

# Planning Reform 2025

# Much has happened since the General Election on July 4, 2024

One of Labour's key issues throughout the election campaign was planning reform

Planning reform will touch all levels of planning:

- Neighbourhood Plans (like ours)
- Cherwell District Council & the Local Plan
- Oxfordshire County Council (Infrastructure)
- Groups of local interest such as the Oxford Greenbelt Network, Council to Protect Rural England & others
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Inspectorate – housing appeals
- Government Reforms on housing infrastructure
- Direct or Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

# Cherwell District Council's Local Plan

- Has been delayed whilst awaiting the election results
- We have now been asked for information including:
  - If required, do you propose to allocate housing sites within the neighbourhood plan?
  - If you are not proposing to review your neighbourhood plan, or you do not wish to allocate sites for housing, would you object to sites within your neighbourhood area being allocated within the emerging local plan if required?

# What could this include?

- When preparing the NP we had village meetings to discuss a range of possibilities. We need to bear in mind historical context, and the green belt and conservation area. A key document for us has been the Conservation Area Appraisal of 2009.
- Areas discounted as housing sites by the village in 2015:
  - land on the west of the B430
  - fields north of Southfield Development (PC won refusal at Appeal)
  - All green belt land
  - The Schoolfield
- To change any of this we would need a village consultation

# National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Is not really binding but councils are expected to take it into account
- Includes proposed reforms to the framework and other changes to the planning system (published July 30<sup>th</sup> 2024)
- Is now holding a Consultation to end of September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024
- This consists of 109 questions based on a wide range of topics

Reform of NPPF Contents. [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHLG)

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# How do we manage this as a Parish Council?

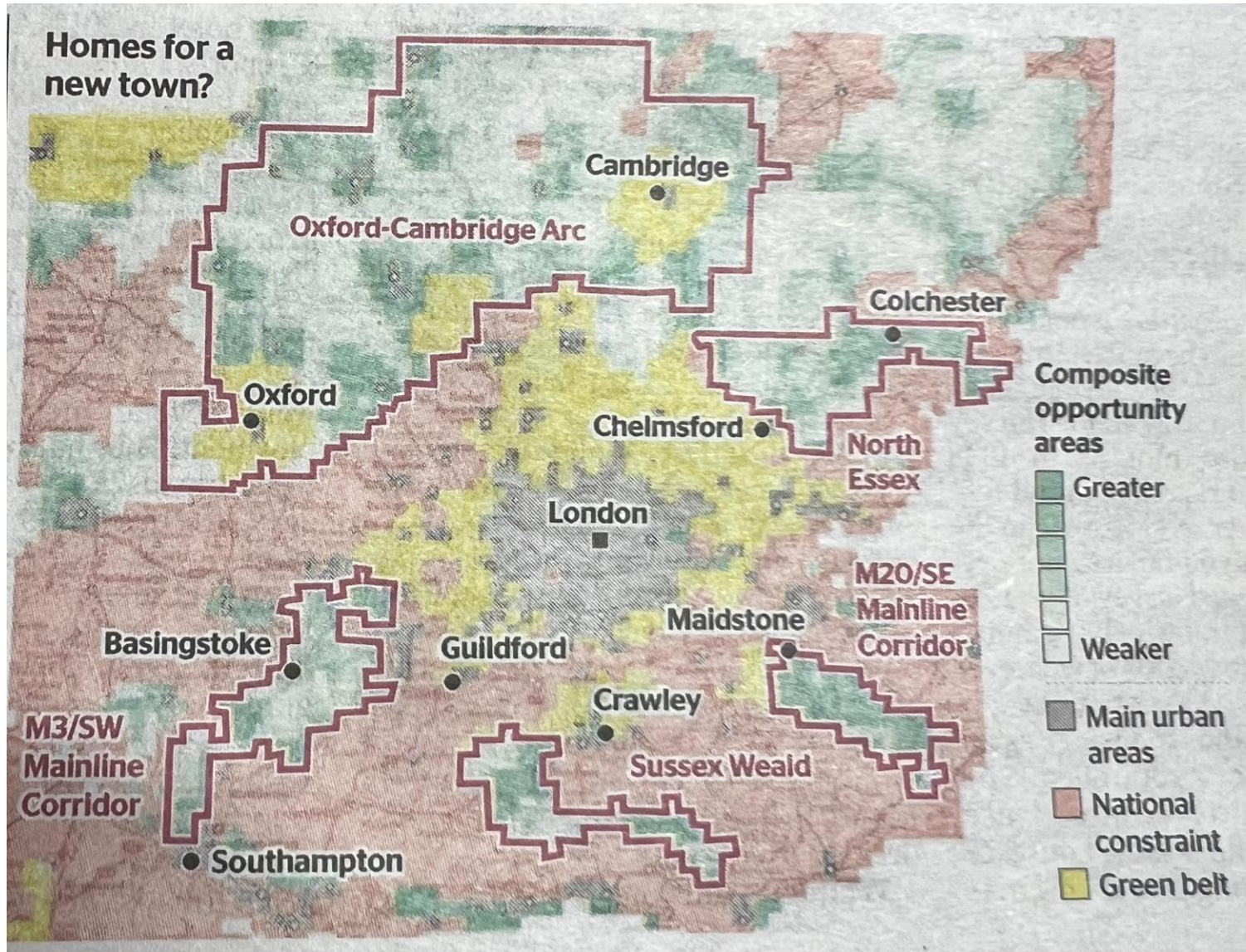
- It is important to respond as we are half Green Belt and of that we don't know what would be considered Grey Belt: out of use plots? Non-agricultural land? This includes Brownfield land (that which has been previously developed that has been abandoned or underutilized and may carry a risk of pollution)
- Oxford Green Belt Network has sent some advice to the 57 Parish Councils in the Oxford Green Belt which includes responses to key questions. Should we follow this advice? (email from Clerk)

# Government Reforms to include:

- 1.5 million homes in this parliament
- Housing Infrastructure and projects to begin ie Dorchester at Upper Heyford for 6,000 homes.
- These projects would go directly to the government for approval surpassing the District Council
- Potential other places for a new town. Read Emma Duncan's weekend essay in the Times Saturday, August 24<sup>th</sup> "How to build a new town: all the clues lie in our recent past"



# “HOMES FOR A NEW TOWN” Emma Duncan



# Other matters to consider that will affect WotG

- Role of the Inspectorate – what weight will local consultations have? (Note current decision re: housing need numbers that has gone to Judicial Review)
- East West Rail
- Hs2
- Rise of the Oxford/Cambridge Corridor
  
- Will the housing be towns or developments on the edge of villages
- What value will village life continue to have?