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OXFORDSHIRE

G R O W T H B O A R D

Mr Graeme Markland
Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer
Thames Town Council
Town Hall
High Street
Thames OX9 3DP

3rd August 2018



Dear Mr Markland

The Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal 3 Year Housing Land Supply Consultation

Thank you for your letter dated 12th July which was addressed to Councillor Susan Brown as Chair of the Oxfordshire Growth Board. The Chair of the Growth Board passed to South Oxfordshire District Council at the beginning of July. I am therefore replying as Director of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.

Your letter was in response to the Growth Board's three year land supply consultation. The website that promoted the consultation provided contact details for responses to the consultation by the deadline of 12th July. Unfortunately, as this letter was not submitted through these channels and was only received by the City Council on the 23rd July, it was not picked up in the original report to the Board on the responses. However at the Growth Board meeting on 31st July your letter and other late responses were highlighted and the Board agreed that the final report would be adjusted to take account of these responses and that they would also be forwarded directly to Government for their consideration.

In response to the particular points in your letter:

We note your concerns with the South Oxfordshire Local Plan, however that is not a matter for the Growth Board. The SODC Local Plan is a matter for discussion with that local planning authority, although we would highlight that the plan will be tested through its own Examination in Public. You may choose to raise concerns through the SODC Local Plan process and participate at the examination.

The decision of the Board to endorse the preparation of a Joint Statutory Spatial plan to 2050 includes a commitment that it will be a strategic spatial plan that will build upon existing local plans and offer a strategic framework for their development within a holistic county wide planning framework. The scope of the JSSP will be considered across each of the constituent authorities, and will be a statutory plan and as such it will need to comply fully with NPPF requirements.

The plan is not being taken forward by a joint planning authority as your letter states but instead the constituent Oxfordshire planning authorities, working in partnership to develop a plan that will then be approved by each individual planning authority.

As part of the Housing and Growth Deal the partners provisionally agreed certain planning freedoms and flexibilities with Government that we believed would help protect Oxfordshire from unwelcome speculative development whilst we moved to this new planning framework. Government agreed in principle to these but asked us to test these with local residents and stakeholders. This we have done and are pleased that the response has been supportive, although we note the concerns of some.

As we take forward the JSSP it is our intention to fully engage with local residents and we hope that Thame Parish Council will play an active role in helping us to develop a Plan that articulates our collective ambitions for Oxfordshire.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Caroline Green', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Caroline Green
Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Director