

OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD

POST SHMA STRATEGIC WORK PROGRAMME

Purpose of Report

1. To provide the Growth Board with a report on the findings of the Post SHMA Strategic Work Programme (the Programme), to recommend the adoption of the proposed apportionment of the unmet housing need for Oxford and approval of a Memorandum of Co-operation including both the apportionment and timetable for delivery of Oxford's unmet housing need as derived through the Programme.

Recommendation

The Growth Board is recommended to:

- (a) *Approve the apportionment of the agreed working figure for the unmet housing need for Oxford, in the interest of complying with the Duty to Co-operate.*
- (b) *Approve the attached Memorandum of Co-operation setting out the apportionment and timetable for delivery of the unmet housing need for Oxford*
- (c) *Formally recommend the approved apportionment to each of the Oxfordshire Local Planning Authorities for consideration in the preparation of their Local Plans, in the interest of meeting the objectively assessed housing needs for Oxfordshire*

Introduction

2. The Growth Board will be aware of the Programme and the progress reports received at Board meetings since its adoption in November 2014.
3. The Board will also recall that the agreed outputs of the Programme are:
 - An agreed apportionment for the unmet need for Oxford, based upon the working assumption that this unmet need totals 15,000 for the purposes of the Programme and that this figure would be confirmed through an update of Oxford's Local Plan.
 - A spatial scenario to support this apportionment, based upon a high level assessment of possible areas of search that could collectively sustain development sufficient to be able to support the unmet need.
 - A Memorandum of Co-operation between the councils, agreeing the apportionment and setting out the process by which each individual district council would address its commitment in its respective Local Plan.
4. The Post SHMA Strategic Programme Project Team (the Project Team) have now completed the Programme and the following constituent projects:
 - A study to consider the level of unmet need for Oxford - resulting in the working assumption of 15,000 homes.
 - A study of the green belt - providing a countywide assessment of how well the Oxford Green Belt performs against the five green belt purposes.
 - A submission of a list of possible areas of search for development for each council to provide for the unmet need - a "long list" that was reduced through a check and challenge process to a short list of 36 areas of search that would be subject to further examination.

- An assessment of the relative merits of each of the areas of search in the shortlist against criteria agreed by the Project Team.
 - An examination of both the transport and education implications of development of those areas of search on the shortlist - both as individual areas and cumulatively.
5. Each of the projects will be published on the Growth Board pages of the lead authority website, Oxfordshire County Council. The conclusions of the projects are summarised in the detailed report attached at Appendix One.

Programme Results

6. The Project Team has considered the conclusions and outcomes of the assessment of the 36 areas of search for growth and the infrastructure assessment, in order to arrive at an apportionment.
8. The report attached at Appendix One provides the detailed narrative of the Programme and how each of the constituent projects has influenced and guided officers in the consideration of the 36 areas of search that underpin the proposed apportionment. The table at Appendix five of the report attached at Appendix One then provides a summary of the Project Team's considerations and demonstrates how the Project Team have assessed the areas of search. It shows how the Project Team have divided the areas of search into those shortlisted (green), those rejected (red) and those classed as having potential for consideration but with material issues that currently preclude consideration (amber). The table provides this short list of areas of search, with the RAG rating demonstrated and the rationale for the rating.
9. The table in paragraph 137 of the report at Appendix One then summarises the results of the assessment and proposes a figure for each District to be apportioned, based upon those areas of search within that district that the Project Team has RAG rated green and collectively concluded are reasonable to consider as the basis for that apportionment.
12. The Growth Board should note that whilst the apportionment is a recommendation to them for approval, the short list of areas of search that underpins it must be viewed as indicative.
13. This is because, although the Project Team based the Programme's conclusions upon officers' collective existing knowledge of areas of search that would be most suitable to meet Oxford's unmet need, subsequent Local Plan work may bring other sites forward that are deemed more appropriate by the respective Local Planning Authority.
14. The Board will recall that the principles that underpin the Programme, approved by the Board in November 2014 and reproduced in Paragraph 51 of the full report at Appendix One, stated that the Programme should never seek to allocate or release sites, but should, at a high level identify the evidence of each district's ability to absorb additional growth to meet a share of Oxford's unmet need. It will be for each of the districts, through their Local Plan processes to allocate sites sufficient to meet their proposed share of Oxford's unmet need under the requirements of the Duty to Co-operate.

15. The recommended apportionment is as follows;

	Shortlisted 'green' areas of search
Cherwell	4400
Oxford	550
South	4950
Vale	2200
West	2750
Totals	14850

The Memorandum of Co-operation

15. Alongside the apportionment the Board are also asked to approve the Memorandum of Co-operation attached at Appendix Two to this report. This Memorandum sets out both the apportionment and an indicative timetable for each council to meet its share of the unmet need through its Local Plan.
16. The Board should note that the Memorandum is predicated upon known Local Plan timetables and could be subject to change. The apportionment is also based upon a common assumed start date of 2021 for the commencement of development after the adoption of the respective Local Plan reviews/update/refresh. This assumption does not preclude earlier delivery, but does recognise the complexity of the issues being considered and consequently has sought to factor in reasonable lead times to enable options to come forward and to be fully considered through the Local Plan process.

Conclusions

17. The report attached at Appendix One demonstrates in detail how the Programme has met the Duty to Co-operate by arriving at an agreed apportionment for the unmet need for Oxford.
18. The Board are recommended to approve the apportionment, agree to the Memorandum of Co-operation attached at Appendix Two and formally recommend to the five Oxfordshire Local Planning Authorities that they agree to consider the apportionment in their respective Local Plan processes.