

Supplementary Papers

Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee

held on Thursday, 2 October 2025 at 12.00 pm
in Meeting Room 1, Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JE

3. **Public participation (Pages 2 - 6)**

Responses to the submitted public speaking requests



Public speakers

2 October 2025

Responses shown in italics

1. Oxfordshire Roads Action Alliance has submitted the following address

Item 6: Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy

The refresh paper credits the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) as successful in helping secure the **Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal** (H&GD) and **Housing Infrastructure Fund** (HIF) bids. OxIS is a ranking of infrastructure projects across the county, along with their funding deficits, and is used by the County Council in its funding applications to demonstrate a strategic approach to supporting planned growth.

Oxfordshire Roads Action Alliance has supported communities in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse affected by road schemes funded in part by the HIF1 bid and the Growth Deal.

His Majesties Government stated that the HIF1 and the H&GD bids did not alter statutory functions, duties and rights of Local Planning Authorities to plan for growth. OxIS includes growth that is not identified in the latest, emerging Local Plans, or their associated Infrastructure Delivery Plans. Should OxIS be updated to rank only unfunded infrastructure for growth in the most up to date plans?

The report acknowledges public opposition to expenditure on road expansion schemes that support out of date policies, do not contribute directly to the achievement of net zero, and that face multiple objections.

OxIS refers to improving sustainable transport provision and managing demand as prioritised over capacity creation on the SRN (page 60). For the local road network, OxIS says the LTCP emphasises the need to reduce reliance on road schemes, but: "*in some cases new roads, or widening roads and junctions may be necessary to ensure a reliable and effective transport network*". OxIS omits LTCP Policy 36a that "**road capacity schemes must only be considered after all other options have been explored: this is not a sustainable long term solution because we have found that road schemes often generate new demand and quickly reach capacity again.**" National Highways is responsible and accountable for the SRN including A34/M40 through Oxfordshire and any associated impacts. Any other new or existing roads would be for Oxfordshire County Council and any traffic and its associated impacts as a result of attracting trips from the strategic road network, or adding capacity on local roads for traffic, would be a matter for Oxfordshire County Council. ORAA contests that

the LTCP supports the public purse funding road capacity schemes in lots of circumstances. This undermines the core aim of the LTCP.

Has OxIS provided a realistic or accurate estimate of funding shortfalls for infrastructure schemes? If not, how can project cost estimates be more accurate? The county council in bidding to deliver schemes **takes all the financial risk of cost over runs**. This is a major concern often expressed by communities to ORAA.

The H&GD included a £150 million Housing from Infrastructure (HfI) programme to accelerate planned homes. There was an expectation the county would recoup forward finance of schemes from developer contributions. There were instances when the county had no legal mechanism to request retrospective contributions as expected. What lessons have been learnt, and will there be a report explaining what actions the county has taken?

ORAA is a community alliance and campaign group opposed to unsustainable road development in Oxfordshire. We would welcome inclusion in the second round of consultation, intended for a wide audience in January- February of 2026.

Response to specific questions in the above text:

a) OxIS includes growth that is not identified in the latest, emerging Local Plans, or their associated Infrastructure Delivery Plans. Should OxIS be updated to rank only unfunded infrastructure for growth in the most up to date plans?

OxIS takes a strategic longer-term look to 2050 to understand infrastructure needs to support the longer-term vision for Oxfordshire. Funding matters will be considered through the scheme assessment and prioritisation process and reported upon in the final report for consultation.

b) ORAA contests that the LTCP supports the public purse funding road capacity schemes in lots of circumstances. This undermines the core aim of the LTCP

The council takes an overall 'decide and provide' approach, complying with the LTCP and policies, this does allow for infrastructure to be built for sustainable modes. During the Inquiry on Didcot Garden Town Highway Infrastructure, [Proof of Evidence](#) was provided by Oxfordshire County Council relating to their Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and demonstrated how the Scheme (including the methodology employed in the transport modelling for the Scheme).

c) Has OxIS provided a realistic or accurate estimate of funding shortfalls for infrastructure schemes? If not, how can project cost estimates be more accurate? The county council in bidding to deliver schemes takes all the financial risk of cost over runs.

The latest information on schemes, including costs is included, taking into account current plans and evidence. Scheme costs are refined as particular schemes move through appropriate business case and/ or detailed feasibility and engineering design work. Where the County Council is bidding for funding more detailed costing will be undertaken and risk taken into account.

d) The H&GD included a £150 million Housing from Infrastructure (HfI) programme to accelerate planned homes. There was an expectation the county would recoup forward

finance of schemes from developer contributions. There were instances when the county had no legal mechanism to request retrospective contributions as expected. What lessons have been learnt and will there be a report explaining what actions the county has taken?

The recovery of the H&GD funding was challenged as the requirement for developers as it was not in Local Plan policy or formally agreed by the Growth Board (at the time). This put the Councils in a weak position when challenged in a formal Planning appeal. Any funding received since the Housing Growth Deal has had a clear legal position to recover forward funding from developers - through the legal agreement with government. The county is working with the districts and city councils, where appropriate to include requirements to recoup funding into Local Plan policy. The Councils are being very clear and transparent with developers when money is being used to front fund infrastructure and when County or Districts are contributing towards a piece of infrastructure. We are making sure that where we require a developer to pay for infrastructure we are ensuring that we check against the CIL regulation tests so we can be assured that the funding is valid and can be recovered.