

SODC ward councillor's report

Shiplake – 11th December 2023

New Joint local Plan – SODC & VoWH – regulation 18 – part 2 consultation

Preparation is underway for the next stage of South & Vale's Joint Local Plan

A preview of the Joint Local Plan consultation materials is available on both the [South Oxfordshire District Council website](#) and the Vale of White Horse one.

Innovative new planning policies to help South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse to address the challenges we face, are proposed – and you'll soon be able to have your say.

South Oxfordshire and VoWH District Councils are preparing to launch a second round of consultation early next year to develop our new Joint Local Plan to 2041.

The Joint Local Plan will help the councils determine planning applications, set out how and where new housing developments should take place, set standards for developments such as carbon and energy efficiency requirements, and guide what infrastructure is needed across the districts.

The next public consultation will ask for thoughts on proposed approaches across the range of policy areas, from reducing carbon emissions and nature recovery, to protecting and enhancing local heritage, meeting community infrastructure and transport needs, affordable housing, jobs and economic opportunities, and more. New policy areas not addressed in past plans include policies to protect valued landscapes, tranquil places and dark skies.

Backed by the extensive feedback gathered in 2022, as well as a suite of new studies and the latest industry research, the councils propose to reduce the number of new houses needed each year, improve minimum standards for water and energy efficiency, increase biodiversity and the share of affordable houses developments need to deliver, and more.

The first Joint Local Plan consultation received over 2,500 responses through a new interactive platform, for which the councils were announced a finalist in a national award for creating an interactive, digital-first approach in planning.

This innovation will continue in the new consultation, where the councils will be using a new digital engagement platform for people to read easy-to-understand summaries and share their feedback, or delve into the details of the draft policies. This will be as well as holding events and providing paper copies in libraries for those who prefer to get involved in more traditional formats.

The next consultation is scheduled to launch to the public in January 2024.

A direct link to the Joint Local Plan Consultation document: <https://jlp.southandvale.gov.uk/>

A direct link to the Emerging Policies Map: <https://jlp.southandvale.gov.uk/pages/policies-map>

New NPPF expected

Secretary of State Michael Gove stated that a new NPPF will be released to apply before Christmas.

Update on HIF 1 roads application

Following the application being called-in by the Secretary of State and the HIF1 Pre-Inquiry meeting earlier this month, the Inquiry is now scheduled to start on **20 February and run until May 2024**. The Inspector will be Lesley Coffey BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI. The Inquiry will be held at Bee House on Milton Park.

[You can view the Pre-Inquiry meeting notes here.](#)

Developer contributions

In October, SODC transferred and released over £1.0 million pounds in infrastructure funding to provide a boost to our communities.

SODC transferred £908,127 of Community Infrastructure Levy (**CIL**) contributions to town and parish councils to help support new development in the area.

Since April, a further £115,557 of **Section 106** funding has been released to relevant council departments, town or parish councils or local organisations towards improving community facilities for the benefit of current and future residents of the district.

You can see a breakdown of CIL monies transferred and approved S106 funds paid out for [South Oxfordshire](#) (document will download automatically). If you'd like further information, please [email the Infrastructure and Development Team](#).

Neighbourhood Plans

NPs for Lewknor, Towersey and Wheatley will go to the full council meeting on 14th December.

SODC car park fees

SODC car park fees are being simplified. In Henley car parks this will mean that the first hour remains free, two hours will be £2 and three hours will be £3. In other longer stay car parks there will be more options for stays with a rationalised fee structure. Investment in the car parks and toilet facilities continues.

AONB extension

Work on the AONB extension continues with consultants having completed the next stage of work for the parish group.

Covid-19

At 2nd December 2023, **reported** cases in SODC were at a weekly rate per 100k of population of **11** (it peaked at 1,504 on 6th January 2022) – a very low level - albeit that reporting may be somewhat incomplete. (Many don't report it, though hospitals are reporting an increase in infection levels

through their general testing and we hear of many reporting an infection). There has also been some interest in a flu variant being called “China or Chinese flu”.

Finally just to wish you all Season’s Greetings and a Happy New Year!

Mike Giles & Leigh Rawlins

District Councillors