hours.

When considering if the plan meets its legal requirements, the Inspector will consider a number of issues including:

- **Local Development Scheme (LDS):** has the plan been prepared in accordance with the timetable set out in the LDS?
- **Consultation:** have the appropriate bodies been consulted and have we consulted in accordance with our Statement of Community Involvement?
- **National Policy and Legislation:** does the plan comply with national policy and legislation?
- **Sustainability Appraisal:** has an adequate Sustainability Appraisal been carried out?
- **Habitats Regulations Assessment:** has an adequate Habitats Regulations Assessment been carried out, including appropriate assessment where necessary?
- **Duty to Cooperate:** has the plan been prepared in cooperation with other local authorities and prescribed bodies?

Publicity period guidance note

Soundness

The Inspector will also consider whether the Joint Local Plan is “sound” in accordance with national policy and guidance. There are four key areas that contribute to this, including:

A. Has the plan been positively prepared?

The plan must provide a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the councils’ objectively assessed housing needs. It also needs to have been informed by agreements with other local authorities, to meet the needs of our neighbouring authorities (where it is practical to do so) and be consistent with achieving sustainable development.

B. Is the plan justified?

The plan must include an appropriate strategy, taking into account reasonable alternatives, and be based on proportionate evidence. You can view all of the studies that we have used to guide us in our decision-making by visiting our evidence page on our website.

C. Is the plan effective?

The plan should be deliverable over its period (i.e. by 2041) based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities (such as strategic roads and/or rail networks) that have been dealt with rather than deferred.

D. Is the plan consistent with national policy and does it enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework?

If you feel that there is a justified local need which means we should depart from national policy, please provide evidence and make it clear in your comments what those local circumstances are.

southandvale.gov.uk/JLP



Appearing at the Examination

The response form asks you to indicate whether you would like to participate at the oral part of the public examination.

The Planning Inspector will decide the format of how issues are heard. You can state if you wish to participate during the oral hearing sessions of the examination. Alternatively, you may feel that your written representation is enough, which is perfectly acceptable and will carry the same weight as oral evidence.

How do I submit comments?

You can submit your online response form between **Tuesday 1 October and 11.59pm on Tuesday 12 November 2024** by visiting:

- southandvale.gov.uk/JLP-publication-stage

Paper response forms and documents are available at the locations below during their usual opening hours.

You can post your paper response form back to us at: **Planning Policy, South Oxfordshire and/or Vale of White Horse District Councils, Freepost SOUTH AND VALE CONSULTATIONS'** (no other address information or stamp is needed). Our preference is for electronic submissions, so no need to post a hard copy as well.

Deposit locations: All public libraries in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse; the district councils’ offices at Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JE; the Beacon Arts Centre, Wantage; Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot; and the Great Western Park District Community Centre, Didcot.

We hope this guidance note is helpful. If you have any questions or require this in an alternative format, please do not hesitate to contact us on **01235 422 600** or email planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk