

Top Ten Points for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 consultation

Frances Mortimer

Consultation website: <https://www.oxfordshireopenthought.org/oxfordshire-plan>
Respond online at <https://www.oxfordshireopenthought.org/consultation-response-form>,
or download a quick [form to fill in](#) and email (or post!).
Closing date 8 October 2021

Addressing climate change, restoring nature, wellbeing, equity

We strongly support the central commitment to addressing climate change and restoring nature which runs through the plan, as well as the priority given to improving wellbeing and reducing inequalities.

Economic growth

We are concerned that within the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, creating economic growth is also a goal in and of itself. We believe that creating economic growth should be subordinate to the other goals above and is not essential to achieve them. We therefore request that references to economic growth be deleted.

Housing targets

We challenge the methodology used to calculate housing 'needs'.

Of the options presented in Policy Option 28, the 'Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory' is the least worst.

However, the 101,580 additional homes that it proposes for Oxfordshire by 2050 is still far in excess of the ONS calculated housing need. The additional building would result in additional carbon emissions, loss of agricultural land, and potentially loss of rural character in areas affected. We call on the Future Oxfordshire Partnership to revisit the methodology by which the new homes targets have been estimated, and base this on meeting the needs of current residents and ONS estimates of population growth.

[more info on this here: <http://www.neednotgreedoxon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/OP2050-NNGO-flyer>]

Affordable homes

There is a pressing need for more affordable homes across the county. This should be addressed through provision of social housing and by measures other than continued expansion in house building, such as disincentives to the purchase of second homes, and by bringing long-term empty homes back into use.

Zero carbon new homes

We welcome the policies for all new homes to be zero carbon, include renewable energy generation and minimise water consumption. These standards should be introduced immediately for all current and future building, overriding previous standards.

Retrofit of existing homes

Retrofit of existing homes needs to be prioritised. This requires a coordinated, whole-house approach.

In future we want planning authorities to be required to obtain a whole-house retrofit plan from anyone who is submitting a planning application to work on their home.

Zero carbon journeys

We strongly support Policy Option 17: Towards a Net Zero Transport Network, and request that this be extended from new developments to cover existing settlements as well.

We would like to highlight the potential of trackless trams to provide rapid transit along key routes e.g. A40, with relatively low infrastructure costs. If trams were modular, they could split into smaller units to connect rural communities.

Sustainable freight management

Policy option 19 needs strengthening to proactively create the infrastructure needed for zero carbon freight transport, covering both long-distance transport infrastructure and the repurposing of existing car-based infrastructure (e.g. park and ride facilities) as distribution hubs for coordinated transfer of goods to smaller electric vehicles & e-cargo bikes for local delivery.

Water quality

We welcome the policy 275 to prevent new and existing development from contributing to water pollution. We further request that the plan commit to ecological restoration of Oxfordshire's water courses.

Air quality

The draft Plan's commitments to cleaner air are in general to be welcomed, but the commitment, apparently limited to new development, simply not to increase air pollution, is not enough. Air pollution is a major sustainability issue with considerable financial and health costs and a fatal health impact on children in particular. The severity of these

issues needs to be reflected by clear, ambitious and unambiguous commitments free of loopholes.

Urgent action needs to be taken, by way of spatial planning (expedient site selection), Clean Air Zones, reforestation, transition to zero carbon and sustainable active travel.