

**South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041**

**Statement of Common Ground**

**Between**

**South Oxfordshire District Council,**

**Vale of White Horse District Council and**

**CBRE Limited on behalf of Ptarmigan Planning 4 Ltd**

**March 2026**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) has been prepared by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils (“the councils”) and CBRE Limited on behalf of Ptarmigan Planning 4 Ltd, hereafter referred to as “the parties”. This SOCG documents those matters agreed with regard to the South and Vale Joint Local Plan 2041 and supporting documents, to assist the Inspector during the examination of the local plan.
- 1.2. This SOCG particularly relates to the continued allocation of land at Berinsfield within Policy AS1 for the development of approximately 1,700 homes and Policy AS13 ‘Berinsfield Garden Village’. The agreed matters have been structured to assist the Inspector through the examination process.
- 1.3. The councils propose the site for continued allocation for housing development in the Joint Local Plan having considered reasonable alternatives including assessing the relevant evidence, and following consultation with stakeholders and the public.
- 1.4. A previous SOCG was prepared for this site in June 2020 as part of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 process, which is available to view from the council’s website<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.5. This SOCG sets out the background/context of the site and previous engagement between the parties and details of the past and ongoing pre-

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<sup>1</sup>[https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic\\_serve.jsp?ID=1670533470&CODE=372B0286AFC64281B367A09BB1173064](https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1670533470&CODE=372B0286AFC64281B367A09BB1173064)

application engagement. Section 3 then sets out the agreed matters in relation to the following key topics:

- Spatial Strategy and Evidence Base
- Policy LS1 and AS1
- Garden Village
- Regeneration Package
- Infrastructure
- Range of Land Uses
- Housing Trajectory

1.6. Section 4 identifies outstanding matters between the parties.

## **2. Background / Context**

2.1. The site is located to the east of Berinsfield. The site measures approximately 130 hectares and consists of undeveloped farmland. There are some farm buildings and a small number of houses on the site, at Mount Farm. The site is bounded to the north by further farmland and a small area of woodland. The northern boundary consists of a hedgerow and the southern edge of the woodland. The site is bounded to its west side by the eastern section of Berinsfield's peripheral road, beyond which lies the settlement of Berinsfield. A cemetery is also located adjacent to the western boundary. The western boundary consists of a tree belt at the southern end and a hedgerow to the north. To the south of the site is a solar farm and beyond this Queenford Lakes. The southern boundary is marked by the edge of the solar farm, and Burcot Lane and Dorchester Road that provide access from Berinsfield to Drayton St Leonard. Further undeveloped farmland lies to the east of the site.

2.2. There are no statutory landscape or wildlife designations on this site. The woodland to the north of the site and the lakes to the south are BAP priority habitats. The lakes to the south are also designated Local Wildlife Sites. The site is neither within nor adjacent to a conservation area. There are no Listed Buildings on the site. There are 15 listed buildings/structures in Drayton St Leonard, including private houses, the war memorial and the church. Those closest to the site are on the High Street (White Cottage and the War Memorial) and the Church and tombs on Church Lane.

### Local Plans

#### *South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (adopted 2020)*

2.3. South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 allocates the site (and released it from the Green Belt) via Policy STRAT 10 – Berinsfield Garden Village and STRAT 10i –

Land at Berinsfield Garden Village, to deliver approximately 1,700 new homes, at least 5 hectares of additional employment land and supporting services and facilities.

- 2.4. The village of Berinsfield is deprived in comparison to South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire as a whole, particularly in terms of income, education, health and wellbeing. Before the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 inset the village and the area relating to the allocation to the east of the village from the Green Belt, development opportunities were limited due to the village's location in the Green Belt. This was beginning to impact on the long-term sustainability of the facilities and services and the village's ability to act as a local centre. The village and allocation area remain surrounded by Green Belt.
- 2.5. The local exceptional circumstances which enabled the releasing of the land from the Green Belt at Berinsfield in the Local Plan 2035 were as follows:
- The tenure mix of housing in Berinsfield is more unbalanced than in other parts of the district, with higher levels of social rent. Releasing land for development will help to rebalance the mix, as well as provide further opportunities for employment and service provision; and
  - For Oxfordshire, the village scores highly on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019), particularly in the following domains:
    - Income;
    - Employment;
    - Education, skills and training, including adult skills, children and young people educational attainment; and
    - Access to housing, including affordability.

2.6. Development in this specific location will help address these matters.

2.7. These circumstances are still relevant to the Berinsfield allocation in the Joint Local Plan. They are linked to the facilitation of regeneration of Berinsfield through the allocation.

#### *South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041*

2.8. The site is proposed for continued allocation in the Joint Local Plan for approximately 1,700 homes, an additional 60 units of housing with care for older people, between 6 and 10 pitches for gypsies and travellers, 5 hectares of additional employment land, and supporting services and facilities. The site will be delivered in accordance with an agreed comprehensive masterplan, as set out in the Plan. The site is expected to deliver a high-quality development that is designed to facilitate the regeneration of Berinsfield, including how it interacts

and connects with the wider, existing village. The site will deliver sufficient education provision, to be agreed with the Local Education Authority, which is likely to be the provision of one on site primary school and contributions to the enhancement of Abbey Woods Academy, as well as contributions to appropriate off site secondary school and Special Education Needs and Disabilities provision.

- 2.9. Development of the site will also facilitate the regeneration of Berinsfield, including facilitating interactions and connections with the existing village. It must be demonstrated how the necessary regeneration package has been identified and will be delivered, referring to the Infrastructure Development Plan, which is likely to include the refurbishment and expansion of the Abbey Sports Centre and library to accommodate new community facilities in a “community hub”. This may include new premises for an expanded health centre or alternatively premises for a new health centre provided within the new development.
- 2.10. The site will need to be delivered in accordance with the policies of the development plan, including with Policies AS1 – Land at Berinsfield Garden Village and AS13 – Berinsfield Garden Village. Policy AS1 sets out a series of site-specific requirements and Policy AS13 provides the Garden Village principles which apply to the area.
- 2.11. The majority of the site is in single landownership.
- 2.12. Pre-application engagement has been held between Ptarmigan, South Oxfordshire District Council, and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). This process provided feedback on a detailed Masterplan Framework Document (MDF) which was also the subject of extensive public and stakeholder engagement. Separate pre-application engagement with OCC identified that the site is in principle suitable and is capable of providing deliverable access options.
- 2.13. Ptarmigan has commissioned a number of surveys in respect of the site that have been conducted and concluded including archaeology, ecology, land contamination, flood risk and drainage technical information. The technical work culminated in the formal submission of an EIA Scoping request to South Oxfordshire District Council in 2017 (REF: [P17/S3835/SCO](#)). Following this, initial pre-application discussions took place between the parties in summer 2019 and then again in 2023.
- 2.14. The parties are committed to partnership working, including regular meetings with other key stakeholders, to ensure the optimum outcome for the site that delivers new residential development in a sustainable location and the necessary regeneration of Berinsfield.

### **3. Agreed Matters**

- 3.1. The site is sustainable, suitable, available and developable. The site is not subject to any insurmountable environmental, legal, ownership, access or technical constraints that would otherwise impede development.
- 3.2. The parties agree that the site will deliver an exemplar Garden Community exemplifying sustainable development with high quality and good design hard-wired from the outset<sup>2</sup>.

#### *Spatial Strategy and Evidence Base*

- 3.3. The continued allocation at Berinsfield is in accordance with the spatial strategy of the Joint Local Plan as set out in Policy SP1.
- 3.4. The parties agree that affordable housing provision in respect of tenure will be delivered in accordance with Policy HOU3 and AS1, with a site-specific mix of affordable tenures informed by robust local evidence that seeks to address existing local need, as well as rebalance the mix of housing tenures across the Garden Village. This may result in a different tenure mix than that identified by HOU3, and if so, this will be informed by robust local evidence.
- 3.5. The parties agree that there is a clear need for deliverable sites in the short and long term to meet identified housing needs in a timely manner and to sustain a five-year housing land supply.
- 3.6. Where any development is proposed within the site allocation on land that falls within Flood Zones 2 or 3, or where there are significant surface water flow paths, the parties agree that detailed modelling would be required at the planning application stage, with a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) provided. The councils' Flood Risk Engineers would also provide further advice. The parties agree with the flood risk requirements set out in Policy CE6 (Flood Risk).

#### *Policy LS1 and AS1*

- 3.7. The parties agree that the general large scale major site requirements set out in Policy LS1 and the site-specific requirements set out in Policy AS1 identify the key requirements for this site to deliver.
- 3.8. Policy AS1 in the JLP proposes to allocate land at Berinsfield for the development of approximately 1,700 homes, an additional 60 units of housing with care for older people, between 6 and 10 pitches for gypsies and travellers, 5 hectares of additional employment land, and supporting services and facilities.

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<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018) Garden Communities, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/garden-communities-prospectus>

- 3.9. The parties agree that the allocation of AS1 is robust and soundly based and is supported by the councils' evidence base in regard to the approximate number of dwellings.
- 3.10. The parties agree that approximately 1,700 dwellings can be delivered within the AS1 site allocation boundary.

#### *Garden Village*

- 3.11. The parties agree that a development can be delivered on site in accordance with Policy AS13 (Berinsfield Garden Village) – save for the matters listed as outstanding (in section 4). Policy AS13 identifies the principles that development within Berinsfield, including the allocation site, should accord with, referencing the Town and Country Planning Association's (TCPA's) Garden City principles and locally-specific Berinsfield Garden Village principles.
- 3.12. Berinsfield was awarded Garden Village status in June 2019 and has the potential to become an exemplar for the delivery of high-quality place making and well-being. Both parties agree that a sense of cohesion should be delivered, considering how existing facilities and services can be improved and expanded to bring benefits and regeneration to the existing village.

#### *Regeneration package*

- 3.13. The parties agree that the IDP is a living document and will evolve as further detail is known regarding the cost of the necessary regeneration and contributions sought for infrastructure. The council undertook an early consultation in January 2025 on the Regeneration Strategy that it is in the process of producing as a corporate document, which once complete, will be used to inform ongoing work with the land developer. Discussions have been ongoing between the council in a corporate capacity and Ptarmigan on a number of matters including the preparation of the Regeneration Strategy. The final necessary regeneration package and contributions to infrastructure required by the developers of the AS1 site will be agreed through the development management process.
- 3.14. The parties agree that the expansion of Berinsfield is considered acceptable only if it will lead directly to the delivery of the necessary regeneration package, which will be informed by other council projects and agreed through the development management process.

#### *Infrastructure*

- 3.15. The parties agree the site-specific requirements set out in Policy AS1 generally identify the key infrastructure requirements for this site to deliver. The parties agree that the IDP is a living document and will evolve as further detail is known regarding the cost of the necessary regeneration and contributions sought for infrastructure.



3.23. CBRE on behalf of Ptarmigan Planning 4 Ltd contend that the site can come forward a year sooner. Ptarmigan Planning 4's estimated development trajectory is as follows:

Total 2021 to 2041	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	2025/ 26	2026/ 27	2027/ 28	2028/ 29	2029/ 30	2030/ 31
1,725	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75	150
	2031/ 32	2032/ 33	2033/ 34	2034/ 35	2035/ 36	2036/ 37	2037/ 38	2038/ 39	2039/ 40	2040/ 41
	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150

#### 4. Outstanding Matters

- 4.1. CBRE on behalf of Ptarmigan Planning 4 Ltd's Regulation 19 response details their concerns with the site-specific policy requirements for the allocation, as well as other proposed policies from the Plan which will have implications on future development on the site.
- 4.2. The parties agree that concerns raised by the promoter regarding site-specific requirements including: gypsy and traveller provision; affordable housing; transport infrastructure; BNG delivery; the policy response to climate change; and the concept plan are matters for the examination.
- 4.3. The councils acknowledge the concerns raised in the Regulation 19 response on the subject of viability. The parties are unable to agree on this matter.

#### 5. Conclusion

- 5.1. Ptarmigan Planning 4 Ltd support the allocation of land at Berinsfield within Policy AS1, and the parties agree that the site is suitable, available and developable for sustainable housing development.
- 5.2. The parties are working jointly to enable delivery of the planned development and will continue to work cooperatively on all matters of mutual interest.

#### Signatures

Signed on behalf of South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council



Name: Tim Oruye

Job Title: Head of Policy and Programmes

Date 18.03.2026

Signed by CBRE Limited on behalf of Ptarmigan Planning 4 Limited



Name: Alison Tero

Job Title: Executive Director

Date 18.03.2026