

OXFORDSHIRE HOUSING & GROWTH DEAL Q&A

The NIC report recommended investment to create 1m new homes between Oxfordshire and Cambridge – how many would be in Oxfordshire?

There is no specific allocation for Oxfordshire. The NIC report recommends up to 1m new homes by 2050 for the arc as a whole. Oxfordshire is already planning for 100,000 new homes and 85,000 new jobs in the period 2011-31, based on the scale of housing need identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and forecast jobs growth in the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan. This growth is set out in current and emerging Local Plans. We need to ensure growth takes place in a planned and sustainable way with the infrastructure that is required to support it.

Would those houses be in addition to targets agreed in this deal?

The deal is about bringing forward and implementing current planned growth, as set out in local plans. Any future forecasting for new homes beyond current local plan periods will reflect a combination of factors including changing population and demographics.

The deal is dependent on agreeing a plan with government – what about agreeing the plan with the people of Oxfordshire?

All six councils will be asked to agree the plan on behalf of the residents and businesses they serve. Furthermore, integral to the deal is the development of a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan, as discussed and approved by the Oxfordshire Growth Board last month. Development of the JSSP will give the public a clear overview of and transparent engagement in the county growth/development picture, thus enabling a better understanding of the growth trajectory and underpinning evidence across the county and an increased ability to engage in collective decision making.

The Secretary of State letter admits that Oxfordshire is planning to build more homes than are required by the government's assessment – why try to accelerate growth beyond what is necessary against many residents' wishes?

The Government's consultation on housing need sets minimum delivery expectations and does not take account of backlog needs, or the additional housing requirements that derive from expected economic and employment growth. Oxfordshire has full employment and an increasing pressure on housing, and we expect to see continued economic growth in Oxfordshire as jobs are created, and the approach proposed in the Deal supports planned and managed growth to ensure there are homes and good transport infrastructure

What assurances can you give that building roads and homes will not have a negative impact on the environment and quality of life in Oxfordshire?

All individual schemes, be they roads, sustainable and active travel schemes or planning applications for new homes or jobs are subject to their own environmental assessment.

Can OGB guarantee that it will protect the existing green belt?

All the partners on the OGB are committed to protecting the green belt. The exact location of the green belt does vary as use of land changes, but the principle of no net loss to green belt remains. Any green belt release is considered and tested

through Local Plans - so following due development plan process - and are subject to examination. Nothing in the deal changes that.

What will the £150m for infrastructure funding be spent on? Does OxIS provide the list of spending priorities for this money?

This is yet to be agreed, but OxIS does give us a list of ranked schemes to help inform investment decisions, and it is already helping shape our bids to government or other sources of funding to deliver strategic infrastructure, including in discussions about securing this deal for Oxfordshire.

Can you guarantee that Oxfordshire people will benefit from the affordable homes created in this deal?

The Deal provides for an additional £60 million to support the development of affordable housing over the next five years. Oxfordshire people will definitely benefit as more social housing and affordable housing is brought forward for tenants, and as the housing market is made generally more accessible by increasing the supply of homes.

What is a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan exactly?

The purpose of the JSSP will be to provide an Oxfordshire-wide; integrated strategic planning framework to help support sustainable growth across the County, including the planned delivery of the new homes and economic development, and the anticipated supporting infrastructure needed. Together with OxIS and the SEP, a JSSP will provide a strategic planning framework for sustainable growth for existing and new communities and a platform from which to secure funding for infrastructure needed to achieve the best outcomes for Oxfordshire.

See [Oxfordshire Growth Board report](#) for more details

And where does that leave local plans and local accountability?

Local plans will remain in place and the spatial plan will provide an overarching framework.

Where does this leave the Housing Infrastructure Fund bids we submitted only last month?

This deal is in addition to the HIF bids. We are still awaiting the outcome of the HIF bids expected early next year.