Supplement for

Cabinet

Wednesday 15 June 2022

6.00 pm

Agenda Item 11: Draft West End and Osney Mead Supplementary Planning Document - Appendices 1 - 3

Contents

11.	**Draft West End and Osney Mead Supplementary Planning Document – Appendices 1 - 3**	3 - 402

The agenda, reports and any additional supplements can be found together with this supplement on the committee meeting webpage.

This page is intentionally left blank

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 2
2. VISION 6
3. STRATEGIES TO INFORM DESIGNING AND ASSESSING PROPOSALS 11
3.1 Green and Blue Network strategy and natural spaces 11
3.2 Heritage strategy 12
3.3 Movement strategy 15
3.4 Public Realm strategy 17
3.5 Arts and cultural strategy 20
3.6 Meanwhile use strategy 22
3.7 Land use strategy 23
3.8 Built form 24
3.9 Transformational sites 29

DRAFT

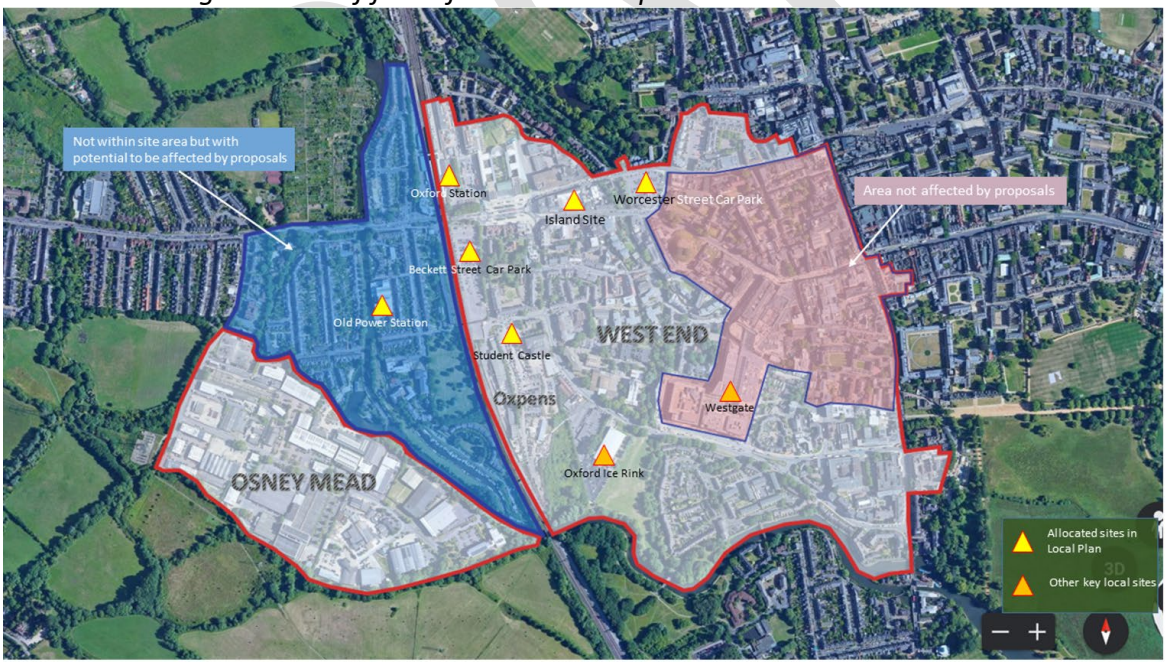
1. INTRODUCTION

The West End and Osney Mead area

1. The West End and Osney Mead presents an exciting once in a generation opportunity to bring transformational benefits to this area to include new mixed-use developments that seek to complement existing uses in the city centre. The area already contains a wide variety of buildings and uses including retail, residential, community, cultural and evening economy uses, City of Oxford College, University of Oxford colleges and the Said Business School, offices, a community centre, and the city's key areas of public transport provision and interchange, including Oxford Station and Gloucester Green bus and coach station. The area must continue to provide these facilities and functions, whilst also maximising opportunities for regeneration. The map shows the site area considered in this document.

2. Whilst much of the West End area falls within the current city centre boundary, the greatest potential for regeneration and transformational change is in the western part of the area and at Osney Mead. There are multiple landowners across the area, and development will come forward on individual sites at different times. Some development sites comprise more than one landowner, which will require co-ordination and co-operation between different parties to realise a holistic vision.

Figure 1: Map showing the West End and Osney Mead site allocations, key sites within the area and showing the area of focus for new development.



Status of the SPD

3. A Supplementary Planning Document gives detail and advice on the implementation of existing adopted policies. There are many adopted policies that are likely to be relevant to development on the site in Oxford Local Plan 2036. The SPD is intended to give detail to show how these should be applied in the West End and Osney Mead

area. Many of the Policies of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 will be relevant to schemes across the West End and Osney Mead area, but particularly relevant are:

- Policy AOC1, which designates the area as an 'Area of Change' and sets out principles for development in the area including that it creates high-density urban living that makes efficient use of land, maintains a vibrant mix of uses and maximises the area's contribution to Oxford's knowledge economy
- Policy SP1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 supports mixed use development across the West End, aiming to deliver at least 734 homes across five named sites: (a) Oxford Station / Becket Street; (b) Student Castle, Osney Lane; (c) Worcester Street Car Park; (d) Land between Park End and Hythe Bridge Street known as the 'Island site'; and (e) Oxpens.
- In addition, Policy SP2 allocates Osney Mead Industrial Estate for a mixed use development including employment and academic uses, as well as affordable housing, employer-linked affordable housing, open market housing, and student accommodation.

4. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (paragraph 8(3)) state that: 'Any policies contained in a supplementary planning document must not conflict with the adopted development plan.' The SPD gives greater detail to policies of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 explaining how to meet the policy requirements in the West End, setting out in more detail what is expected and how policy requirements can be met in the context of the West End. It does not and cannot override the policies of the Local Plan.

5. The SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of any planning application made on sites in the West End. The Spatial Framework and Design Guide, Appendix 1 and 2, form part of this SPD. Once the landowners are ready, detailed plans for the sites can be drawn up based on the guidance in this SPD. The West End and Osney Mead SPD provides an overarching spatial framework, helping to co-ordinate public realm improvements, infrastructure and design across the area, as sites are brought forward by developers over time. It ensures that, even as sites come forward at different rates, the needs of the West End and the wider vision for it as a whole are fully considered and planned for. As such, the SPD helps provide greater certainty for the public and developers and will help applicants to inform on design principles of place-making.

How to use this SPD

6. The City Council appointed consultants, Levitt Bernstein, to undertake work on a spatial framework for the West End, which is attached as Appendix 1. In addition, Levitt Bernstein has produced a Design Guide for the area, which is attached as Appendix 2. The Spatial Framework sets out the principles for development and strategies for individual aspects of development in the area, such as enhancing the green and blue network, public realm and movement. The Design Guide adds more detail on what aspects to consider in design terms within these strategies in order to ensure high quality and cohesive design across the area. These pieces of work help to consider the area cohesively and ensure the various developments coming forward are set within an overarching framework. Prior to this public consultation,

they have been informed by stakeholder meetings and workshops and extensive collection and interrogation of an evidence base. These pieces of work are appended to the Spatial Framework, found in Appendix 1 of the SPD.

7. The main body of the SPD summarises and explains how to use and apply the principles of the Spatial Framework and Design Guide in developing and assessing proposals. The SPD explains what is needed in different areas or types of area in the West End and Osney Mead in order to meet the individual strategies, and pulling in the relevant details of the Design Guide. For all sites this can be used to identify the parts of the strategy and Design Guide advice that is most relevant to each part of the area. The SPD then picks out some key sites and goes into more detail about the interventions expected there. This does not replace the other sections for these sites but should be read alongside them.

Objectives of the SPD

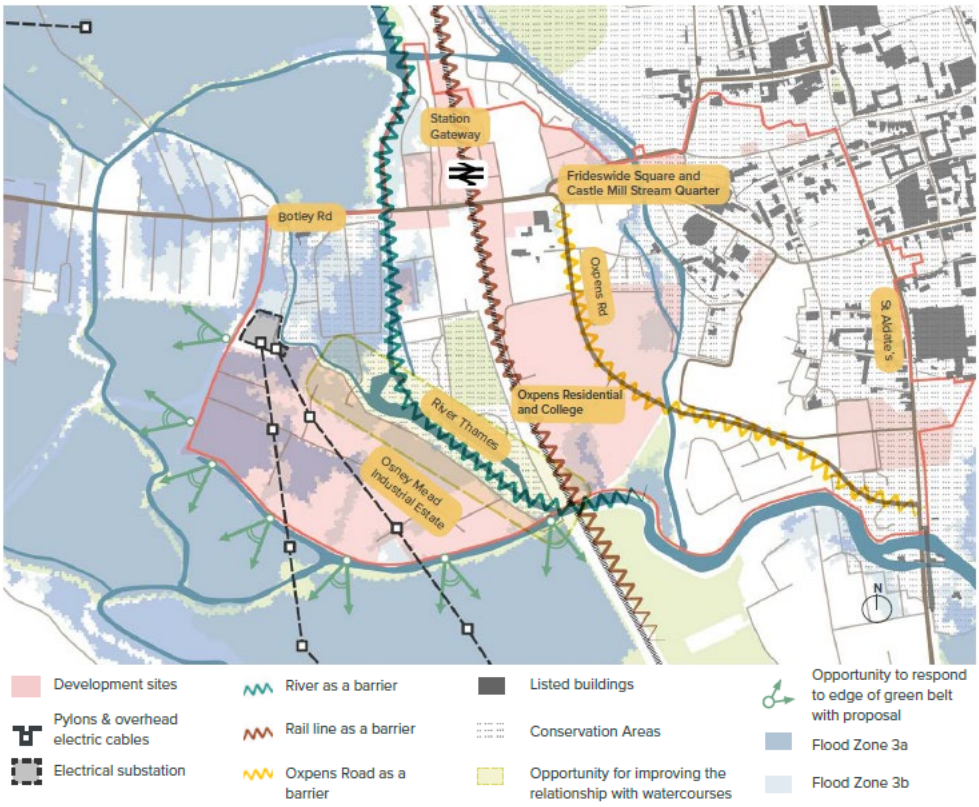
8. The key objectives and intended benefits of the SPD are to:

- Setting out the scope and parameters for development proposals;
- Set out a clear Vision and show how it can be realised;
- To help decision makers assess planning applications in terms of their contribution to achieving the vision for the area of change in Policy AOC1;
- Help to unlock sites by identifying infrastructure needs generated by the cumulative developments of the area and setting out how they can best be delivered;
- Setting out guidance and a framework to enable a comprehensive masterplan for Osney Mead in accordance with Policy SP2;
- Provide continuity.

9. The Spatial Framework attached as Appendix 1 is based on significant contextual analysis, including on policy, emerging developments, historic context, demographics, activity, character, public realm, movement and flooding. This concludes with an identification of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the West End.

Figure 2: Diagram showing key threats and opportunities

DRAFT



10. This shows that there are significant opportunities but also that there are significant infrastructure needs in order to fully realise these, and that these will require a holistic view of the whole West End and Osney Mead area. Therefore, the principal aim of the SPD is to help ensure development takes place in a cohesive way that contributes to the wider vision for the area. The West End and Osney Mead is a large and sensitive area on the edge of the city centre with a great deal of potential.

11. The West End and Osney Mead area is capable of accommodating significant additional development, which would help transform the area, but there are challenges to achieving successful development in the West End. Beyond environmental constraints such as large areas of flood risk, challenges also result from the fact that the West End and Osney Mead is a large area with a variety of landowners, as well as the need to continue to provide city-wide functions such as Oxford station and significant through-routes for traffic and buses. To realise the regeneration potential of the area it will be important to strike the right balance of uses, which extends the City centre, making the best and most efficient use of land, by delivering a series of new mixed-use neighbourhoods that complement existing uses and established communities.

12. Furthermore, redevelopments in the area are at various and differing stages. This SPD offers the opportunity to ensure these different developments, by different landowners, are not designed in isolation and that they all contribute to the transformational benefits for the area that are part of the vision. The SPD provides specific advice and guidance for major development sites in the West End and Osney Mead area and in addition requires developers and landowners to respond to the

key strategies set out in detail in the spatial framework and through the broader design guide principles.

13. The potential of the area, the importance of its existing uses and its significance to the city means that it is vital that any redevelopment of the sites is carefully managed from the outset. The SPD is a way of managing these developments, helping to unlock development sites and to ensure development that is piecemeal nevertheless comes forward cohesively, within a clear spatial framework.

This consultation

14. The City Council has prepared a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to set a framework for future developments in the West End and Osney Mead area of Oxford. This follows the consultation on the vision and scope that took place in 2021. This earlier consultation set out a vision for the area to transform it into a vibrant mixed use area including new homes, as well as a globally recognised Innovation District, and went on to set out our initial thoughts on what we should include in the SPD in order to best guide development in the area.

15. Since the early consultation informed development of the scope and vision, consultants have lead work on a Spatial Framework and a Design Guide for the area. Stakeholder workshops informed this work, which is now incorporated into the draft SPD.

16. Your comments are invited on the draft SPD. Please send comments to CONSULTATION DETAILS INCL DATES

Next steps

17. We will collate comments, make any changes necessary to the draft SPD document and publish a consultation report.

2. VISION

18. The transformation and redevelopment of the West End and Osney Mead area will see significant change in one of the busiest parts of Oxford. The City Council and its partners wish to see the area transformed from an underperforming, underdeveloped edge of city centre location, to a liveable quarter of the city where innovation as part of Oxford's knowledge economy is integrated with a strong community and a vibrant mixed use quarter. The West End and Osney Mead area includes the residential communities of St Ebbe's and St Thomas', with a diverse existing population including families. We wish to strengthen and grow this community, and the development of the area will therefore contain high quality housing at an appropriate density that responds to the historic and environmental context of the West End.

19. New residential development in the area will make an important contribution to Oxford's high housing needs, and will need to integrate both with existing

communities, and with the range of other new uses coming forward in the area. Housing will be provided that meets a variety of needs. Policies in the Oxford Local Plan require that at least 50% of housing should be affordable, including a total of 40% of housing being provided as social rented housing, although the requirement for First Homes has meant this has had to be amended, as set out in the First Homes Policy Statement, to require 25% of Affordable Housing to be First Homes, 5% intermediate and 70% social rented[1]. Residents, both new and old in the West End will need to be supported by good amenities and facilities. Student accommodation will also help to meet needs in this city centre location, where it is particularly well suited, and help to reduce pressure on existing housing stock elsewhere in the city.

20. Oxford Station will be subject to major infrastructure investment, supported by enabling development to create a new and improved gateway to the city. This investment will provide an improved public transport hub as part of the railway station development (providing both east and west frontages) and will be a significant upgrade for the city. Its' early delivery will help to set a new transport / movement context that will promote more pedestrian, cycling and use of buses creating a multi-modal hub to support the development of key sites within the West End. The new Station would facilitate the re-opening of the Cowley branch line to passengers linking this area to the large residential communities in south and east Oxford, as well two of the city's other major innovation hubs at the Oxford Science Park and Oxford Business Park. The planned multi-modal improvements at the Oxford station, being detailed in a forthcoming masterplan, will cement the already unrivalled accessibility of the West End, and therefore its position as the most sustainable employment location in Oxfordshire. Such connectivity is a key priority for R&D firm's when choosing a location.

21. The continued success of Oxford's economy is critical to the creation vibrancy and of more diverse, cleaner, greener and better paid jobs for its residents, and those of the wider region. It is also vital to the success of the national economy, supporting globally significant innovation and a supply chain that benefits the wider UK economy. The city centre is a very suitable location for this activity, integrated into the heart of the city, and the region, with activity at all times of day and with sustainable transport links. As such, the creation of an innovation district at the West End and Osney Mead will support the resilience of Oxford and Oxfordshire's economy for the benefit of local communities and UKPLC.

22. Innovation Districts are a relatively new concept for revitalising industrial and city centre areas for creating research and development spaces. These uses have often tended to be concentrated in inward-facing business parks peripheral to cities and city centres. Innovation Districts seek to reverse this trend, recognising that innovation in technology happens when professionals in different fields collaborate in pleasant working environments and where talent and entrepreneurs want to live, work and play. They host a variety of residential solutions, from homes to student housing and hotels. They have a defining focus on quality of life and enabling social

[1] https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/7907/tan_16_first_homes

interaction outside the formality of the working environment. A wide range of focal points, facilities and amenities encourage people to dwell and create a dynamic and compelling place.

23. The opportunities in the West End and Osney Mead to create an area of collaboration, where research and developments helps find solutions to significant global issues such as climate change and pandemics, in the accessible heart of the city, are unmatched. The West End and Osney Mead should be an environment where leading-edge anchor institutions and companies cluster and connect with start-ups, business incubators and accelerators. Innovation districts help to revitalise and regenerate city centres by encouraging entreneureship as well as in Oxford's case providing an opportunity to build on the city's key strengths in research and development, alongside the retention of existing assets and delivery of new housing and other city centre uses.

24. The innovation district will: *"provide a flagship, gateway development into the innovation ecosystem, providing a new district for business growth and innovation as an extension of Oxford's city centre encompassing A-Grade office space R&D HQ facilities for spin-out companies across multiple sites, so forming the largest scale mixed use development project in generations. This project is focused on delivering a sustainable, integrated and connected district encompassing Osney Mead, Oxford National Railway Hub and Station, Oxpens, and other development sites with retail, hotel, university, lab and office, and residential spaces"* (Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy Investment Plan, August 2020).

25. An 'inclusive economy' seeks to provide a wider range of job opportunities, promote more skills and training prospects for local people, require the supply chain to offer greater potential for local firms and support well-paid employment, which in turn helps to promote greater equality and opportunities for all and realise added social value. This may be achieved within the West End and Osney Mead area by providing opportunities for a range of businesses, including start-ups, studios, collaborative workspace and meanwhile uses, within the area; together with community skills plans prepared by the developers of major sites that offer new training and skills prospects for local people. The opportunity for land owners across the West End to co-ordinate on this is also encouraged.

26. The innovation district will need to provide spaces for social interaction including wherever possible maximising the opportunities for collaboration across different fields. These could be formalised areas such as shared workspaces, coffee shops or food halls; childcare; public open space; or leisure facilities. These uses will also ensure that the West End remains a vibrant extension of the city centre outside of standard working hours, providing services and attractions for visitors and residents within and nearby the area.

27. These new uses will be supported by a transformation of the public realm and key infrastructure in the area. The West End is also strategically located on several movement corridors, notably occupying a significant portion of land between the

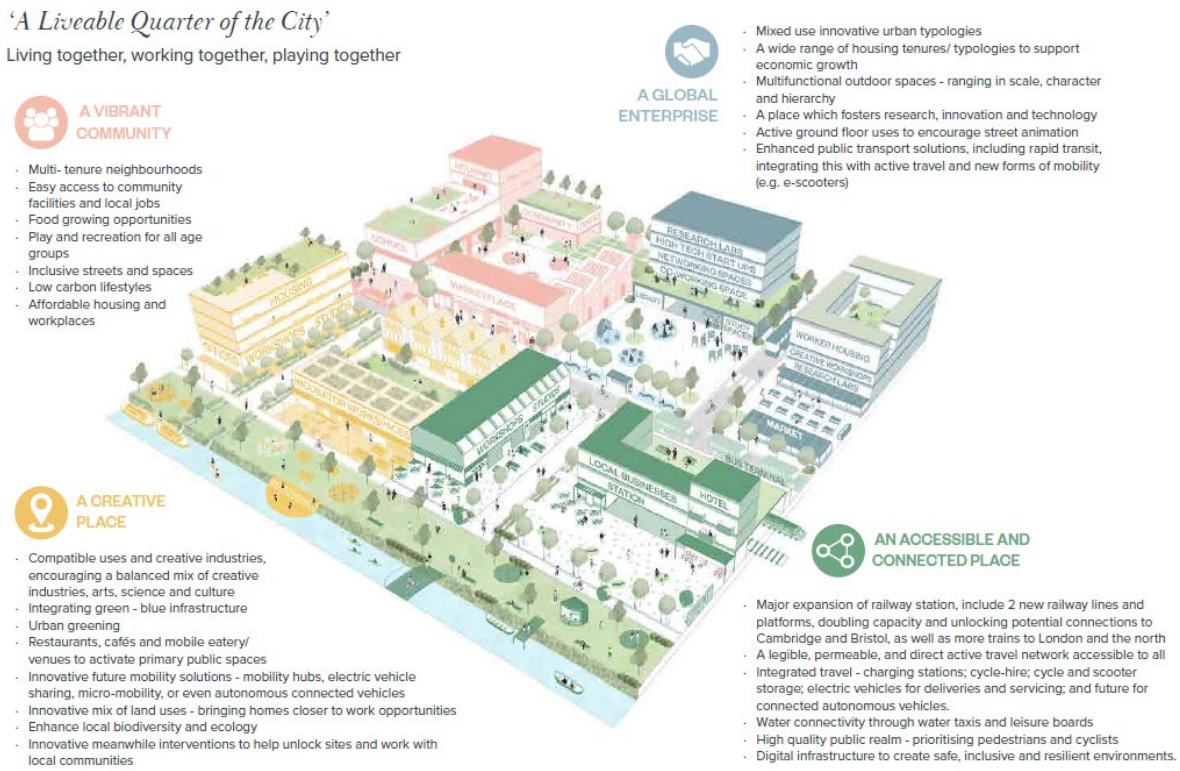
station and main retail centre. Introducing a mix of uses, including residential, will help create an area that is active beyond the working week and make these routes more attractive for pedestrians and cycling. It is important that the area can be easily accessed, and also that it can be enjoyed. Integrating this range of uses with the wider city centre, which will provide activity and footfall throughout the day and into the evening, will also support the existing businesses and cultural & leisure attractions in the city, providing greater economic resilience.

28. The public realm strategy will help ensure that rather than it being experienced as just a transport corridor, opportunities are realised for an enhanced public realm and green infrastructure network, making it an area in which to wander, stop and relax. The public realm strategy will transform the currently unattractive routes through the West End and provide for good wayfinding throughout the area. These will connect a series of new public open spaces with opportunities to find tranquillity and access to rivers and the natural environment. These open spaces will also contribute to net gains for biodiversity and form part of the area's and city's climate change adaption and mitigation strategy.

29. The design guide and Spatial Framework will ensure new development is sensitively designed to conserve the rich historic environment of the area, and wider skyline of Oxford. Policies in the Oxford Local Plan 2036 already provide a general toolkit to ensure high quality design that is informed by the local context. However, the SPD's design guide provides specific guidance for the area, to make sure that it works as a whole and has an identity, whilst also reflecting the local character.

Figure 3: The Spatial Framework in Appendix 1 is based on this vision. It encapsulates it in this diagram, which sets out key principles:

DRAFT



Golden threads

30. The Spatial Framework also sets out three golden threads, which run through each of the strategies because of the important part they play in every aspect of the built environment. These golden threads include the:

    - Sustainability Strategy;
    - Social Value Strategy; and
    - Economic Strategy.

31. The council is committed to addressing the effects of, and reducing our contribution towards, climate change. In 2019, the council declared a climate emergency and has committed to a series of actions. The most relevant to the West End project are: raising energy efficiency of new homes and community buildings; cutting transport emissions; boosting renewable energy installation; and expanding biodiversity. This has been considered in developing every strategy, because all aspects of development in the West End and Osney Mead must be viewed in the context of the need to reduce carbon emissions and tackle the climate emergency.

32. Social value has also been considered in the development of all of the strategies. All strategies and interventions should create social value in order realise the vision. Consideration of this as a golden thread throughout the development of the strategies in the Spatial Framework ensures this will be the case. Linked to this, the draft Oxford Economic Strategy and its delivery plan has been considered throughout.

33. The economic strategy recognises the vision for the West End which has regional and national importance, as set out in the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (2019) and is a key component of the Oxfordshire – Cambridge Arc. This approach is taken forward in Oxford's Draft Economic Strategy (2022), which provides a new focus for the city's economy that introduces measures to promote an 'inclusive' economy, to build on its global strengths and support the transition towards 'zero carbon'.

3. STRATEGIES TO INFORM DESIGNING AND ASSESSING PROPOSALS

3.1 Green and Blue Network strategy and natural spaces

34. Green infrastructure includes natural features such as trees, meadows and hedgerows and blue infrastructure is water features such as rivers, streams and canals. These are particularly beneficial in networks and they form part of ecological systems and provide important benefits such as flood management, shading, biodiversity, food production, better air quality and healthy soils, as well as being important for people's general sense of wellbeing. The West End is an area of ecological value with its proximity to the Green Belt and the River Thames. Preserving and enhancing the ecosystem will make the area resilient in the face of changing temperatures, weather events and other effects of the climate crisis.

35. The Green and Blue Network strategy diagram in the Spatial Framework (page 62) shows a vision for green and blue infrastructure across the West End, which includes greening of existing corridors and also proposed new streets. The Thames and Castle Mill Stream are key existing green corridors. New development alongside existing corridors should lead to enhancements including to public access.

36. The following summary shows what is expected in different types of locations across the West End:

- **Development with new streets and along existing streets**: Tree planting is expected where feasible, and greening along major routes. Street trees should be well integrated into the design and consideration given to the character of the street and wider area. Also, consideration should be given to integrating sustainable drainage into the green and blue network.
- **On large new development plots of Osney Mead and Oxpens** new streets should be strategically designed to have a hierarchy of green and blue routes. Green and blue infrastructure should underpin the development plots. It should be multifunctional, incorporating SuDs to mitigate flood risk, providing public spaces and enhancing biodiversity. The green and blue network on these sites will need to be highly effective in flood mitigation, promoting ecology and providing amenity space for the community using the site. The riverside should become a place of activity, leisure and play.
- **Developments alongside waterways** should ensure the waterways are made more accessible, enjoyable and safe for pedestrians as well as considering biodiversity needs such as the need for buffers or bank restoration.

- **Where developments include new or existing green spaces** these should be designed with the community in mind, taking opportunities for community food growing and making improvements to existing spaces and where possible creating new playspaces.
- **On all development sites** nature should be present and opportunities for planting should be maximised such as through installations of green, blue and brown roofs. Further details of what's expected in designing for nature are included in the nature section of the Design Guide (page 30).

Key infrastructure priorities are:

- Establishing a green and blue network on Osney Mead
- Activation of the riverside edge at the Thames and Osney Lock
- Urban greening along major routes.

37. Most of the Green and Blue Network Strategy and infrastructure needed to achieve it will be delivered by careful design of new developments. In some cases, contributions will be needed to enhance the green and blue infrastructure on routes that pass along and beyond sites.

Table 1: Key infrastructure priorities in relation to the green and blue network

Strat	Key Priority	Detail of Priority	Known Infrastructure Cost
Green and Blue Landscape	1. Establishing a green and blue network on Osney Mead	• New green and blue elements introduced to Osney Mead's existing routes will need to precede comprehensive development and will work to unlock the site for development • Green and blue infrastructure effective for flood mitigation, promoting biodiversity, and amenity space • Designs must consider works from the Oxford Flood Alleviation scheme (OFAS) and ongoing works to watercourses	• Osney Mead and Thames improved cycle paths - £4.9m – delivery 2021–23
	2. Opening up the Thames riverside and Osney Lock	• Opportunity for the Thames riverside to be a key place of activity, biodiversity, flood mitigation, leisure and play • Works must respond to the different characters present on the River Thames and the nearby Castle Mill Stream	
	3. Urban greening along major routes	• Greening and rationalising of movement on key roads such as Oxpens, Ferry Hinksey, and Botley Road • Ensuring streets and surrounding development sites contribute positively to active travel, biodiversity, and active street frontages	

Golden threads

38. Promotion of a Green and Blue network throughout the area has important sustainability benefits. Integration of sustainable drainage into green infrastructure helps adaptation to greater flood risk. The shading and cooling effects of green infrastructure are likely to be increasingly important. Green infrastructure adds social value as it can be a place for community interaction and play, it can provide peace and opportunities to exercise, all of which contribute to health and wellbeing. For these reasons, and because of the added value and desirability it brings to a place, the green infrastructure network also helps to achieve the economic aims.

3.2 Heritage strategy

39. Oxford benefits from a rich heritage of assets. This strategy seeks to ensure that heritage assets are retained and conserved, but also ensure that their value is promoted to fully realise the important contribution they can make to help define the distinctive character of the area and create a 'sense of place'. Heritage assets can play a key role in helping people to navigate their way around the West End Area,

and together with the use of appropriate signage can re-enforce the distinctive character of the West End area.

40. The heritage of an area includes both key assets but also local places, features and associations, minor buildings, paths and open spaces, view points and events. The history and heritage of the West End are important to those who live and work in the city and contribute to a sense of belonging and ownership.

41. **Key principles of heritage strategy:** to celebrate diverse heritage by enhancing and opening up their settings, conserving heritage using sensitive design and refurbishment, using the character of the assets to promote a sense of place and character, use heritage as a tool for wayfinding, and to retain and recycle the built form recognising the contribution this can make to sustainability principles. The map on page 107 provides a vision for where these principles could be used and shows how they relate to existing heritage assets.

42. **Application of principles:** How and where these principles should be applied and what is expected in different types of locations across the West End:

43. **Development adjacent to the River Thames:** the heritage strategy seeks to re-establish the historic relationship of the River Thames to its heritage assets. By opening up the remnants of Osney Abbey and Osney Mill Cottage with public realm improvements, new connections and activity along the riverside. This seeks to bring the river back into the heart of the Osney Conservation Area. The potential for opening up of the EA depot and its bridge connection to the public would significantly improve accessibility from Bridge Street to the river and should be explored as part of any proposals.

44. **On existing streets which have a strong heritage and character value:** the strategy seeks to protect and mitigate the effect of increased footfall and traffic on heritage assets. The following areas therefore need to be protected:

- Osney Mead's Bridge, East, West and South Street;
- Becket Street and the surroundings of St Thomas the Martyr Church;
- Osney Mead's Cemetery; and
- Walking routes across the green belt to North Hinksey village.

45. **On new or existing areas of public realm: in conjunction with the public realm strategy, the heritage strategy seeks to celebrate key assets with improved settings.** the strategy seeks to make improvements to or create new areas of public realm to significantly improve the settings of heritage assets. This could include using key assets / buildings as a focal point for new development to respond to, or re-purposing heritage assets with community uses and meanwhile uses for example. Interventions may be landscape improvements and making greater and more active use of the public realm, creating attractive areas for people to sit, dwell and enjoy or enabling them to learn about the heritage of various assets.

Key areas where public realm improvements could benefit heritage assets are:

- Osney Abbey and Lock

- St Thomas the Martyr's Church
- St Frideswide's Church
- Nuffield College Sites
- Oxford Castle

46. **New development which may impact on views of key spires and or structures of height:** The strategy considers that key heritage assets in the West End are important in themselves but equally for their setting and how they provide a focus for people to move and navigate their way around the area.

47. The heritage strategy requires new development to show that it:

- does not restrict short views of key heritage assets, such as Nuffield College, the Castle Mound and Tom Tower at Christ Church College;
- positively responds to the setting of heritage assets; and
- does not restrict long views of the city, for example of particular significance are the proposals for Osney Mead Industrial Estate and Oxpens, and their impact on the historic view from Raleigh Park.

48. **New development within the Core Area of the City centre:** the proposed height of new development needs to be sensitive and respond to existing heritage assets. It should comply with Policy DH2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036, and proposals should be well designed to respect key heritage assets within the West End, which include:

- St Thomas's Church and proposals on Becket Street
- Nuffield College and Castle Mound and proposals on Nuffield College Sites
- Christchurch Old Buildings and proposals on Osney Lane
- Rewley Abbey Scheduled Monument and proposals on
- Rewley Road Fire Station and Oxford Station depot site.

49. **New development on Osney Mead:** Osney Mead has few heritage assets, but its massing and urban form will need to be considered in relation to its impact on longer distance views.

50. **Development comprising existing buildings and or structures:** The Heritage Strategy encourages proposed schemes to re-use, recycle or retain the existing built form wherever possible and integrate this into the new urban fabric of the emerging new destinations. This could be retaining a historic wall within a piece of public realm, re-using bricks from a demolished building within the public realm, or using an old warehouse for a new vibrant activity. This has benefits for carbon (embodied) as well as heritage.

51. **Key infrastructure priorities**

- Opening up of Osney Mill and Osney Lock to public: Osney Mill square recognising heritage of Osney Abbey
- Bulstake stream: new street lower in the hierarchy with a focus for its use by residents and for access
- Green belt routes: connections from existing network into Osney mead / Oxpens

- St. Thomas Church, Becket Street: enhanced public realm to enable better appreciation of the heritage asset

Delivery

52. Requires working in partnership with key landowners and the local highway authority to develop schemes in collaboration with the local community and sourcing of funding, through for example funding opportunities arising from comprehensive developments.

Golden threads

53. Sustainability is achieved by retaining and recycling the built form. Social value is delivered by making greater and more active use of the public realm and riverside settings. Economic benefits are derived through conserving and enhancing heritage assets and their settings.

3.3 Movement strategy

54. The overarching aim of the movement strategy is to reduce vehicular dominance in the West End and support car free developments and reductions in car parking at key sites within the West End. Currently the West End area is quite constrained in terms of movement and connectivity, with streets which are poor in quality with limited connections through the area and beyond and a reliance on constrained streets and towpaths. There are, however, significant opportunities to improve movement and connectivity in the future which can be tied into wider strategies to improve walking and cycling links; bus connections and movements, and to deliver a net zero carbon Oxford. There is also the opportunity to integrate the West End's development with the wider aspirations for the railway station as a key gateway into the area.

55. The Movement Strategy diagram in the spatial framework (page 71) sets out a vision for how people should be supported to move around the West End area, including how they walk, cycle, drive and travel by bus. It sets out the importance of supporting low carbon and active lifestyles, the need for a clear hierarchy of streets and routes, and the importance of physical connections and strategic land use placement in order to support movement. The strategy also pays special attention to how more significant barriers such as the River Thames and the railway ought to be improved upon.

56. The following summarises what is expected in relation to movement in different types of locations across the West End:

- **On all proposals where interventions are to be made within the streetscape** active transport options should be prioritised, with pedestrian and cyclist friendly design measures maximised to ensure that all users are safe and comfortable within the movement network.

- **On larger plots, or where proposals include the creation of new streets and routes** care should be given to defining the intended street hierarchies and the scale of movement they may sustain, with particular attention paid to supporting the transition to zero carbon travel. New east-west links should enable improved movement within the West End between existing and new sites as well as centres of activity. The Design Guide (pages 14 to 20) sets out expectations for what would be expected on streets/routes at different levels of the street hierarchy (primary, secondary and tertiary routes).

- **On sites adjacent to waterways and the railway line** attention should be paid to the barriers to movement that these features present and opportunities sought to improve or support connections across them. The SPD sets out an analysis of routes across the River Thames and railway. Some of these are existing with opportunities to open up further, others, like the Oxpens River Bridge, are entirely new bridge connections.

- **On all development sites, particularly those with proximity to key routes connecting into the station,** opportunities should be sought to build upon the re-development of the Oxford station, supporting its establishment as a key gateway into the city. The central location and strategic importance of the station should be capitalised upon with a focus towards establishing seamless onwards connections by walking and cycling within the West End to areas such as Osney Mead, Oxpens and the core of the city centre.

Key infrastructure priorities in relation to movement are:

- Railway Station gateway
- Oxpens River bridge
- Opening up the EA depot & Osney Lock for access
- Oxpens Road

57. Many of the principles set out within the Movement Strategy will be delivered by careful design of new developments. Due to the interconnected nature of the topic of movement and connectivity, attention will also need to be paid to planned interventions in the locality that may already be in place as well as having regard to supporting strategies/frameworks that address these issues more broadly across the city (such as the Local Cycling Walking and Infrastructure Plan LCWIP[2], Oxfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4, Oxford Transport Plan, emerging Local Transport and Connectivity Plan & Central Transport Area Strategy / Core Schemes that will supercede LTP4 & OTS. Additional funding may be required to deliver some of the infrastructure priorites.

58. The majority of the key infrastructure priorities benefit from some level of external funding to ensure their delivery. In some cases, contributions will be needed to support other larger interventions and pieces of infrastructure where an alternative

[2] Link to LCWIP on this page: https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/connecting-oxfordshire/active-and-healthy-travel

delivery body has responsibility for the project and where funding has not been secured.

Table 2: Key infrastructure priorities in relation to movement

Movement	4. Railway station gateway	• Strengthening Oxford Railway station as a local and regional transport hub through public realm and infrastructure improvements • Improving east-west connectivity to sites such as Osney Mead and Oxpens through pedestrian and cyclist prioritisation • Creating a new sense of arrival at the station	• Oxford Station West side improvements - £80–160m • Oxford Station East side improvements - £350-550m • Connecting Oxford - £60-100m– new and improved bus services and associated bus and cycle infrastructure	• Becket St to Oxford railway station Rd pedestrian / cycle bridge - £10m-16m – delivery by 2028 • Cowley branch line reopening - £50–150m – required by 2028
	5. Oxpens bridge	• Creating an important new connection between the developments at Osney Mead and Oxpens • Improving access and improving value to the area around Grandpont Nature park, Thames riverside and the green belt	• Osney Mead to Oxpens pedestrian and cycle bridge - £6m – delivery in 2023	
	6. Opening up the EA depot & Osney Lock	• Improving public access to the River Thames • Opening up key route through the EA depot connecting Osney Town and Osney Mead and introducing new permeability between the two banks of the river	• West end public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals	
	7. Oxpens Road	• Interventions could include tree planting, cycle infrastructure, building frontages, swales, and a central reservation • Oxpens road as a holistic site for delivery of infrastructure, from Frideswide Square to St Aldate's	• Zero Emission Zone - £2m – delivery dependent on Connecting Oxon • Connecting Oxford £60-100m – new and improved bus services and associated bus and cycle infrastructure	• West end public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals

Golden threads

59. Facilitating movement through the West End as well as to and from the area will have a range of sustainability benefits. Supporting people to take up active travel (walking and cycling) has social benefits in respect of physical and mental health but also encourages social cohesion and interaction with other people. Supporting active travel as well as a shift away from private car to travel by public transport options like bus and rail will support the decarbonisation of the transport network, with additional benefits for air quality, noise and congestion on the roads too. Enabling better connections and mobility through the West End can also support economic objectives, enabling more people to enjoy and spend time in the area, discovering and accessing local businesses that they may not have used before. The future programming, management and maintenance of the public spaces will need to be fully considered as part of the infrastructure delivery and implementation plan for major new development sites.

3.4 Public Realm strategy

60. The West End and Osney Mead area is limited in terms of high quality public space, but its redevelopment offers the opportunity to invest into existing spaces and to create a range of new interconnected spaces throughout the area. Public realm is considered to be just as important as the design of the buildings themselves, investing in high quality public spaces such as streets, squares and green areas can encourage people to move through the West End more actively, build social cohesion and a sense of community, as well as inspire a true sense of place and identity.

61. Whilst some of the strategies set out in the SF are fairly independent, much of the guidance within the public realm strategy is supported by and closely related to other strategies in the SF. These other strategies often take a greater focus on particular elements or features which are intrinsic to a successful public realm,

including the arts and cultural strategy, green and blue infrastructure, movement and heritage; as such it is recommended that these should be read in conjunction with it. The Design Guide (pages 21 to 29), goes on to set more specific advice and guidance for practical measures that ought to be implemented by developers and infrastructure delivery partners within the public realm of the West End.

62. The public realm strategy diagram in the Spatial Framework (page 86) sets out a vision for how public spaces should be designed and includes six principles/characteristics that need to be embedded in all areas of the West End. These principles, including the need for spaces to be comfortable, characterful, enjoyable, resilient, flexible, and connected, are then analysed in more detail with practical examples set out for how each principle can be successfully incorporated into design proposals.

63. Whilst much of the guidance on public realm will apply everywhere, the SF goes on to set out some specific expectations for the public realm in different scenarios, across different locations and types of development within the area:

64. **New public spaces** should take opportunities to connect up existing spaces and establish gateways, which will be important for attracting activity into the area, improving legibility and wayfinding, and making it easier and more pleasant to navigate and move through.

65. **All routes** should be designed as spaces that are friendly for pedestrians and cyclists and should incorporate significant greening in order to support people to take up active travel and to make the experience positive and encouraging. Existing streets like Botley Road; Oxpens Road and St Aldate's are often dominated by vehicles, and are not friendly to those travelling on foot or bike, but various interventions could support people to shift away from the car.

66. **Proposals along watercourses** should improve public realm to create a high quality destinations within the West End that can significantly boost Oxford's riverside character. The SF identifies points of focus such as that running to the north-east of the Osney Mead Regeneration site, the public realm by the northern section of Castle Mill Stream, located adjacent to Worcester car park and routes along the Osney Mill Marina. These spaces offer multi-faceted opportunities, not only for creating spaces for social interaction and engagement with nature, but also movement corridors to the wider city and flood mitigation.

67. **All public realm** consideration should be given to how these spaces might form part of the setting for heritage assets and celebrate heritage and also bhhow the wider historic character of the area might potentially be integrated or repurposed within the design of such spaces. As the Arts and Culture strategy highlights, this can be an important means of establishing character and sense of place for the area, alongside other creative measures.

68. **On all developments between Osney Mead and the city centre,** opportunities should be sought to create or improve east-west connections for pedestrians from Osney Mead to the city centre as this is likely to become a critical link for future residents and users of the site for work or pleasure. Key public spaces such as Oxpens Meadows; Grandpont Nature Park; Oxpens new public square and the new improved riverfront at Osney Mead regeneration site could be linked up via these connections including via new or improved routes over/along the river, including the provision of Oxpens Bridge.

Key infrastructure priorities

69. A range of localised interventions spread across three categories (routes, exceptional public spaces and junctions) are identified in the public realm strategy section of the Spatial Framework via a map and table (pages 98 to 101). These should be considered as part of design proposals for sites in their proximity as they come forward. Aside from these, the Spatial Framework also identifies a number of more major priorities:

- Station gateway
- Oxpens Bridge
- Oxpens Road
- Becket Street Link
- Frideswide Square/ Castle Mill Stream sites
- Opening up the riverside
- Osney Mead riverside square

70. Many of the principles set out within the Public Realm Strategy will be delivered by careful design of new developments. Some of the key infrastructure priorities benefit from some level of external funding to ensure their delivery, others have remaining costs to be identified in part or in the whole. In some cases, contributions will be needed to support other larger interventions and pieces of infrastructure where an alternative delivery body has responsibility for the project and where funding has not been secured.

Table 3: Key infrastructure priorities in relation to the public realm

DRAFT

Strat	Key Priority	Detail of Priority	Known Infrastructure Cost	
Public Realm	8. Station gateway	• Strengthening Oxford Railway station as a local and regional transport hub through public realm and infrastructure improvements • Public realm improvements to all surrounding streets and spaces including Frideswide Square	• Oxford Station West side improvements - £80–160m • Becket Street to Oxford railway station pedestrian / cycle bridge - £10m-16m – delivery by 2028	• Oxford Station east side improvements - £350-550m • Cowley branch line reopening - £50–150m – required by 2028 • Connecting Oxford - £60-100m
	9. Oxpens Road	• Developing a consistent public realm experience from the station down to new developments at Oxpens and Osney Mead • Improved public realm connecting Oxpens and the adjacent meadows to Westgate	• West end public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals • Zero Emission Zone - £2m – delivery dependent on Oxford Station East side improvements - £350-550m	• Connecting Oxford £60-100m – new and improved bus services and associated bus and cycle infrastructure
	10. Becket Street link	• Rationalising the bus network necessary to determine the character of Becket Street and its relationship with its surroundings • Considering the sensitive context of St. Thomas the Martyr Church	• Becket Street to Oxford railway station Botley Road pedestrian / cycle bridge - £10m – delivery by 2028	• West end public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals
	11. Frideswide Square/Castle Mill Stream sites	• Public realm improvements along Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street will be critical in unlocking the site • Consideration of the station as a gateway and how the site can contribute to this	• West end public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals	
	12. Opening up the riverside	• Making the most of the West End's natural resources to create high quality public space • Opening up the Thames riverside from Oxpens meadow to the EA depot site	• West end public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals	
	13. Osney Mead riverside square	• A new riverside square to activate Osney Mead as a new activity hub and innovation quarter • Meanwhile uses during early phases of development may aid delivery and the fostering of community support	• West end public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals	

Golden-threads

71. Sustainability is achieved by positively responding to climate change and seeking to balance the issues of the natural environment, such as flooding, with the need to support sustainable development. Public realm helps to provide the connections and links that access an area and the space to enjoy it. It draws on the distinctive local character of the area, its buildings, streets and public spaces. Social value is created by providing and improving public realm to support well-being and peoples' ability to access and enjoy spaces. Economic benefits are derived from providing better access / connections to the West End generating activity and making it easier to navigate through the area for visitors, workers and local community.

3.5 Arts and cultural strategy

72. The redevelopment of the West End area is an opportunity to put culture and art at the heart of the community and to use it as a means to galvanise positive economic and social change.

73. The Arts and Culture Strategy diagram in the Spatial Framework (page 112) sets out the vision for how investment in art and culture can garner multiple socio-economic benefits for the West End and the wider city, as well as countering the negative impacts that the Covid-19 Pandemic has had on this sector over the last couple of years. The vision in the Spatial Framework highlights the importance of aiming to establish a strong sense of identity and belonging through culture and establishing a community led environment with a culture of innovation and strong partnerships that can drive regeneration and revitalisation of the West End.

74. Arts and culture can be encouraged through a wide variety of spaces, and the Spatial Framework highlights a selection of uses including:

- Creative workspaces
- Rehearsal studios
- Recording studios
- Production studios
- Artist and maker spaces
- Cinemas
- Sports and leisure venues
- Galleries and museums
- Heritage buildings
- Performance venues
- Libraries
- Community spaces
- Artistic installations in the public realm

75. The following summarises what is expected in how arts and culture should be incorporated within developments across the West End:

76. **Promote arts and culture through establishing vibrant mixed-use neighbourhoods** by ensuring that buildings can accommodate a mixture of uses alongside more typical residential and employment spaces, for example by mixing co-working and leisure uses side-by-side.

77. **Make space for culture to thrive, a place where people can share in and experience it** thus establishing the West End as a destination for the enjoyment of art and culture. Ensuring that there are a range of spaces that are affordable and allow for a diverse range of stakeholders to come together to collaborate and create. Such spaces should not wholly necessitate creation of new buildings, but could also make use of existing buildings repurposed for a mixture of functions. There are a number of under-utilised spaces within Osney Mead's Industrial Estate and within vacant shop units within the city centre that could play an important role in realising this vision.

78. **Incorporate the public realm as a contributor to the cultural identity of the area,** ensuring that the spaces between buildings can act as a channel for people to experience artistic and cultural endeavours. Existing space and new spaces can act as an important venue for hosting permanent and temporary public art, performances and other community-led projects and the Design Guide (page 28) includes further guidance on how this could be implemented in a successful and inclusive way. The SF identifies a couple of key areas in the West End that are envisioned to serve as focal points for culture including the waterfront square in Osney Mead and the area surrounding Oxpens Meadow.

79. **Celebrate the cultural heritage of the West End area** designing in a way that is sympathetic to and enhances the rich heritage of the area. The heritage strategy has further guidance on how heritage should be treated, but it should be recognised that features such as historic buildings can make an invaluable contribution to the cultural identity of the area which is difficult to replicate. Repurposing old buildings

where appropriate, enhancing their setting and celebrating the heritage of the area through smart design choices are all to be encouraged in helping to promote a strong sense of belonging and place.

80. Most of the Arts and Culture Strategy will be delivered by careful design of new developments. A key part of the design process will be the need for it to be underpinned by strong and meaningful engagement with the local community and other key stakeholders.

Golden threads

81. Sustainability and social value are both achieved through the creation of a strong sense of identity and belonging and by promoting active partnership working between the local community and partners on agreed projects. Economic benefits will be realised by encouraging greater use of buildings and spaces for arts and cultural activities that will serve new and existing uses, the community and the local economy.

3.6 Meanwhile use strategy

82. The West End has a number of vacant and under-utilised areas of land and buildings. Meanwhile uses and the introduction of new uses for spaces can play an important role in stimulating activity and help change the feeling of an area. The Spatial Framework (page 116) identifies some key opportunities to help unlock sites, create better footfall through and to areas and attract investment in strategic locations. The strategy seeks to generate social value, build resilience and create a long legacy for the area.

83. The key principles of meanwhile uses require collaboration between public and private partners with a shared vision; using meanwhile uses as catalysts for change; introducing new uses to buildings and spaces to generate activity; and using meanwhile uses to positively change the perception of areas within the West End. The map on page 117 provides a visual representation of where these meanwhile uses could take place in the area. The temporary nature of these 'meanwhile' uses provides activity and interest, whilst longer-term proposals for a site are being developed.

84. **Application of principles:** How and where these principles should be applied and what is expected in different types of locations across the West End:

85. **On existing walking and cycling routes and where new links are created to promote active travel:** Better connectivity is required to support new uses in the area. Meanwhile uses will then be able to positively improve the footfall, attractiveness, activity and legibility of the area. These new links could potentially include the east-west route of Woodins Way; key crossings at Oxpens and Botley Road; and the Botley Road underpass.

86. **Under-used buildings on Osney Mead and other new development sites:** could provide the opportunity for the creation of new hubs of activity for local business and enterprises to be supported. This could include for example community space, exhibition space, studio space and local food and drink businesses.

87. **On spaces on Osney Mead and other new development sites:** meanwhile uses can help to develop and foster a new community by setting up new events and use of spaces can help bring residents, visitors and workers together. The role of the local community will be key in developing meanwhile uses and activities.

88. **In vacant buildings, such as on Osney Mead and other development sites:** these buildings can be re-used and re-purposed to include new uses which promotes a sustainable approach to the use of the built form. It could include for example using industrial buildings for incubator space, and or rooftops for food growing.

Delivery:

89. The key to delivery will be working with partners, developers and local community to explore the potential for meanwhile uses. Landowners should be alive to the possibilities of meanwhile uses on their sites as a way of ensuring their continuous use.

Golden threads

90. Sustainability is achieved by introducing new uses that would make better use of vacant land and buildings. Meanwhile uses will seek to generate social value by building resilience, creating a long legacy and promoting collaboration with the community and partners in taking forward new projects and programmes. Economic benefits would flow from attracting investment and activity by supporting new uses.

3.7 Land use strategy

91. The Local Plan 2036 under different site allocations provides minimum housing requirements which respond to the existing and future needs of the area in the context of each site. In practice, and subject to viability, many of these sites may be able to take more housing which will bring vibrancy to the areas. The housing requirements set by the Local Plan 2036 are a direct response to Oxford's urgent need for more homes as a response to the city's housing supply crisis. Housing delivery is necessary for the city's economic, environmental, and social health. Economically, housing provision attracts and retains people to support the economy. Socially, it prevents the disconnection of social networks caused by housing unaffordability and environmentally lessens the impact of commuting. Ultimately, Oxford's West End is looking at a significant influx of homes in the coming decades. Those need to be designed carefully with other uses and to work as part of the mixed use schemes that are expected on all sites and the complementary intention to create an innovation district in the West End and Osney Mead area.

92. The adopted Local Plan 2036 allocates a number of sites for development in the West End, which will bring significant change in the future. The spatial framework

provides the setting for these new buildings, increase in population, new land uses including innovative and meanwhile uses, new activities, new and improved links throughout the area, improvements to the public realm and green spaces.

93. Consideration of land use distribution will need to respond to the following key principles: the promotion of mixed-use neighbourhoods seeking to provide a balanced mix of uses within local neighbourhoods (15 min distance), innovative urban typologies aim to bring this mix of uses together in well-designed buildings, which will generate activity for the areas of public realm, flexibility and adaptability will be important to ensure that buildings and spaces around them can respond to changing future needs, the lifecycle of buildings as a principle reflects the need to promote sustainability using recycled materials, and the creation of activity hubs that support an intensity of uses and good connections to ensure successful place-making.

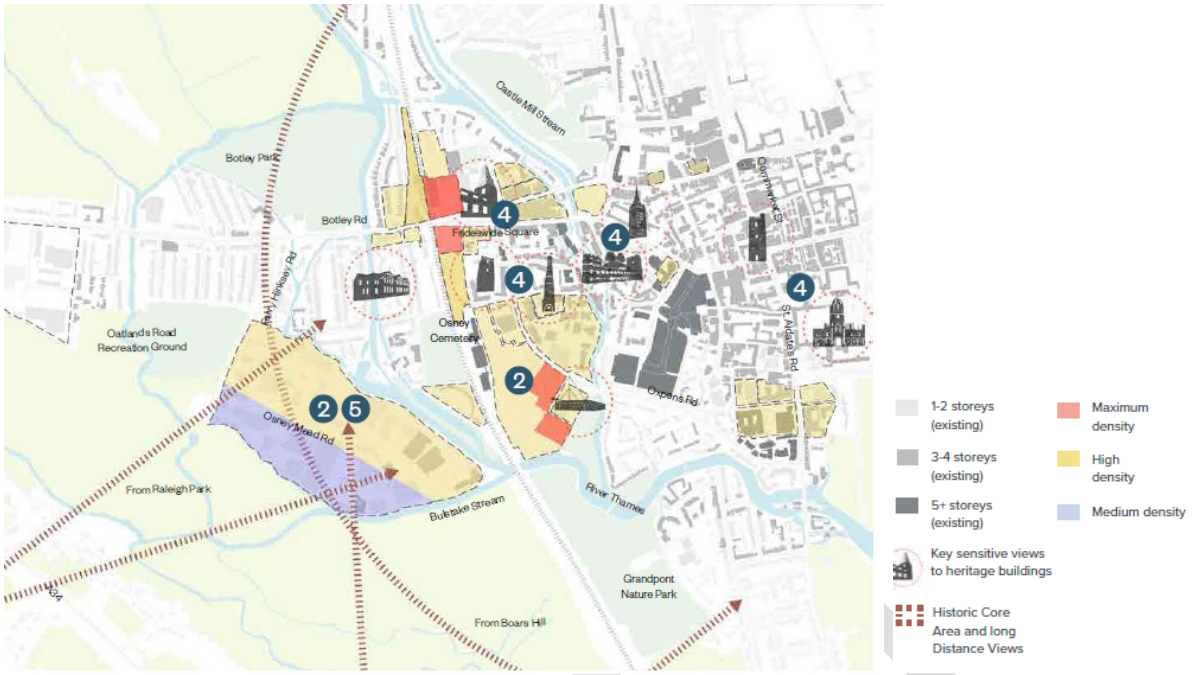
Golden-threads

94. Sustainability is achieved by the promotion of mixed-use neighbourhoods that seek to support a mix of uses within local neighbourhood areas. It supports re-use of buildings and materials, and making sure that their layouts have flexibility to respond to changes in future needs. Social value is realised through the support for local neighbourhoods which creates activity hubs and a sense of belonging and connection to the area. Economic benefits are derived from the support for local firms, businesses and arts and culture activities together with the balanced mix of uses and a range of job opportunities.

3.8 Built form

95. The framework addresses built form, which encompasses much of the physical and spatial elements of the built environment. The Spatial Framework and Design Guide address design quality of buildings and spaces, including considerations for appropriate scale, massing and roofscape. In line with the aspirations of the Area of Change policy in the Local Plan, the strategies also consider how to make use of density, block typology/morphology and overall design approaches in order to achieve the most efficient use of land.

Figure 4: Heights and densities analysis diagram from the Spatial Framework (page 123):



Heights and densities

96. Oxford is particularly renowned for its iconic skyline, which can be particularly sensitive to the impacts of development of unsuitable heights and roof forms. The West End offers several opportunities for sensitive yet statement moments of built height to add fresh new additions to Oxford's 'dreaming spires', as well as gateways that serve as wayfinding landmarks and key character features. The framework includes a number of strategies on how to manage the heights of development proposals in order to result in a net positive impact to the skyline. The West End High Buildings Study (2018) specifies more contextual height parameters based on location. Broad principles to consider are:

1. Celebrating the West End's existing points of height, and strategically adding more
2. Enhancing the long distance views by improving the roofscape and form of the West End
3. Ensuring height of new development is informed by immediate surroundings
4. Building heights and massing should respond to existing heritage assets
5. Balance of new development with spaces in between Buildings

Roofscape

97. With Oxford having many long distance views into the City the aesthetics of the roofscape is important. Policy DH2 in the Local Plan 2036 asks proposals to ensure a positive contribution to the roofscape. The Assessment of the Oxford View Cones (2015) highlights the opportunity to improve long distance views from the west. It suggests that the existing industrial estate's roof surfaces could be amended. Using darker or less reflective material would be of benefit and tree planting could be used to break up the area. Utilisation of rooftops is essential in an urban area such as

Oxford where land is limited. Roof spaces provide a real opportunity to support biodiversity, mitigate flood risk, improve building insulation and thermal efficiency; and provide key amenity space for communities.

98. The Design Guide has assessed and identified three levels of built densities that may be appropriate for the West End context, including indicative numbers of storeys, although these are not definitive and heights will be subject to testing through the detailed design process for individual sites:

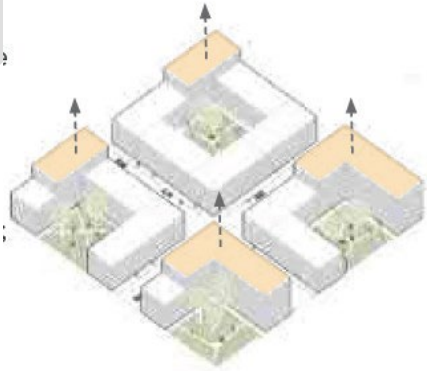
99. **At development sites adjacent to existing low-rise buildings or heritage buildings or where height will impact on heritage- medium:** urban block parameters which are 2/3-4 storeys with larger external spaces. Larger floor plates can be accommodated within these blocks - depending on the uses which need to be accommodated within the parameter.

Figure 5: medium urban block parameters as set out in Design Guide (page 35)



100. **Much of the new development sites- high:** tighter urban blocks. Fulfilling the need for different uses and limiting height as set out in Policy DH2 of the Local Plan 2036 allows for tight perimeter blocks which accommodate a multitude of uses. Existing examples of these are the redevelopment of Northgate and Clarendon Centre.

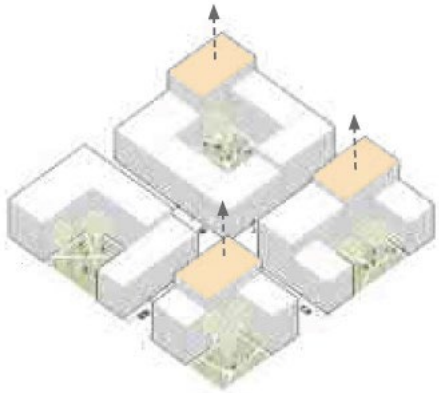
Figure 6: higher and tighter urban block parameters as set out in Design Guide (page 35)



101. **At strategically designed 'moments'- maximum:** key buildings which maximise development potential and are located at strategic moments. These could potentially be more than 5 storeys tall in places, although the impacts would beed to be carefully tested through the design process. No existing precedents of such height have been found in Oxford City Centre. Careful design and sensitive planning for the setting of these taller moments/ buildings is essential. They could be developed as part of a wider wayfinding strategy for the West End.

102. Maximum densities will only be considered in certain locations and will need to be justified by place-making strategies. As the Local Plan 2036 states, development exceeding the limit of 18.2m will need to be limited in bulk and of high design quality. Extensive justification of higher building blocks will be required and all relevant policy for listed or other heritage buildings must be followed.

Figure 7: maximum urban block parameters as set out in Design Guide (page 35)



Urban Block Typologies

103. The applicability of the different types of urban block typologies is dependent on site context, existing built morphology and urban grain and the ability to project height in the face of height limitations. The framework identifies a number that may be applicable in the West End setting:

104. **More constrained sites and infill sites- Individual Block typology:** Individual buildings stand alone but should be integrated into surrounding context with careful consideration given to public realm aspects for spaces between the buildings.

105. **Where a continuous building line around the boundaries of an urban block with shared space within is desired- Courtyard (perimeter) Block typology:** Courtyard blocks can vary in size and shape, and careful consideration is needed to ensure good levels of daylight- sunlight are achieved within the interior courtyard spaces. Should the urban block be developed at ground level with larger non-residential functions, raised courtyards in the form of podiums are possible.

106. **Where more flexibility and prominent points are required- Hybrid block typology:** Hybrid blocks combine the characteristics of courtyard and individual block typologies; they offer more plot flexibility as they are not made up by a continuous

block. Hybrid blocks offer opportunities to introduce building height at prominent points. This creates a block that is both visually interesting and capable of meeting ambitious floor space targets while minimising footprints at ground level. The urban block can also provide secondary access routes through - ground floor uses should be carefully designed to create active and animated frontages along the external perimeter and the internal route.

Massing

107. Massing of buildings will need to vary considerably across the West End and will be significantly dependent on the land uses needed. How different scales and uses of buildings sit together and how these interface with the public realm will be particularly important.

108. Considerations of how different scales of buildings (for example large floor plates for non-residential uses like labs, research spaces with smaller footprints of residential and/ or offices above) sit together will also be important.

Mix of uses

109. A compatible mix of land uses is desirable for most buildings to maximise the efficiency of land usage and to create vibrant and multi-functional spaces within buildings. It is however recognised that there are operational and management challenges with the practical delivery of these developments. The Osney Mead and Oxpens Character Areas will be characterised by large amounts of employment space, and the aspiration will be to integrate a mix of employment types, as well as space for residential dwellings, food and drink, shops, leisure, and community facilities.

Figure 8: mixing of uses example as set out in Design Guide (page 37)



110. Such mixes of use should be done with careful consideration to the needs of new and existing users for the avoidance of conflict on the grounds of amenity and service provision. The types of uses employed on the ground floors of buildings should be designed in close alignment with the intended character of the public realm around it. In order for there to be a positive contribution to the public realm, buildings should be designed with an active frontage that offers a degree of interface with the street. Buildings with façades that are obscured through a lack of windows or advertisements, breaking street character are in effect dead frontages. This is

possible to achieve regardless of the type of building or the land use at ground floor level.

Golden Threads

111. Care in design of the built form is essential for achieving sustainability. Maximising use of space, ensuring a comfortable living and working environment in more extreme temperatures and saving energy can all be achieved by careful design of the built form. Social value can also be achieved. There is a disparity in impacts of climate change between more deprived and less deprived areas. Well designed and insulated buildings available to all help to minimise this disparity. Cheaper running costs for employment buildings and built in flexibility also helps their affordability for a variety of workspace types, helping to achieve economic aims.

3.9 Transformational sites

112. Four areas of the West End and Osney Mead are expected to see transformational change that will be key to the successful development of the whole area, which are Osney Mead, Oxpens, The Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream Gateway and Station Gateway. These four areas have particular focus in the West End Spatial Framework and the Design Guide in the emerging masterplans section. It is essential the details relating to these sites in the SF and Design Guide, and in the emerging masterplans section, is referred to, carefully understood and followed.

Expectations for development on Osney Mead

113. Osney Mead's location and opportunity for change is instrumental in realising the wider vision for the area. It's a site which provides significant opportunity for more innovation, a new working and residential community and a place for culture, arts and leisure. Allocated in the Local Plan 2036 (Policy SP2), Osney Mead is earmarked as a place for a mixed use development which accommodates employment uses, academic uses, student accommodation, employer linked affordable housing and market housing.

114. The place-making vision for this site is to:

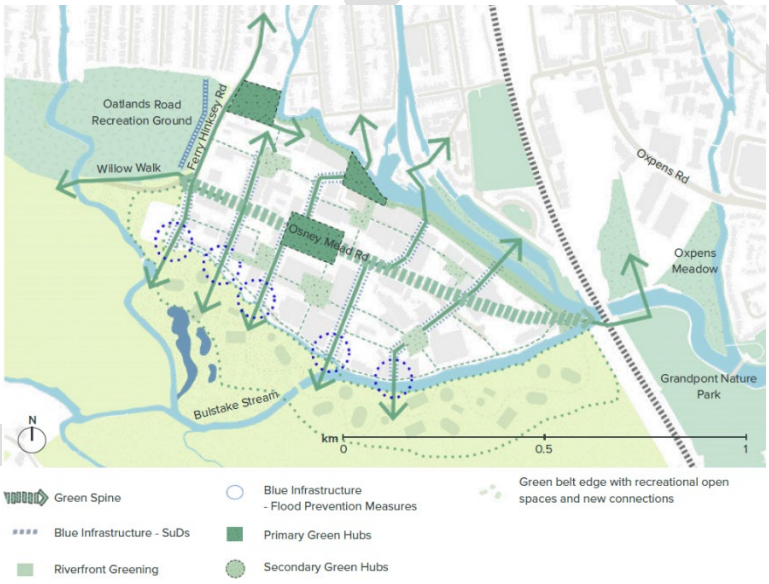
- Take the opportunity for green and blue infrastructure to address not only environmental challenges but be adapted into a friendly and comfortable public realm network
- Build upon existing urban structure and existing access routes to create a practical urban armature of movement, connections and infrastructure
- Allow intimate and lively public spaces to emerge from the processional design of streets and flexible urban block typologies

115. There are key opportunities to unlock the site around access, place-making and sustainable infrastructure. These measures make the most efficient use of land to fully achieve development goals and to unlock the full potential of Osney Mead as a world leading innovation and sustainable urban quarter. Some of these opportunities can only be achieved by comprehensive development across the site, the potential benefits of which may in future justify a Compulsory Purchase Order.

There are particular key interventions that can significantly enhance the development potential of the site that require a large-scale redevelopment, including relocation of the Environment Agency's depot to create a new route into the site. Undergrounding the electric cables is also likely to only be achievable as part of a full redevelopment of the site. Comprehensive flood risk management through integrated SuDS and green infrastructure across the site. Development of the site as one piece would also have an advantage in terms of placemaking, ensuring comprehensive consideration of activity, public spaces and so on across the site. Connectivity, access and movement around the site, including for example potentially accommodating public transport, could also be considered fully.

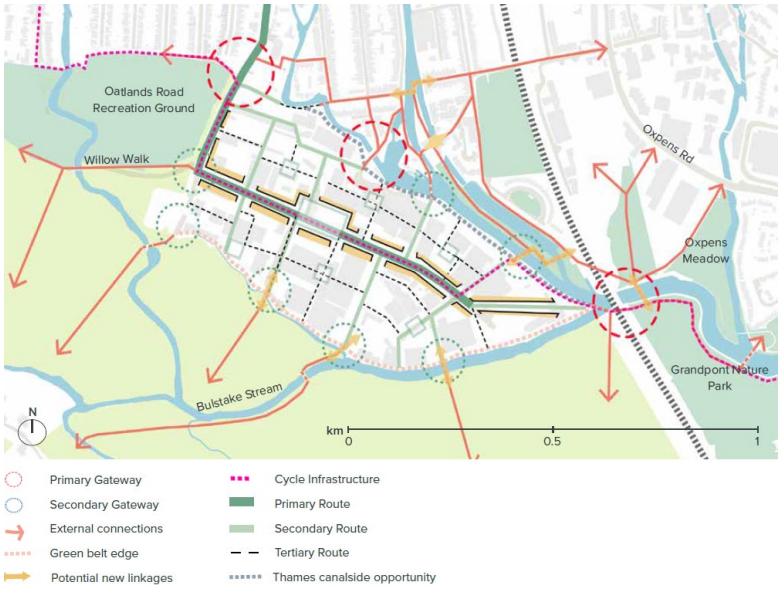
116. Comprehensive development should follow the vision and design principles set out in the Spatial Framework. This includes the **Green Infrastructure Strategy**, which is illustrated by the following diagram:

Figure 9: Osney Mead blue and green infrastructure strategy



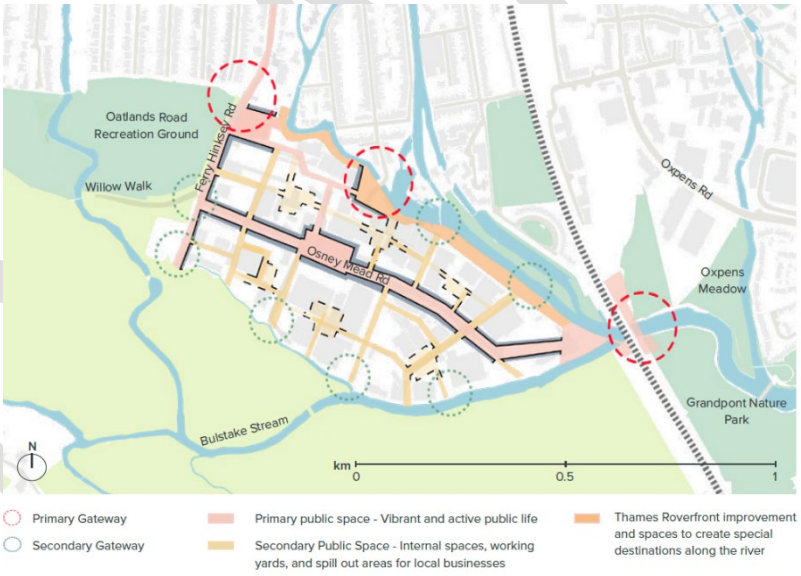
117. This also includes the **Movement Strategy**, as illustrated by the following diagram. The off-site connections will not necessarily be achievable through the development of Osney Mead but it will be necessary to show that the site is adequately connected and integrated into the wider area:

Figure 10: Osney Mead movement strategy



118. The **Urban Armature Strategy** should also be applied, as illustrated by this diagram showing the structure of public spaces across the site:

Figure 11: Osney Mead urban armature strategy



<u>Individual proposals ahead of any comprehensive development</u>

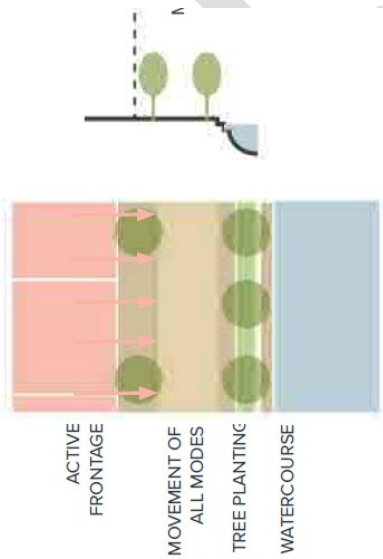
119. Even with any smaller individual proposals within the Osney Mead site it is important that they contribute to the delivery of the overall vision and do not compromise it. The means that the location should be identified on the strategy diagrams and proposals designed around this to ensure future delivery of the vision is not compromised. Policy SP2 states that planning permission will not be granted for development that prejudices the comprehensive development of the whole site and that a masterplan approved by the City Council should be developed prior to any development, which all development should comply with. Whilst development of a masterplan will rely on a majority landowner carrying out more detailed work, this

SPD enables smaller incremental developments to come forward and be considered in the context of their impacts on delivery of the vision for the site. Any large-scale comprehensive development of the site should follow development of a masterplan in collaboration with city council officers and endorsed at Cabinet.

120. Responding to the flood risk is essential for development on the site and it is likely that flood mitigation will be required on most of the site, even when in the context of the Oxfordshire Flood Alleviation Scheme. Technical work and detailed surveys will be needed to support proposals and the opportunity should be left for future implementation of the GI strategy.

121. Any development along the Thames should reactivate the interface with the river, designing in a river walk and a green buffer to the river. The Design Guide (page 17) gives the following guidance for developing alongside waterways, which will require an 8-12m gap:

Figure 12: Movement guidance alongside waterways



122. The SF gives guidance about mixed uses and innovative urban typologies, for example providing worker housing with private shared courtyards, stacking uses within buildings and rooftop meadows.

Expectations for development on Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream

123. The placemaking vision for this site is that it will be a vibrant mixed-use quarter which is a place to work, live, study, socialise, play and visit. Its redevelopment should deliver an eco-system of workspace and innovation, achieved through a mix of uses integrated with a high quality public realm, activated waterside space and a new residential community. The location on a key transport axis in close proximity to the station makes the site immediately within a site of activity. For this reason, the public realm alongside the sites and the interface of the development with the public realm is very important. The public realm will need to support significant movement particularly of buses, cycles and pedestrians.

124. There are site specific principles within the SF that should be applied as proposals are developed, and that proposals will be assessed against to help determine whether they will enable the vision for the site and its role in the West End to be met.

Movement

- Development should enhance Frideswide Square to facilitate the creation of a western gateway;
- Development should add some additional north-south connectivity between Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street and allow active and public transport on one or both of Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street, with enhancements for walking and cycling such as wider pavements and cycle lanes.

Green and blue network

- Development should include the creation of a public space adjacent to the Castle Mill Stream which is active and celebrates the site's history
- Development should add to the greening of Frideswide Square where it is actively affecting public realm
- Development should retain existing trees where possible and consider opportunities for planting new trees, especially on Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street
- Development should consider potential for ecology on rooftops

Public realm improvements and activation

- Require celebration and sensitivity towards existing heritage walls
- Greening of streets and public realm is expected
- Wayfinding interventions are expected which improve legibility and navigation.
- Complement opportunities for enhancement to the public realm and streets around the Nuffield West End sites as part of a holistic strategy that prioritises pedestrians and cyclists
- Ground floor activation will be essential
- The opportunity should be taken to provide enhancements to the public realm on Becket Street to improve the setting of the heritage assets of St Thomas the Martyr Church and Abbey, and to respond to proposals coming forward on the Becket Street Car Park

Urban grain: mixed uses and built form

- Buildings should include diverse built typologies and flexible floor-plates
- Buildings should be designed to be sensitive to surrounding heritage assets
- Development could include moments of height to aid legibility on the Island and Worcester Street Car Park sites, if it can be sensitively incorporated.
- Development on Worcester Street Car Park should create a strong relationship with the built form of Nuffield College
- Opportunities should be taken to accommodate a range of types and sizes of businesses and to enhance the evening economy.

Oxpens

125. The Oxpens site is strategically located where the urban city meets nature, providing an opportunity for the masterplanning of the site to be landscape driven by the River Thames, Oxpens Meadow, Green Belt and the heritage of the West End as a seat of industry and productivity. It has an important relationship with Osney Mead, the Station and the City centre's Core Area.

126. The vision for the place-making of Oxpens is to provide a mixed-use neighbourhood that opens up the riverside to provide a new public space for Oxford. The development of this site has the potential to provide new homes and jobs through residential and commercial uses as part of the Area of Change in the Local Plan 2036.

127. There are site specific principles within the SF that should be applied as proposals are developed, and that proposals will be assessed against to help determine whether they will enable the vision for the site and its role in the West End to be met. Many of these may be most easily achieved through comprehensive development, so a Compulsory Purchase Order across the whole site could have many benefits for successful delivery of these priorities.

<u>Green and blue infrastructure</u>

- The development needs to demonstrate a strong biodiverse green and blue infrastructure response through the site showing how the river links to the city centre
- The development is required to expand the meadows into the heart of the Oxpens site area and for buildings to respond to its riverside setting

<u>Movement</u>

- The development should include allow for the landing of the new Oxpens Bridge providing pedestrian and cycle access from south of the city, Grandpont and Osney Mead to the Station and City centre, which would significantly improve east-west connectivity links
- The development should contribute towards the cost of new improvements to the public realm along Oxpens Road including better pedestrian and cycle crossing links as well as new cycle lanes
- The development should seek to improve east-west links over the railway line, such as next to Student Castle
- Strengthen the link to the Castle Mill Stream and Westgate

<u>Urban grain, mix of uses and built form</u>

- The Oxpens development as a whole needs to provide 450 homes to help meet the city's housing needs
- Commercial buildings should be designed to include flexible footprints and typologies to meet a diverse size and range of innovative businesses
- The comprehensive development of this site will bring significant benefits and help to deliver and phase the provision of key elements of infrastructure. However co-

operation and collaboration between landowners and partners is important in realising this place-making vision
- The development could include a hotel to attract visitors to this City centre site and help to activate the scheme
- An amphitheatre as a focus for outdoor events could be supported to further activate the development and promote social value and well-being

Urban armature

- The development should include a new river plaza opening up the river to the city
- Buildings should include a dynamic roofscape that contributes to both the city's skyline and green infrastructure provision
- New buildings facing Oxpens Road and within the development should have 'active' frontages both at ground level and wherever possible on upper floors
- The development should support public realm improvements along Oxpens Road including landscaping and tree planting

The Station Gateway

128. Establishing Oxford Station as a world-class multi-modal transport hub will be critical in realising the regeneration potential of the West End area of the city and forming an important gateway into the city. The Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study (ORCS) has highlighted the importance of the Station, locally, regionally and nationally and the need for significant improvements to be made to increase the station capacity and achieve greater connectivity. The capacity of the station needs to provide two new lines/new rail bridge over Botley Road, new ticket office to facilitate EWR, CBL and deliver greater connectivity to London, South-East, Midlands and the North; in addition to a new interchange for walking, cycling and bus, all within its tightly constrained existing site. These are all needed to deliver wider Oxfordshire Connect plans to support 100,000 new homes across the County. These infrastructure improvements to the Station will help to facilitate the delivery of the Cowley Branch Line to be opened up for passengers, which will make a significant difference to improving the accessibility and connectivity for those living in the south-east of the city together with both the planned urban extensions and access to the Business Park and Science Park.

129. The provision of two additional railway lines will place pressure on available space on the eastern side of the station, with the need to accommodate adequate interchange with pedestrians, cycle, bus and taxi. Consideration of Becket street as part of the solution will be needed. The size, scale and design of the car parking provision at Becket Street will need to be re-considered. The Rail Regulator has ultimate control over the number of car parking spaces, but there is a general ambition to reduce parking in the city centre. Development on Becket Street car park will also be important to create value that helps enable development of the station.

130. Some preliminary options for the Oxford Station masterplan, which includes the Station site (both east and west of the station) and Becket Street car park are being developed and tested. There are a range of scenarios which differ in how they deal with buses, car parking, development plots and movements around the site.

This initial work will be taken forward further through the preparation of a more detailed masterplan for the Station. It is expected that investment and improvement in the station area will need to be implemented on a phased basis, as business cases are approved.

131. The place-making vision is:

- **To create a strong sense of arrival**. This requires high quality public realm linked to strong legibility and wayfinding for those arriving and leaving from the station. Opportunities to link to Frideswide Square and south to Becket Street will be important to create a comprehensive public realm network and Gateway for the Station;
- **To provide a multi-modal hub**. This needs to be accessible for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, which is important for both visitors and local people. The hub needs to include adequate infrastructure comprising cycle parking, hire and routes; accessible and attractive bus stops; high quality public realm and buildings; and a mix of uses with active frontages;
- **To create a mixed-use precinct.** A rich mix of uses provides activity and contributes to a sense of arrival. Uses can include cafes, restaurants, studios and arts and community uses. These activate both the buildings and the spaces / public realm areas.

132. There are site specific principles within the SF that should be applied as proposals are developed, and that proposals will be assessed against, to help determine whether they will enable the vision for the site and its role in the West End to be met.

Movement

- Becket Street is recognised as a key sustainable transport link with potential to support active and public travel interchange, which requires enhancement
- The creation of a new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the Botley Road is important to provide access to and from the new Station development
- Last mile solutions should be fully explored to show how an integrated approach to travel has been proposed for bus stops, cycle parking, and taxi-ranks
- The aim should be to limit car parking provision to respond to a sustainable approach to travel, congestion measures and zero-emission
- Opportunities for improved bus accessibility and appropriate bus layover should be fully explored
- The provision of a western entrance has positive benefits for meeting the needs of those arriving from the west and serving Osney Mead.

Urban grain, mix of uses and built form

- New buildings in Frideswide Square should demonstrate how their design and the uses proposed positively activate and enhance the square

Urban Armature

- New development needs to celebrate and enhance the setting of St. Thomas's Church and the Abbey

- The new development should have due regard to the existing protected trees

Green and Blue infrastructure

- Existing and new trees should be considered within the context of a landscaping scheme that assesses their value both from a biodiversity and amenity point of view.

DRAFT

This page is intentionally left blank

SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

West End, Oxford

2022



Levitt Bernstein
People.Design

ARUP

urbandelivery

Robert West Design
architect + urban designer

Contents

INTRODUCTION & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 5

INTRODUCTION 6
WHAT IS OXFORD'S WEST END SPATIAL FRAMEWORK ABOUT? 7
HOW HAS THIS SPATIAL FRAMEWORK DEVELOPED? 8
OXFORD'S STRATEGIC ARC 9
IN THE CONTEXT OF AN INNOVATION DISTRICT 10
VISION AND PRINCIPLES 11
SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS 13
THE GOLDEN THREADS 14
SPATIAL STRATEGIES 15
OSNEY MEAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE 21
FRIDESWIDE SQUARE AND CASTLE MILL STREAM QUARTER 23
OXPENS AND ASSOCIATED BRIDGE 24
OXFORD RAILWAY STATION AND BECKET STREET CAR PARK 25
NEXT STEPS & DELIVERY 26
FUNDING ESTIMATIONS FOR KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES 27
KNOWN INFRASTRUCTURE COST FOR KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES 28

A VISION FOR THE WEST END 33

VISION: INTRODUCTION 34
VISION IN THE CONTEXT OF AN INNOVATION DISTRICT 35
HOW HAS THIS SPATIAL FRAMEWORK DEVELOPED? 36
A VISION LED BY SUSTAINABILITY 37
VISION: PLACEMAKING APPROACH 39
AN ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED PLACE 42
A CREATIVE PLACE 43
A VIBRANT COMMUNITY 44
A GLOBAL ENTERPRISE 45
CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES 46

THE SPATIAL FRAMEWORK 51

THE SPATIAL FRAMEWORK 52
SUSTAINABILITY 54
SOCIAL VALUE 58
ECONOMIC STRATEGY 61
GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE 62
MOVEMENT 68
MOVEMENT AND CONNECTIVITY ACROSS THE RIVER THAMES 78
SCENARIO OPTIONS FOR THE MOVEMENT STRATEGY 84
PUBLIC REALM 86
LIST OF PUBLIC REALM AND INFRASTRUCTURE INTERVENTIONS 98
SUMMARY OF KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES 102
FUNDING ESTIMATIONS FOR KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES 104
HERITAGE 106
ARTS AND CULTURE 112
MEANWHILE USES 116
MEANWHILE USES: CASE STUDIES 121
BUILDING HEIGHTS 122
DEVELOPMENTS AND LAND USE DISTRIBUTION 126
EMERGING DEVELOPMENTS 128
BUILDING OUT THE SPATIAL FRAMEWORK 132

EMERGING MASTERPLANS 135

INTRODUCTION 137
OSNEY MEAD TODAY 138
BREAKDOWN OF BUSINESS TYPES 139
LAND OWNERSHIP 141
FLOOD RISK 142
KEY CONSTRAINTS 143
KEY OPPORTUNITIES 144
PLACE-MAKING STRATEGY 145

VISION AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES 146
BLUE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE 148
MOVEMENT 150
URBAN ARMATURE 152
URBAN GRAIN 154
SPATIAL STRATEGY 159
MIXED USES AND INNOVATIVE URBAN TYPOLOGIES 160
LAND USES 164
KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES 168
FUNDING ESTIMATIONS FOR KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES 170
FRIDESWIDE SQUARE AND CASTLE MILL STREAM QUARTER 172
OXPENS 175
OXFORD STATION: A WORLD CLASS TRANSPORT HUB 180
STATION AND SURROUNDING SITES 181

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY 185

INTRODUCTION 186
OXFORD'S ECONOMIC STRATEGY 187
THE WEST END AND OSNEY MEAD OPPORTUNITY 188
STRATEGIC BOARD 189
OXFORD CITY COUNCIL 190
SOCIAL VALUE 191
IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY PRINCIPLES 192

APPENDIX A: ANALYSIS 197

STUDY AREA AND INTRODUCTION 198
STRATEGIC CONTEXT 200
OXFORD-CAMBRIDGE ARC 201
REGIONAL CONNECTIONS 202
UNDERSTANDING OXFORDSHIRE: ECONOMIC SECTORS AND ASSETS 204
POLICY CONTEXT 206
LOCAL PLAN 207
SITE ALLOCATIONS 209
A ZERO CARBON FUTURE: THE NET ZERO OXFORD ACTION PLAN . . . 210
OTHER DOCUMENTS 211
A CHANGING CONTEXT 212
PROPOSALS 213
MEANWHILE USES 218
HISTORIC CONTEXT 220
OXFORD'S WEST END THROUGH TIME 222
HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS 224
HISTORIC CHARACTER AREAS 226
VIEW CONES 228
DEMOGRAPHICS AND USE 230
LAND USE 231
DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE WEST END 232
HUBS OF ACTIVITY 234
INNOVATION AND EMPLOYMENT 236
INNOVATION DISTRICT 237
OXFORD'S ASSETS 238
TOWNSCAPE AND CHARACTER 240
BUILDING HEIGHTS 241
VISUAL LANDMARKS 242
CHARACTER ANALYSIS 246
PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACE 250
PUBLIC REALM 251
LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS 255
PARKS 258
WATERSIDE WALKS 260
FOOD GROWING 262
CEMETERY 263
MOVEMENT AND TRANSPORT 264
WIDER TRANSPORT NETWORK 265
EXISTING CONNECTIONS AND SEVERANCE: WALKING 266
EXISTING CONNECTIONS AND SEVERANCE: CYCLING 268
EXISTING PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK 269
POTENTIAL TRANSPORT NETWORK AND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS: OCC AND 3RD PARTIES 271
SENSE OF ARRIVAL 274
EXISTING BRIDGES CONNECTIONS 276
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES 278
FLOODING 280
EXISTING FLOOD RISK 281
UNDERSTANDING TOPOGRAPHY 282
OXFORD FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME 284
FLOOD MODELLING 286
PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS FOR OSNEY MEAD DEVELOPMENT SITE 287
ELECTRICAL INFRASTRUCTURE 288
STRENGTHS 290
WEAKNESSES 292
OPPORTUNITIES 294
THREATS 296
EARLY THOUGHTS AND IDEAS 298
EARLY THOUGHTS AND SUMMARY 301

APPENDIX B: ENGAGEMENT 303

OVERVIEW OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 304
STAGE 1: STAKEHOLDER MAPPING 306
STAGE 2: INTERNAL STEERING GROUP 308
STAGE 3: INFORMATION SHARING SESSIONS 309
STAGE 4: VISIONING WORKSHOP 310
STAGE 5 AND 6: IDEAS AND TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS 313
STAGE 7: PRESENTING THE SF 314



A good city is like a good party. People don't want to leave early.

- Jan Gehl

1

INTRODUCTION & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Oxford's West End is expected to experience significant change within the coming decades. Its up-and-coming developments will play a key part in growing Oxford as a liveable and equitable city that can benefit all communities; a city which celebrates innovation and creativity, where all citizens have a stake, and no one is left behind. The West End is designated as an Area of Change in Oxford's Local Plan, and a priority project for Oxford, Oxfordshire and the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, as set out in the Local Industrial Strategy (2019). The Oxford City Centre Action Plan (2021) lays out several key future development sites, many of which fall within the West End.

Its geographical scope makes it instrumental to the future of Oxford - it includes the railway station, the retail core, a key industrial employment site, and much of the city's cultural, educational and employment offer. It also comprises many homes, public spaces and key heritage and ecological assets.

With so many complexities and competing interests, this Spatial Framework sets out a holistic vision for the West End - underpinned by stakeholder input and engagement.

Flexibility is built-in to ensure developments are able to respond to changing needs or context throughout the delivery process. Further in-depth technical and viability analysis will be required as a part of each delivery priority and for each site. Commercial development opportunities may help unlock value and viability and earlier change.

The fundamental purpose of the Spatial Framework is to set out how the West End and its major new developments could become a thriving extension of the city quarter over the next 25 years. The Spatial Framework and its various strategies are important tools to guide and shape future development in the West End of Oxford. The ambition is to create a place that is welcoming to all – to work, live, enjoy leisure time and build on Oxford's strengths as a world-class city.

While the Spatial Framework sets out overarching strategies and principles for development in the West End, more detailed design guidance can be found in the West End Design Guide.

These two documents are design and development recommendations and should be read together to establish multi-level guidance for any future design work within this area.



WHAT IS OXFORD'S WEST END SPATIAL FRAMEWORK ABOUT?

Vision & Themes

Achieving High Sustainability Targets

- A CREATIVE PLACE
- A VIBRANT COMMUNITY
- AN ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED PLACE
- A GLOBAL ENTERPRISE

Spatial Framework Strategies

Golden Threads

Sustainability



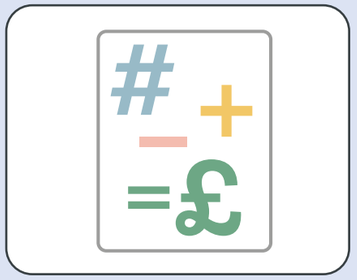
holistically covers interventions on water, health and well-being, active travel, net zero design, and ecology and biodiversity

Social Value



looks at identifying and preserving communities and their identities and establishing meaningful stewardship and engagement

Economy



outlines how the West End's economy can be more inclusive, global, and transition towards net zero carbon

Core Strategies

Green and Blue Landscape Infrastructure



is key to the design of streets and spaces - helping to mitigate flood risk, enhance local biodiversity and bring communities together

Movement



promotes low carbon lifestyles, improved connections and access to key sites, improved streets and spaces and good land use design

Public Realm



aims to create a series of interconnected public spaces and streets which are characterful, enjoyable and comfortable

Supporting Strategies

Heritage



seeks to protect, enhance and celebrate places of heritage

Arts and Culture



supports employment in the arts/culture spaces where culture can be shared

Meanwhile Uses



as catalysts of change, changing perceptions and creating social value

Building Heights



strategic moments of height, promoting legibility, viewing corridors, protecting heritage settings/ assets

New Development & Land use



seeks to provide the right mix of land uses across development sites

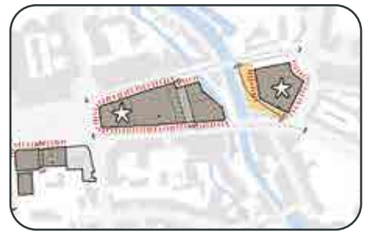
Strategic Projects



Osney Mead regeneration site



Oxpens and associated Oxpens Bridge



Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream Quarter (Nuffield College sites)



Station and Becket Street car park

HOW HAS THIS SPATIAL FRAMEWORK DEVELOPED?

The Spatial Framework has been set up through an iterative process as the below diagram illustrates. It has been prepared to co-ordinate development across the wider area of the West End of Oxford, comprising several sites in multiple ownerships with widely differing delivery timescales.



OXFORD'S STRATEGIC ARC

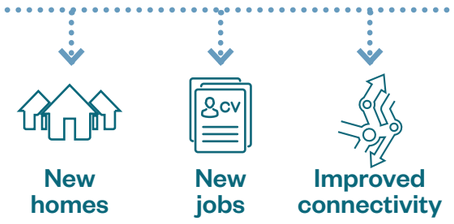
Strategic Context

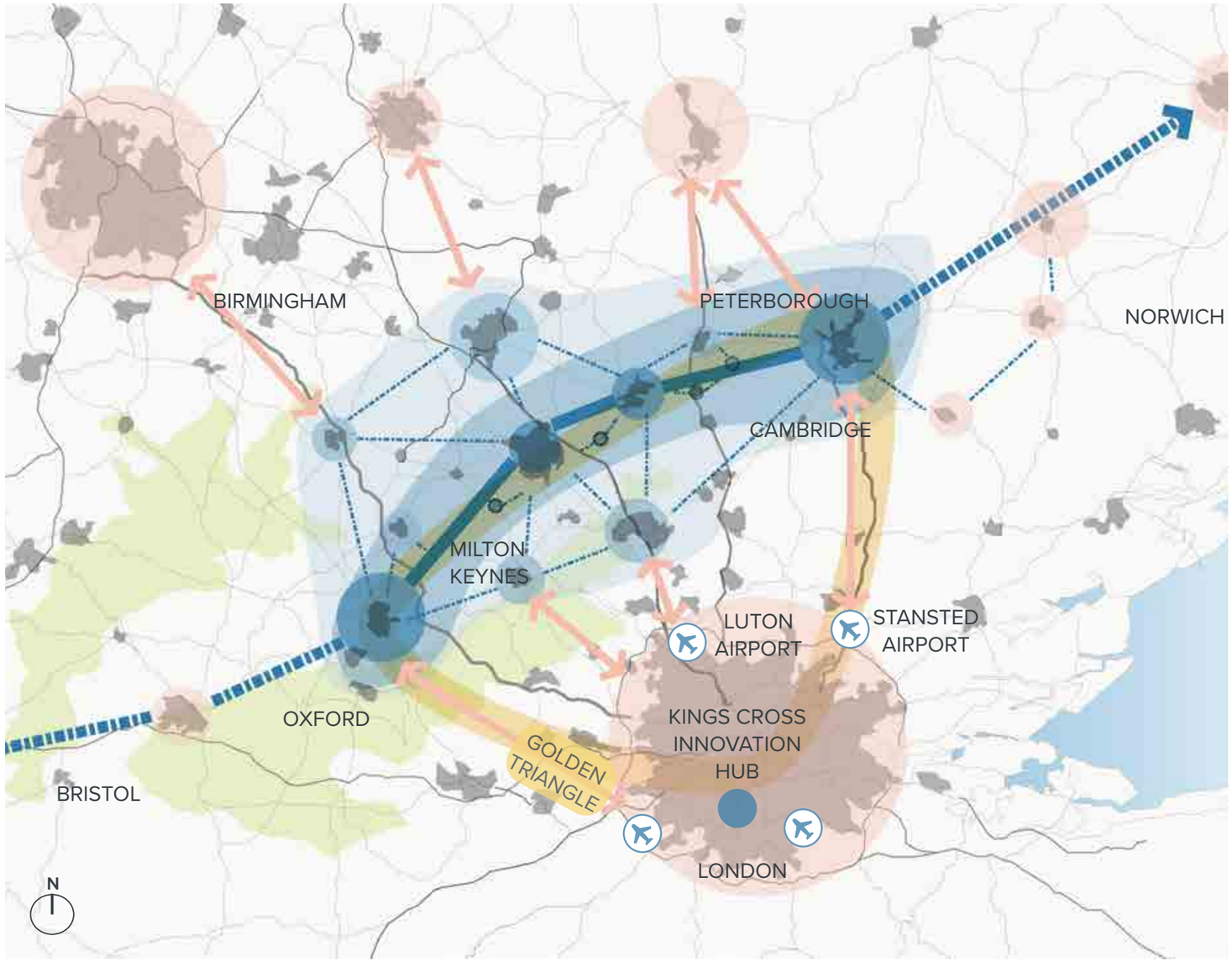
Strategically, Oxford is situated within a complex economic, social and cultural network which operates at a multitude of scales. Regionally, it's a significant hub in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and the Golden Triangle. The Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework (2021) provides a long term vision for the region which seeks to support economic growth, a vibrant place and improvements to the environment. The government's Levelling Up White Paper (2022) and investments will be critical to bolster research and development, and new jobs in the Arc.

The City of Oxford has strategic importance in supporting economic growth at a national and international scale. It has key rail and air links which allow Oxford to be connected to a multitude of places and networks. The 'Build Back Better: our plan for growth' report (2021) highlights how Oxford's pivotal role in the development and manufacture of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine illustrates the value of strong partnerships between different educational and business stakeholders. This makes Oxford a key hub for research and development, something which the UK Government has pledged to increase investment in.

The 'Golden Triangle'- London, Oxford and Cambridge – will continue to grow the science, tech and creative industries with the support of world top ranking universities.

The corridor containing Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford has the potential to be the UK's Silicon Valley





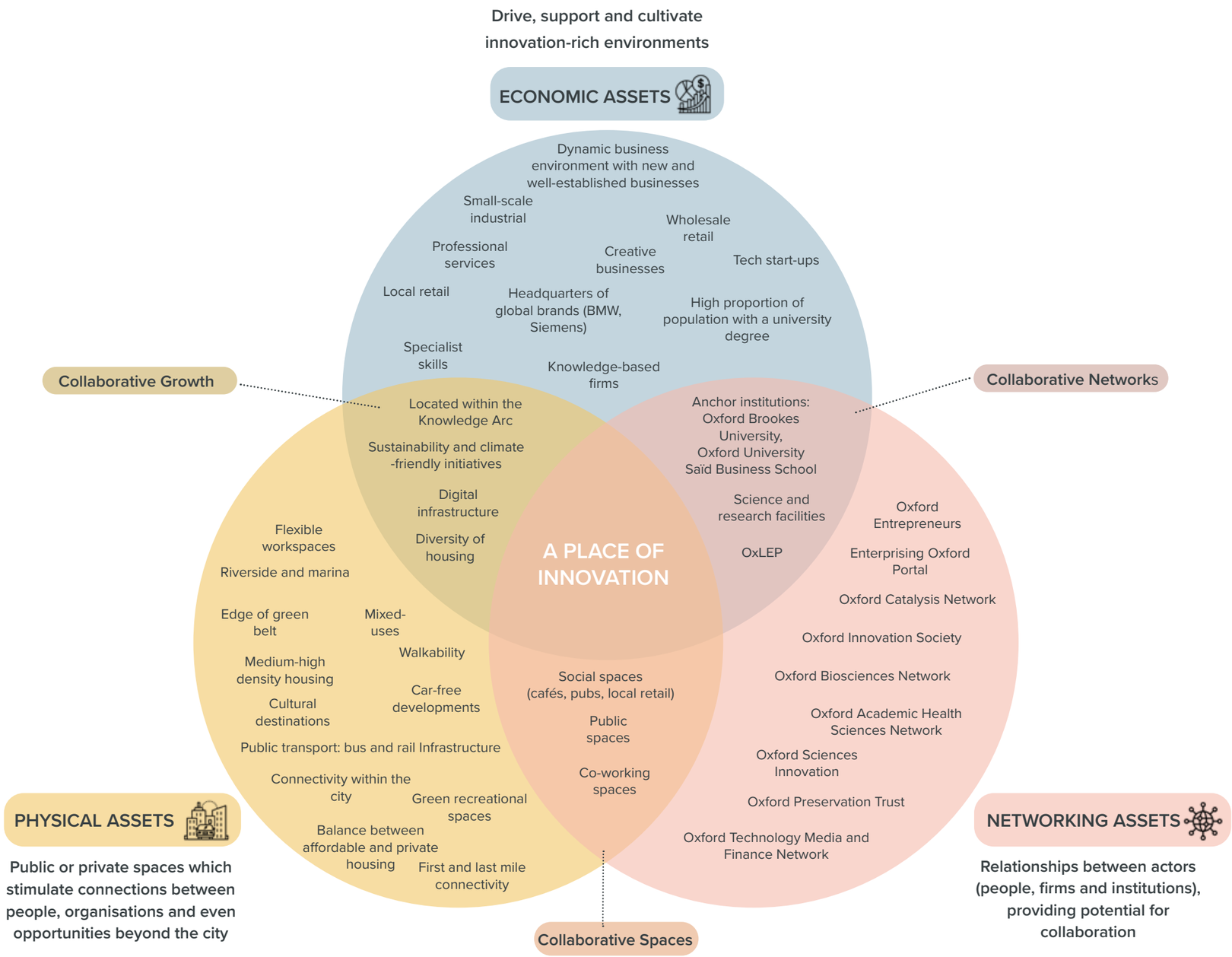
IN THE CONTEXT OF AN INNOVATION DISTRICT

The Spatial Framework looks to represent the Oxford West End Investment Prospectus (2022) which sets out an ambitious vision for an **'inspiring and inclusive innovation district'** which expands the city's innovative network sustainably. A well-managed balance of residential and employment uses are a prerequisite for the development of a successful innovation district.

As echoed in the Area of Change Policy of the Local Plan, the rapid expansion of the city centre has called for a more balanced mix of uses and has reached an immediate need for commercial space. This is also echoed within the Local Plan (2020) which envisages Oxford to be a centre of learning, knowledge and innovation. Policy SP2 allocates **Osney Mead** as a mixed use development where an **'innovation quarter'** is encouraged. This falls within the University's vision (2019) which aims to create a campus experience which fosters an ecosystem of innovation, in both the academic and business world. This vision for the West End has regional and national importance, as set out in the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (2019) and is a key component of the **Oxford-Cambridge Arc**.

Oxford has a number of key assets: economic assets, such as different types of businesses; physical assets, such as public realm and mixed use areas; and network assets, which are organisations which hold communities together. The overlaps which occur between assets are key for innovation and growth, ultimately fostering an environment which the city can achieve the status of an **Innovation District**.

The vision seeks to build upon these valuable assets and improve them. It aims to expand the current offer by delivering new workspaces and homes; improving connectivity and enriching the existing context.



VISION AND PRINCIPLES

The Spatial Framework promotes the West End of Oxford as a liveable quarter of the city centre. This is an area where people will want to live well together, work well together and play well together.

The placemaking approach sets out to create safe and prosperous communities; places where people want to live, work and do business are at the heart of the vision for this emerging new quarter of the city's extended core. Four key themes help us unpack and understand this vision. These themes are all interconnected and form core principles of the Spatial Framework and its various strategies.

An innovative and creative place to work, live and visit all year-around

A CREATIVE PLACE. RIVERSIDE ACTIVITY. CAFE CULTUR



DIVERSE LAND USE. SUDS GREENING. ARTS. CULTURE

A liveable and inclusive place that maximises land with mixed use destinations

A VIBRANT COMMUNITY. PLAY MULTI-TENURE. INCLUSI



EDUCATION. AFFORDABLE COMMUNITY FACILITIES. FOOD

A 15-minute place: strong connections of ecology, community and infrastructure

ACCESSIBLE/CONNECTED PLACE



FUTURE-PROOF. SAFETY CYCLING. WALKING. STATION GATEWAY. DIGITAL. WATER

A place with economic strengths: an innovative & creative mix of uses

ENTERPRISE. MULTI-FUNCTIONAL



MEETING SPACES. SOCIAL MIXED USE. ACTIVITY MEANWHILE USE. INNOVATION

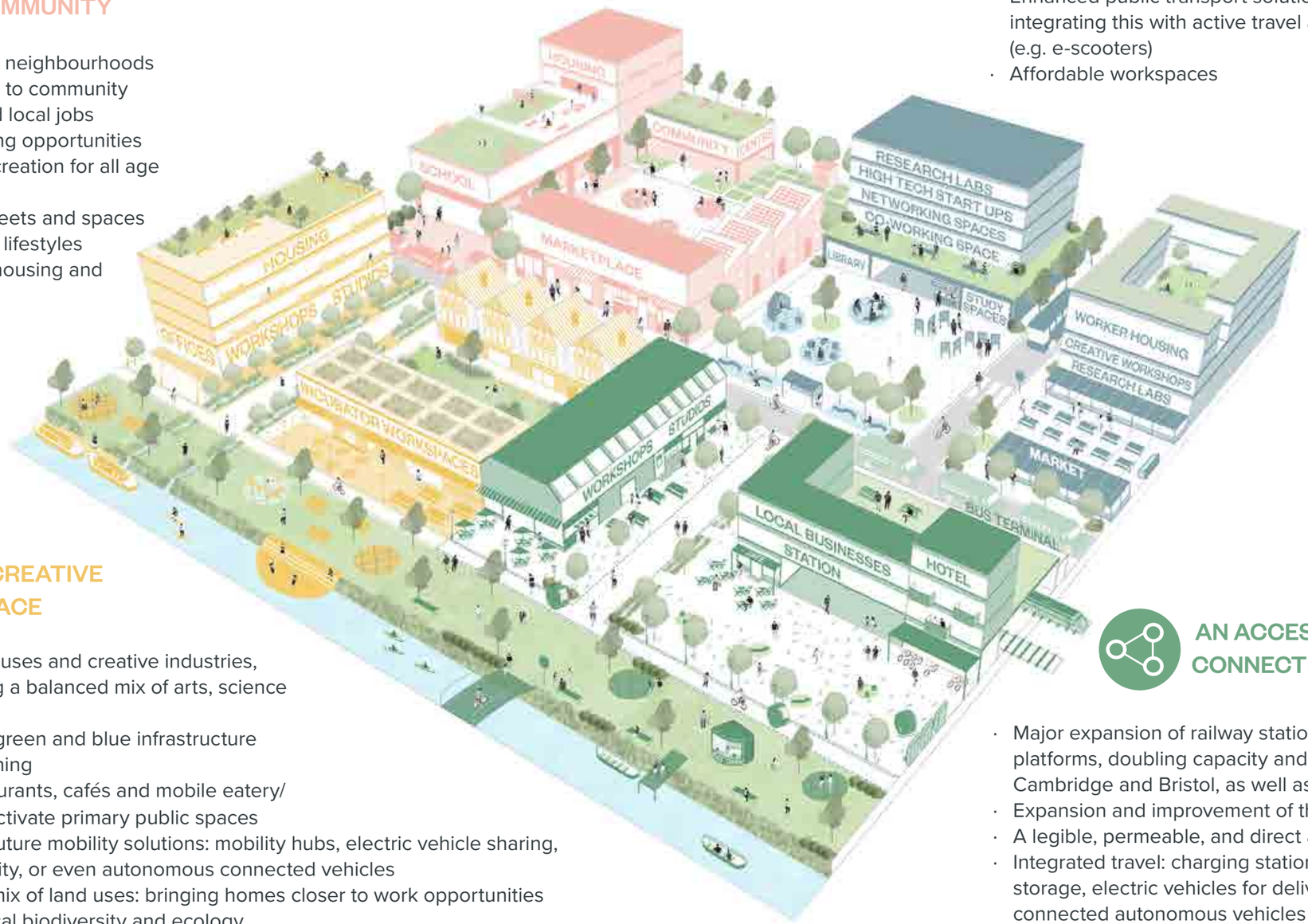
VISION AND PRINCIPLES

A VIBRANT COMMUNITY

- Multi-tenure neighbourhoods
- Easy access to community facilities and local jobs
- Food growing opportunities
- Play and recreation for all age groups
- Inclusive streets and spaces
- Low-carbon lifestyles
- Affordable housing and workplaces

A GLOBAL ENTERPRISE

- A place which fosters research, innovation and technology
- Mixed use innovative urban typologies
- A wide range of housing tenures/ typologies to support economic growth
- Multifunctional outdoor spaces - ranging in scale, character and hierarchy
- Active ground floor uses to encourage street animation
- Enhanced public transport solutions, including rapid transit, integrating this with active travel and new forms of mobility (e.g. e-scooters)
- Affordable workspaces



A CREATIVE PLACE

- Compatible uses and creative industries, encouraging a balanced mix of arts, science and culture
- Integrating green and blue infrastructure
- Urban greening
- Retail, restaurants, cafés and mobile eatery/ venues to activate primary public spaces
- Innovative future mobility solutions: mobility hubs, electric vehicle sharing, micro-mobility, or even autonomous connected vehicles
- Innovative mix of land uses: bringing homes closer to work opportunities
- Enhance local biodiversity and ecology
- Innovative meanwhile interventions to help unlock sites and work with local communities

AN ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED PLACE

- Major expansion of railway station, including two new railway lines and platforms, doubling capacity and unlocking potential connections to Cambridge and Bristol, as well as more trains to London and the north
- Expansion and improvement of the bus network
- A legible, permeable, and direct active travel network accessible to all
- Integrated travel: charging stations, cycle hire, cycle and scooter storage, electric vehicles for deliveries and servicing and future for connected autonomous vehicles
- Water connectivity through water taxis and leisure boards
- High quality public realm that prioritises pedestrians and cyclists
- Digital infrastructure to create safe, inclusive and resilient environments

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

- Development sites
- Pylons & overhead electric cables
- Electrical substation
- River as a barrier
- Rail line as a barrier
- Oxpens Road as a barrier
- Listed buildings
- Conservation Areas
- Opportunity for improving the relationship with watercourses
- Opportunity to respond to edge of green belt with proposal
- Flood Zone 3a
- Flood Zone 3b

The analysis is set out in Appendix A of this Spatial Framework which includes analysing policy, emerging developments, historic context, demographics and activity, townscape and character, public realm and landscape, movement and flooding. This concludes with identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the West End. The following provides a summary of the key points:

- Heritage - Oxford's rich history has led to many listed buildings, Conservation Areas and key views which must be protected. This requires proposals to be sensitive and positively contribute to the character of their surroundings.
- The large number of development sites coming forward, some of which are outlined within the Local Plan (2020), providing an exciting opportunity for new places for people to work, live and play.
- The large number of watercourses and associated towpaths. The West End has a huge opportunity to celebrate its watercourses and improve connections across them. Development sites must respond to these and open them up with high quality public realm. This is particularly important in development relating to the River Thames, Bulstake Stream and Castle Mill Stream.
- A number of roads are congested and offer a poor quality pedestrian experience (e.g Botley Road, Oxpens Road). Development sites must improve streets through urban greening and provide better frontages onto them, creating an active, pedestrian and cycle-friendly environment.
- Flood risk is a major environmental concern, with much of Osney and Osney Mead Industrial Estate being in flood risk zones. Development sites within these areas will need to design flood resilient proposals and ensure a sound evacuation plan.
- Proximity to the green belt is a significant asset for the West End and development sites will have the opportunity to take advantage of good views and amenity space. Development proposals do need to be sensitive.
- Overhead power lines and associated substation are a major constraint for the Osney Mead regeneration site. Undergrounding or relocating them will be a key enabler for development proposals to come forward.



THE GOLDEN THREADS

Sustainability, Social Value and Economy

These golden threads run through each strategy listed within the Spatial Framework. They have an important part to play in every part of the built environment and need to be embedded in early strategic thinking whilst looking at sites within the West End, to meet the broad goals set out in the Local Plan.

Sustainability Strategy



The Sustainability Strategy is an important golden thread which runs through the Spatial Framework. In the age of a Climate Emergency, every strategy needs to work together to fulfil Oxford City Council's ambitious goals to achieve social, environmental and economic sustainability.

This is recognised by Oxford's Economic Strategy (2022) and the and the Zero Carbon Action Plan (2021) which seeks to increase jobs within the zero carbon sector; create diverse and inclusive places; and promote opportunities which restore habitats and provide urban green infrastructure. The Oxford West End Investment Prospectus (2022) campaigns for the expansion of the green-tech sector and the embracing of new sustainable approaches.

Social Value Strategy



Ensuring all strategies and interventions provide effective social value will be critical in realising the vision of the Spatial Framework. The following will be needed:

1. Identify social needs as a precondition for any development
2. Protect and enhance existing social infrastructure and their networks
3. Include the community as a driver of design decisions
4. New developments must provide an affordable and diverse housing mix
5. High quality design for all - tenure blind - whether its affordable or market
6. Designing public spaces which are inclusive and accessible to all

Economic Strategy



Reflecting Oxford's Economic Draft Strategy (2022), the Spatial Framework has an ambitious vision to create a place of innovation within the West End. To support economic growth, a set of principles has been created to guide this, provoke new practices and support delivery:

1. Commitment and focus - shared long-term commitment to responding to the priority challenges and opportunities identified in the economic strategy
2. Collaboration - making the most of available capacity and resources that exist across the city by building on the work of partners, brokering new relationships and working across new areas
3. Participation - embedding participatory principles within delivery to ensure that Oxford's residents are actively involved in idea development and decision-making.
4. Innovation - using the city as a 'living lab' to try unique projects, alongside taking innovative approaches to leverage funding and realising ambitions
5. Agility - continuously reviewing delivery mechanisms, project priorities and ways of working to ensure the city remains agile in responding to changing needs
6. Pace - working rapidly to deliver projects that deliver positive economic, social and environmental impacts

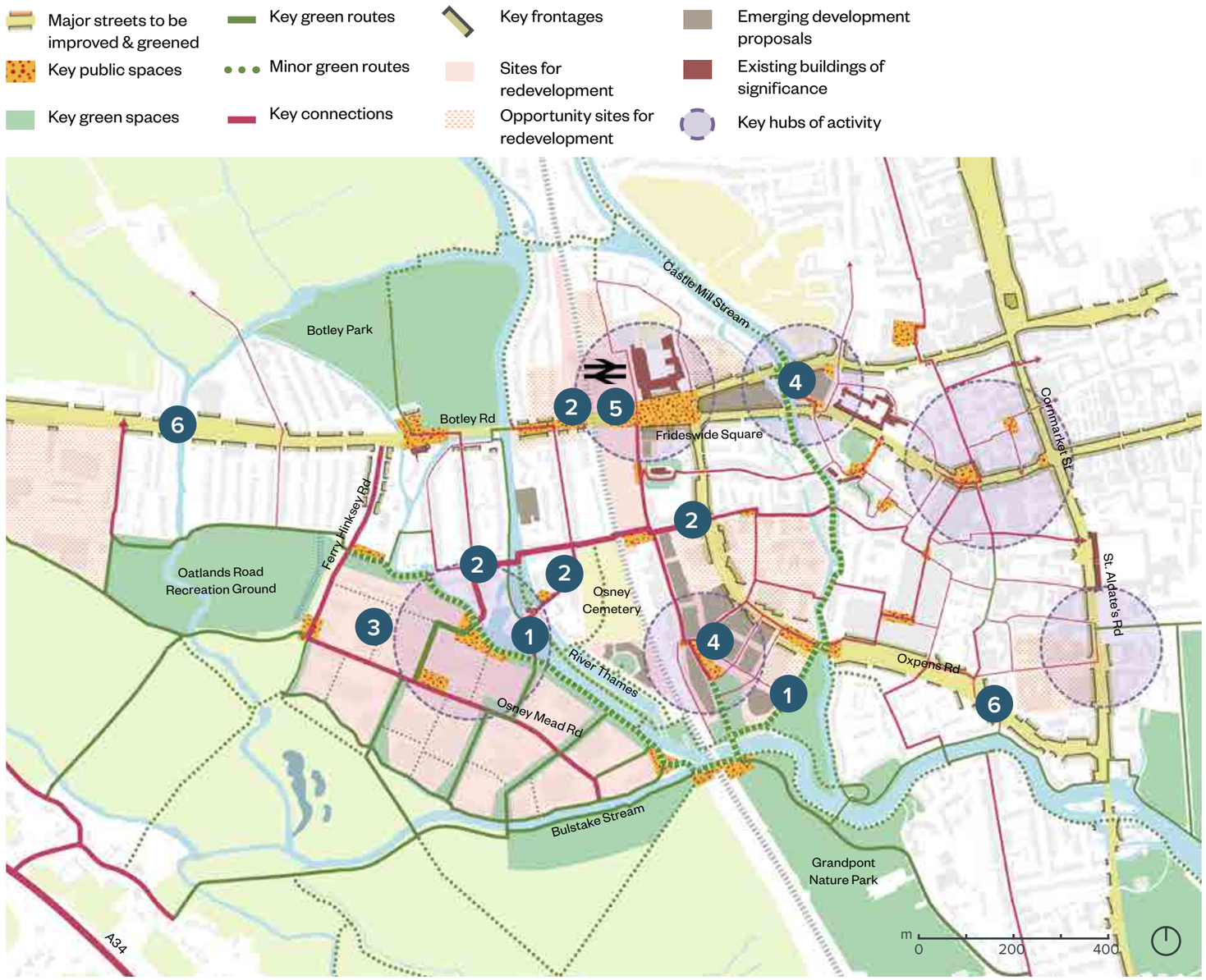
SPATIAL STRATEGIES

The Spatial Framework is set out in the form of broad principles of good place-making and strategic thinking for the West End. Framework strategies have been driven from a holistic approach - looking at the output from stakeholder engagement - understanding priorities, constraints and ambitions. The strategies must be considered in the wider context - taking into account strategic movement patterns; characters of neighbouring areas; and key green and blue infrastructure considerations. From this, a number of strategies have emerged. These include:

- Green & blue
- Movement
- Public realm
- Heritage
- Arts & culture
- Meanwhile use
- Building heights
- Emerging development & land use

In summary, a number of key points are worth highlighting:

1. **Opening up the riverside** - enhanced character to riverside and Oxpens Meadows edge
2. Significantly **improving east-west pedestrian and cycle connections** through new and existing routes
3. **Redevelopment of Osney Mead Industrial Estate** provides the opportunity to create a place to live, work and play for new and existing communities
4. **Creating new hubs of activity with high quality public realm** at Oxpens and Nuffield College sites; and other future sites
5. **A new station gateway** (including Becket Street car park) which provides a significant entrance to Oxford
6. Making **existing streets more human scale** with better pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, tree planting, improved frontages and new public realm



SPATIAL STRATEGIES

Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

A strong green and blue network is essential in adapting our environment in light of climate change, promoting health and well-being and fostering biodiversity. These principles underpin the Green and Blue Landscape Strategy.

This strategy seeks to reinforce what is already there, create better connections between components and add new green and blue infrastructure which enriches the existing offering.

1. Greening of existing and proposed streets
2. Integration of flood risk mitigation into design
3. Making a destination for Osney Mead's riverside
4. Towpaths as key green arteries within the city
5. Putting the community at the heart of every green space
6. Improve access to the green belt areas and sports and recreation provision



Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy as outlined in Chapter 3: The Spatial Framework

Key Delivery Priorities

1. Establishing a green and blue network on Osney Mead:

- New green and blue elements introduced to Osney Mead's existing routes will need to precede comprehensive development and will work to unlock the site for development
- Green and blue infrastructure must be effective for flood mitigation, promoting biodiversity, and amenity space
- Designs must consider works from the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) and ongoing works to watercourses

2. Opening up the Thames riverside and Osney Lock:

- Opportunity for the Thames riverside to be a key place of activity, biodiversity, flood mitigation, leisure and play
- Works must respond to the different characters present on the River Thames and the nearby Castle Mill Stream

3. Urban greening along major routes:

- Greening and rationalising of movement on key roads such as Oxpens, Ferry Hinksey, and Botley Road
- Ensuring streets and surrounding development sites contribute positively to active travel, biodiversity, and active street frontages

SPATIAL STRATEGIES

Movement Strategy

A strong movement network is pivotal to the future of the West End. Currently this area is highly limited in connections, relying on constrained towpaths and streets which are poor in quality and connectivity.

This strategy provides a real opportunity to bring the West End into the life of the bustling city centre by providing key activity hubs with high quality public realm which are interlinked with walking and cycling connections.

1. Movement strategy supporting decarbonisation and helping to meet net zero carbon
2. New east-west links which will connect existing and future places
3. Enhance access to the bus network and plan for future improvements in accessibility
4. Build upon station development to create a gateway to the City and new movement corridors to Osney Mead and Oxpens
5. Create a network of routes which promote active travel as the first choice
6. Improve integration of public transport with walking, cycling, and micromobility to make it easier for people to travel
7. Improve connections to nearby green and open spaces and better integrate them



Movement Strategy as outlined in Chapter 3: The Spatial Framework

Key Delivery Priorities

1. Railway station gateway:

- Strengthening the Oxford railway station as a local and regional transport hub through public realm and infrastructure improvements
- Improving east-west connectivity to sites such as Osney Mead and Oxpens through pedestrian and cyclist prioritisation
- Creating a new sense of arrival at the station

2 Oxpens bridge:

- Creating an important new connection between the developments at Osney Mead and Oxpens
- Improving access and improving value to the area around Grandpont Nature park and Thames riverside

3. Opening up of the Environment Agency depot and Osney Lock:

- Improving public access to the River Thames
- Opening up key route through the EA depot connecting Osney Town and Osney Mead and introducing new permeability between the two banks of the river

4. Oxpens Road:

- Interventions could include tree planting, cycle infrastructure, building frontages, swales, and a central reservation for safer crossing
- Oxpens Road as a holistic site for the delivery of infrastructure, from Frideswide Square to St. Aldate's

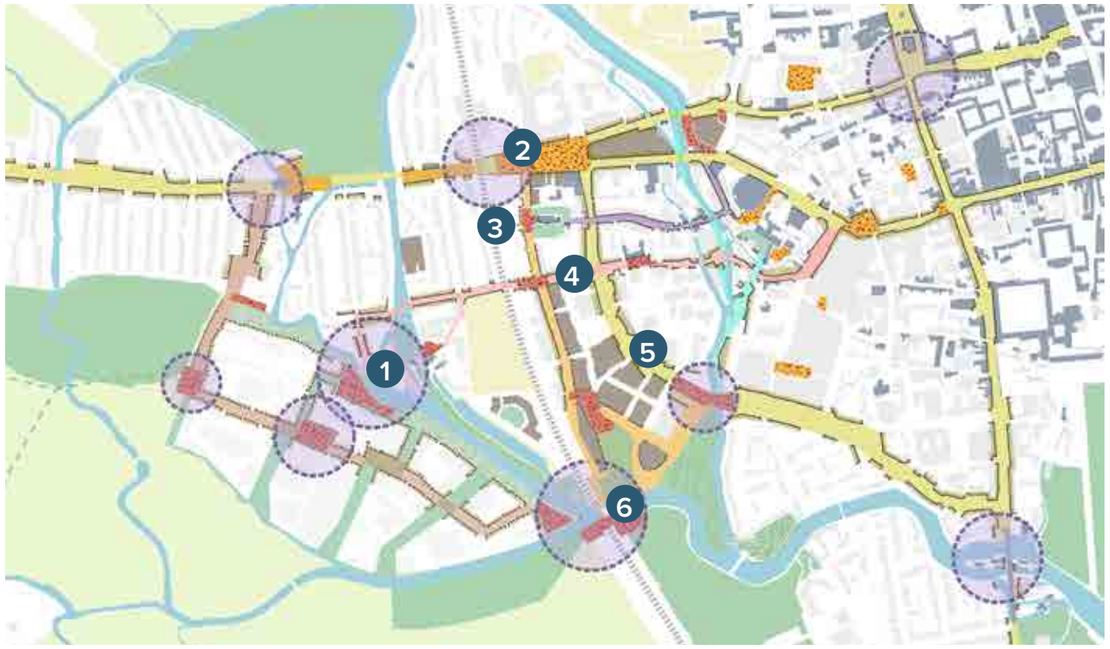
SPATIAL STRATEGIES

Public Realm and Infrastructure Strategy

The quality of public space and streets is pivotal to how we experience and move through a city. The public realm provides a setting for community life.

It includes all parts of the urban environment that people can experience or access - public space and buildings, and those parts of private development that impact on public space.

1. Improving public realm around watercourses to create a destination
2. Improvement of wayfinding through design with the creation of gateway spaces
3. Public realm which celebrates heritage assets
4. Interconnected public spaces to anchor future development
5. Humanising and greening vehicle dominated major streets
6. Improving and creating east-west connections which provide a good quality pedestrian experience from Osney Mead to city centre



Public Realm Strategy as outlined in Chapter 3: The Spatial Framework

Key Delivery Priorities

1. Station gateway:

- Strengthening Oxford Railway station as a local and regional transport hub through public realm and infrastructure improvements
- Public realm improvements to all surrounding streets and spaces

2. Oxpens Road:

- Developing a consistent public realm experience from the station down to new developments at Oxpens and Osney Mead
- Improved public realm connecting Oxpens and the adjacent meadows to Westgate

3. Becket Street link:

- Last mile solutions to show how a fully integrated approach to sustainable travel can be achieved. Opportunities for improved accessibility & bus layovers should be fully explored.
- Considering the sensitive context of St Thomas the Martyr Church

4. Frideswide Sqand Castle Mill stream:

- Public realm improvements along Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street will be important alongside the development of the area
- Consideration of the station as a gateway and how the site can contribute to this

5. Opening up the riverside:

- Making the most of the West End's natural resources to create high quality public space
- Opening up the Thames riverside from Oxpens meadow to the Environment Agency depot site

6. Osney Mead riverside square:

- A new riverside square to activate Osney Mead as a new activity hub and innovation quarter
- Meanwhile uses during early phases of development may aid delivery and foster community support

SPATIAL STRATEGIES

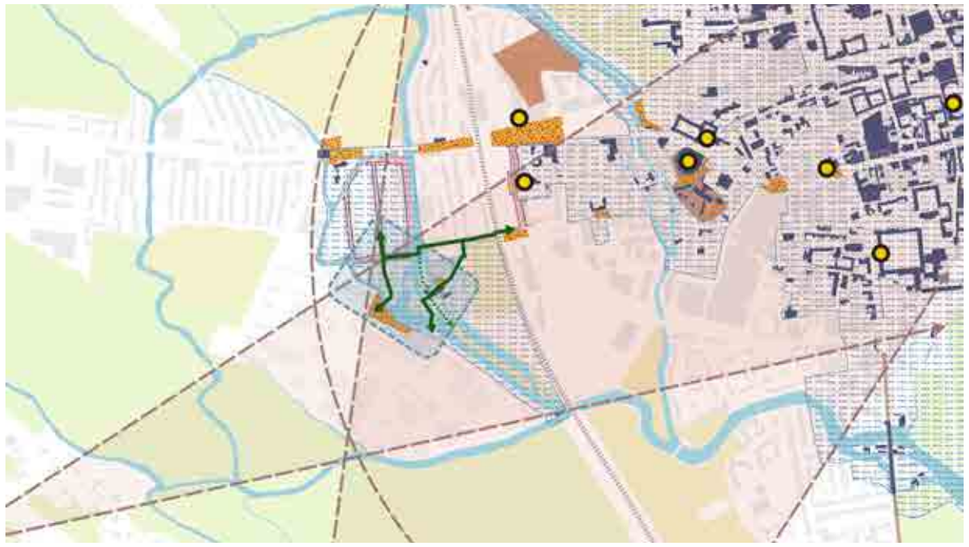
Heritage, Arts and Culture Strategy

Heritage Strategy

The heritage is much more than high-profile assets, it also includes local places, features and associations: minor buildings, paths and open spaces, viewpoints and events.

This history is of significance for the local people who live and work in the city and feel a sense of belonging and ownership, which is reinforced by the continuity of experience that the heritage provides.

1. Re-establishing the historic relationship of the River Thames and its heritage assets
2. Ensuring the protection of heritage assets from increased footfall and traffic - taking a holistic approach to connectivity
3. Improving public realm to celebrate key heritage assets
4. Ensuring short and long distance heritage views are maintained
5. Proposed heights need to be sensitive and respond to existing heritage assets
6. Creating a culture of reusing, recycling and retaining and promoting the principles of circular economy



Heritage Strategy as outlined in Chapter 3: The Spatial Framework



Arts and Culture Strategy as outlined in Chapter 3: The Spatial Framework

Arts and Culture Strategy

Culture and arts have a multitude of socio-economic benefits which are crucial in realising the vision for Oxford. It provides an opportunity to improve the skills and diversity of the creative workforce and helps to foster social capital in the various destinations which attract locals and visitors.

1. Allowing for space within the West End where culture can be produced and can thrive
2. Creation of a destination(s) in the West End where people can experience and share culture
3. Promotion of cultural and arts activities in mixed use neighbourhoods
4. Utilising the public realm as a key space for culture with a programme of events
5. Celebrating the cultural heritage of the West End

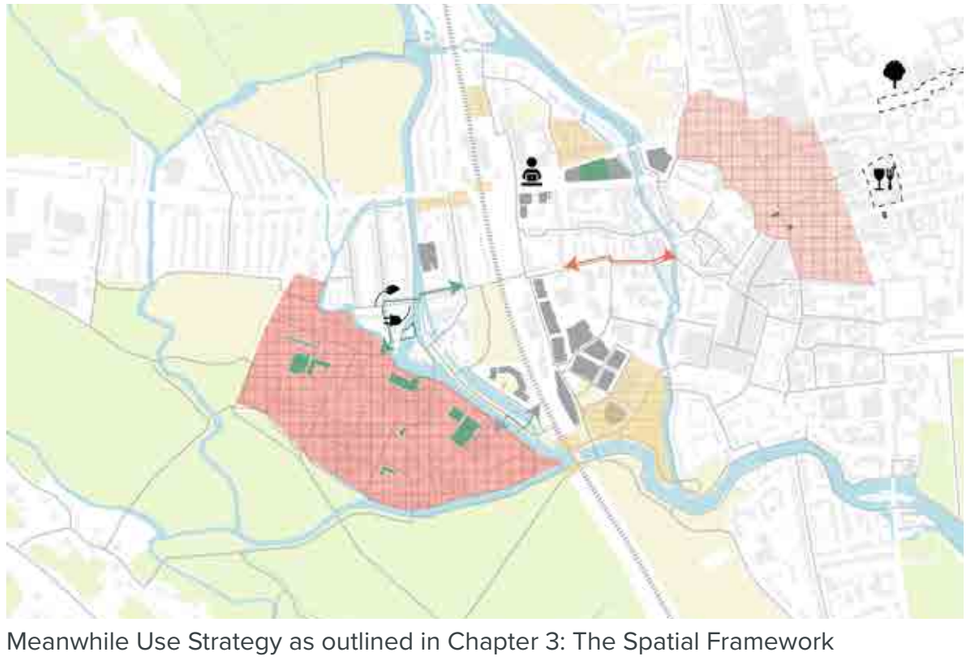
SPATIAL STRATEGIES

Meanwhile Use and Building Height Strategy

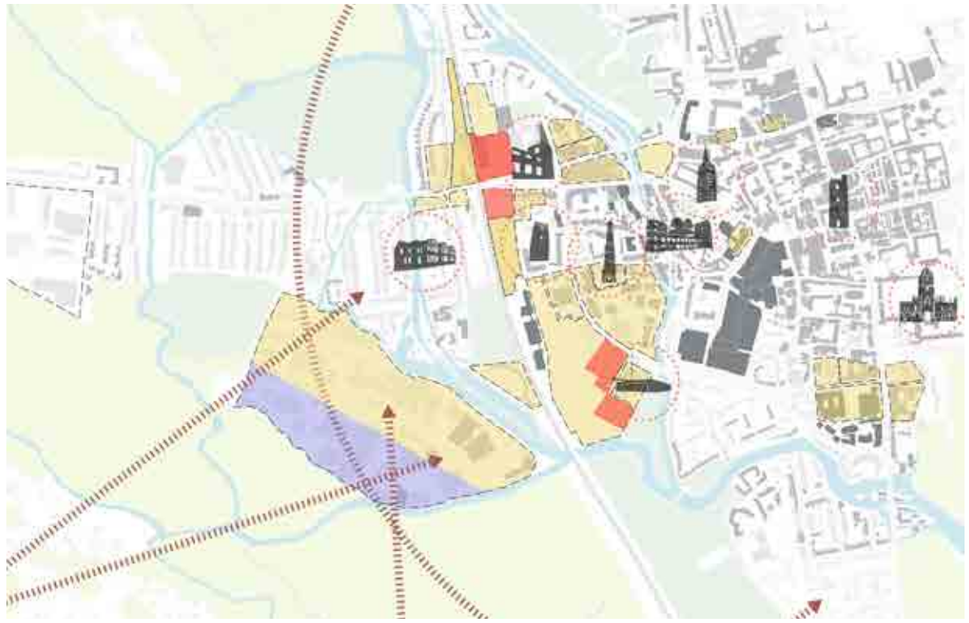
Meanwhile Use Strategy

The West End of Oxford has plenty of vacant and under-utilised land and buildings which could be re-purposed as meanwhile spaces/uses to help stimulate activity and change perceptions of some neighbourhoods. The Spatial Framework identifies some key opportunities to help unlock sites, create better footfall through and to areas and attract investment in strategic locations. Ultimately, the strategy seeks to generate social value, resilience and create a long legacy for the area.

1. Improving existing and creating new connections and promoting active travel
2. Creating new hubs of activity
3. Meanwhile uses which seek to aid developing and fostering a new community
4. Re-using and re-purposing existing urban form



Meanwhile Use Strategy as outlined in Chapter 3: The Spatial Framework



Building Heights Strategy as outlined in Chapter 3: The Spatial Framework

Building Height Strategy

Building heights within Oxford's West End need to be strategically and sensitively designed to: i) respond to viewing cones and heritage assets (Policy DH1, Local Plan, 2020) and; ii) allow for moments of heights which provide a quantum of development space and are key marker buildings enhancing legibility and wayfinding through the neighbourhoods in the West End.

1. Celebrating the West End's existing points of height, and strategically adding more
2. Enhancing long distance views by improving the roofscape and form of the West End
3. Ensuring height of new development is informed by immediate surroundings
4. Building heights and massing must respond to existing heritage assets
5. Balance of new development with spaces in-between buildings

OSNEY MEAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

Key Delivery Priorities

1 Links and connections:



To unlock the site, new east to west routes in and out of Osney Mead are critical. They may be provided through a multitude of connections - Oxpens Bridge; Osney Lock, making the Environment Agency depot publicly accessible for pedestrians; and South Street to Barrett Street. Existing connections along the Thames pathway and at Osney Lock will need to be strengthened.

3 Securing all the land and property required for the project



Currently, with a complicated and fragmented land ownership, proposals at Osney Mead will need to engage effectively with many stakeholders. A holistic vision which enables the site to come forward in strategic phases should be agreed early on. This includes resolving existing land titles and may make use of compulsory purchase powers.

5 Green and Blue infrastructure:



Establishing the green and blue network on Osney Mead is a key infrastructural priority which will introduce significant green and blue elements to Osney Mead's existing routes. This will need to precede comprehensive redevelopment and offer both immediate environmental and flood defence benefits, as well as long-term benefits in opening the site up for redevelopment. Green and blue infrastructure must be highly effective in flood mitigation, promote and protect ecology and providing amenity space for communities. Designs must consider work on the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme and ongoing works to surrounding watercourses

Delivery drivers and steps to unlock Osney Mead's potential

Meanwhile interventions should precede more substantial development and aid holistic delivery strategies. The focus of these meanwhile interventions should be at Osney Mead's riverside square and along the existing towpath.



2 Meanwhile interventions along Thames riverside

The under-grounding of power lines will enable the comprehensive development of Osney Mead. Without burying or removing these, the site is heavily constrained in terms of new development, also due to flood risk and appearance. This includes the SSI substation which sits at the gateway to the site, coming in from Ferry Hinksey Road. Feasibility work is needed to better understand the costs, a funding strategy and planning implications of removing or burying the pylons which may be essential to enable a commercially viable proposal.



4 Under-grounding of power lines:

The treatment for existing businesses in Osney Mead must be accounted for as an infrastructure priority.



6 Strategy for businesses and relocations:

OSNEY MEAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

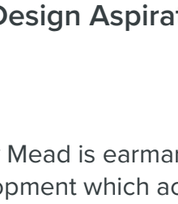
Key Design Aspirations

Osney Mead is earmarked as a place for a mixed use development which accommodates employment uses, academic uses, student housing, employer-linked affordable housing and market housing.



Movement

- Establishing key transport gateways
- Creating improved east-west connectivity across watercourses and railway line
- Creating connections into the adjacent greenbelt



Green and blue

- A strong green and blue network which better links the Thames Riverside to the green belt
- An effective SuDS strategy for effective flood mitigation



Urban armature

- A series of interconnected public spaces with different characters
- Active frontages along public squares to create animated, lively, and safe spaces



Urban grain

- Mixed use urban blocks to ensure access to diverse services and active edges
- Flexible design guidance allowing for the creation of landmark blocks adding to Oxford's characteristic skyline and improving wayfinding

The University of Oxford is a significant landowner of the site and is currently developing a vision for this area. The Spatial Framework sets out four design principles to illustrate potential development in Osney Mead.

The following page outlines key delivery priorities which will be needed to unlock the site.



FRIDESWIDE SQUARE AND CASTLE MILL STREAM QUARTER

Key Design Aspirations

The emerging masterplan for this area includes a series of new and retained buildings which will deliver a mixed use quarter providing spaces for commercial businesses, active ground floor uses with some residential.



Movement

- A new piece of public realm framed by the Castle Mill Stream on the car park site allowing north-south permeability



Urban armature

- Frideswide square and island sites to assist with legibility and wayfinding from the station
- Revitalised entrance to the city



Green and blue

- Greening Frideswide Square
- Retaining existing trees and planting new trees



Urban grain

- Improved frontages onto Frideswide Square
- Active ground floor frontages onto new waterside public realm
- Sensitivity of the setting of St Thomas the Martyr Church



Key Delivery Ingredients



Public realm improvements along Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street: Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street which bound the island site on both sides, are in great need of public realm improvements. A holistic strategy needs to be considered which should prioritise pedestrians and cyclists.



Meanwhile uses in vacant units: There are already several vacant or under-utilised units in the island site. Housing meanwhile uses in these units may support delivery strategies and create early interest and activity. Similar meanwhile solutions are found on the nearby Frideswide Square.



Improvements to station gateway and Frideswide Square: The station gateway aims to deliver a new and improved arrival into Oxford and signifies the West End. A holistic vision will be needed for the station which include public realm improvements to all surrounding streets and spaces, including Frideswide Square.



Creation of a new public space adjacent to Castle Mill Stream: Creation of a vibrant public space which connects with the Castle Mill Stream is an important contribution of this development.



Land ownership challenges: A few key elements on the development site are not owned by the developers, including the Oxford Retreat, Middle Fisher Row Gardens, the eastern bank of the Castle Mill Stream and the Lighthouse pub. Resolving these land ownership challenges could help to facilitate development coming forward strategically. This in particularly important in the opening up of the Castle Mill Stream.

OXPENS AND ASSOCIATED BRIDGE

Key Design Aspirations

A mixed use development including commercial and residential uses is being proposed by OxWED (Oxford City Council and Nuffield College) and a planning application is due to be submitted in 2022.



Movement

- Oxpens Bridge providing new links to Osney Mead and green belt
- Improved link from Station to Oxpens



Urban armature

- Improvement of the quality to Oxpens Road
- Creation of destination public space with mixed use functions animating the area



Green and blue

- Expanding the meadows into the Oxpens masterplan
- Greening Oxpens Road



Urban grain

- A strong frontage onto key public spaces and streets
- Flexible commercial floorplates meeting needs of head quarters to start-ups



Key Delivery Ingredients



Green and blue infrastructure: Integrating Oxpens Meadows and the River Thames will be essential in unlocking Oxpens as a development site, and it forms a key part of the amenity space for the new development.



Oxpens bridge: The placement and quality of Oxpens Bridge will help define the relationship between Oxpens, Osney Mead and further afield. Considerations around where this bridge will land must be carefully considered as it will be crucial for both on the south to pick up movement routes, and the north as an entry point into the Oxpens development and the wider city centre.



Oxpens Road improvements: Public realm improvements on Oxpens Road will benefit the character of the development itself as well as movement links into the wider West End and the city as a whole. Urban greening; prioritisation of pedestrians and cyclists; better crossings; and positive frontages will all be needed.



Richard Gray Court and Royal Mail Delivery Office and the Ice Rink: A strategic vision which includes all land ownerships of Oxpens will allow the whole site to come forward comprehensively.



Becket Street and link from Oxpens to Station: Public realm improvements on Becket street will be important in providing a better link between Oxpens and the station.

OXFORD RAILWAY STATION AND BECKET STREET CAR PARK

Key Design Aspirations

An emerging masterplan is currently in early design stages - looking at options for the future of the eastern and western side of the station, Becket Street car park; Frideswide Square and Botley Road.



Movement

- Interventions on Becket Street to establish it as a sustainable travel link
- Improved pedestrian and cyclist experience
- Improved configuration of railway station uses



Urban armature

- Improvements to existing public realm elements
- Improved sense of arrival with a strong wayfinding strategy



Green and blue

- Retaining and planting trees
- Retaining green character of Becket Street and setting of St Thomas the Martyr Church



Urban grain

- A multitude of uses which activate the public realm
- Improved frontage and public realm quality on Becket Street and enhancing of the setting of St Thomas the Martyr Church



Key Delivery Ingredients









Improvements to public realm and sense of arrival both to the east and the west: Changing how people arrive and depart Oxford is a major infrastructural undertaking. Public realm improvements around the station will need to create a sense of arrival from both the east and the west. A holistic vision will be needed for the station which include public realm improvements to all surrounding streets and spaces, including Frideswide Square.

Improving east-west connections around Botley Road and Botley Road underpass: East-west connections around the station will be key in how the site is linked to other surrounding developments such as Osney Mead and Castle Mill Stream and Frideswide Square. Improvements to the congested Botley Road, the railway underpass and Frideswide Square will be essential in realising the vision of the Spatial Framework.

Consideration of bus movement in Oxford: Resolving how we should move around Oxford will be a key factor in how the railway station and its surrounding public realm will work.

Last mile solutions to show how a fully integrated approach to sustainable travel can be achieved. Opportunities for improved accessibility & bus layovers should be fully explored.

Consideration of car parking: A great deal of space around the station is currently taken up by car parking. How much of this space is to be retained as parking and the role of cars in general in the scheme must be evaluated through in depth audits from both a transport and a sustainability agenda. As stated above last mile solutions which use sustainable travel should be explored.

IMPLEMENTATION & DELIVERY

Oxford's West End has the potential to deliver change at a significant scale to address demand for new homes, start-ups, spin-offs and headquarter facilities for major businesses, through the implementation of projects across a number of key development sites. Blending, coordinating and delivering these ambitions will be the key to future success.

Oxford's history and its attraction as a location for business, linked with world-class higher education, provides both a resilient context for change and a responsibility to ensure that such change benefits the wider city context and blends the ambition for modern facilities with the history and context that Oxford possesses.

The mixed-use nature of the potential projects within Oxford's West End will allow the area to attract and retain more interlinked and highly productive industries. The addition of new commercial floorspace will be particularly important in achieving this ambition, along with the provision of new homes and associated facilities that embrace the principles of a successful innovation hub in this world class city. This enhanced offer will also act as a driver for wider change in the region and through the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

Major investment to provide an improved public transport hub as part of the **railway station development** (providing both east and west frontages) will be a significant upgrade for the city. The planned improvements at the railway station will provide an important facility that major firms value when choosing a location.



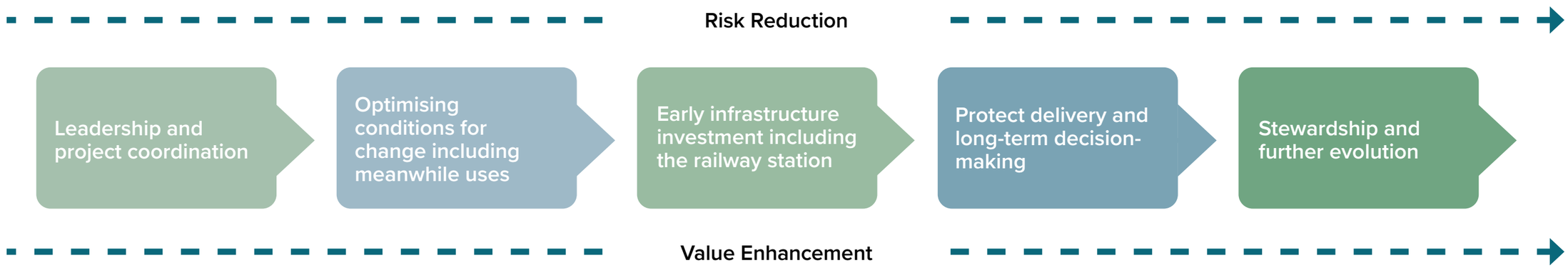
It is recognised that there is a need for a strategic approach to the future of public transport improvements and the impact they have on the West End to ensure a high quality public realm and urban environment is achieved.

The **West End** has the potential to deliver long-term value by attracting and retaining more talent, wealth and opportunity in Oxford, with lasting benefits for local communities, the companies and institutions that invest, and for UK plc. This includes ambitions for zero carbon targets.

Integrating Oxford West End into the city centre is key to the place-making ambitions of the area. This will be achieved by seeking to develop not only complementary uses, but also through investment in new river crossings, bridges and public realm, and to support seamless pedestrian and cycle movement across an expanded city centre.

In order to achieve these ambitions and ensure the planned coordination between sites, public sector investment, and key new and upgraded infrastructure are delivered a **Strategic Board** has been established to provide co-ordination and alignment across the key partners throughout the development and regeneration of the West End.

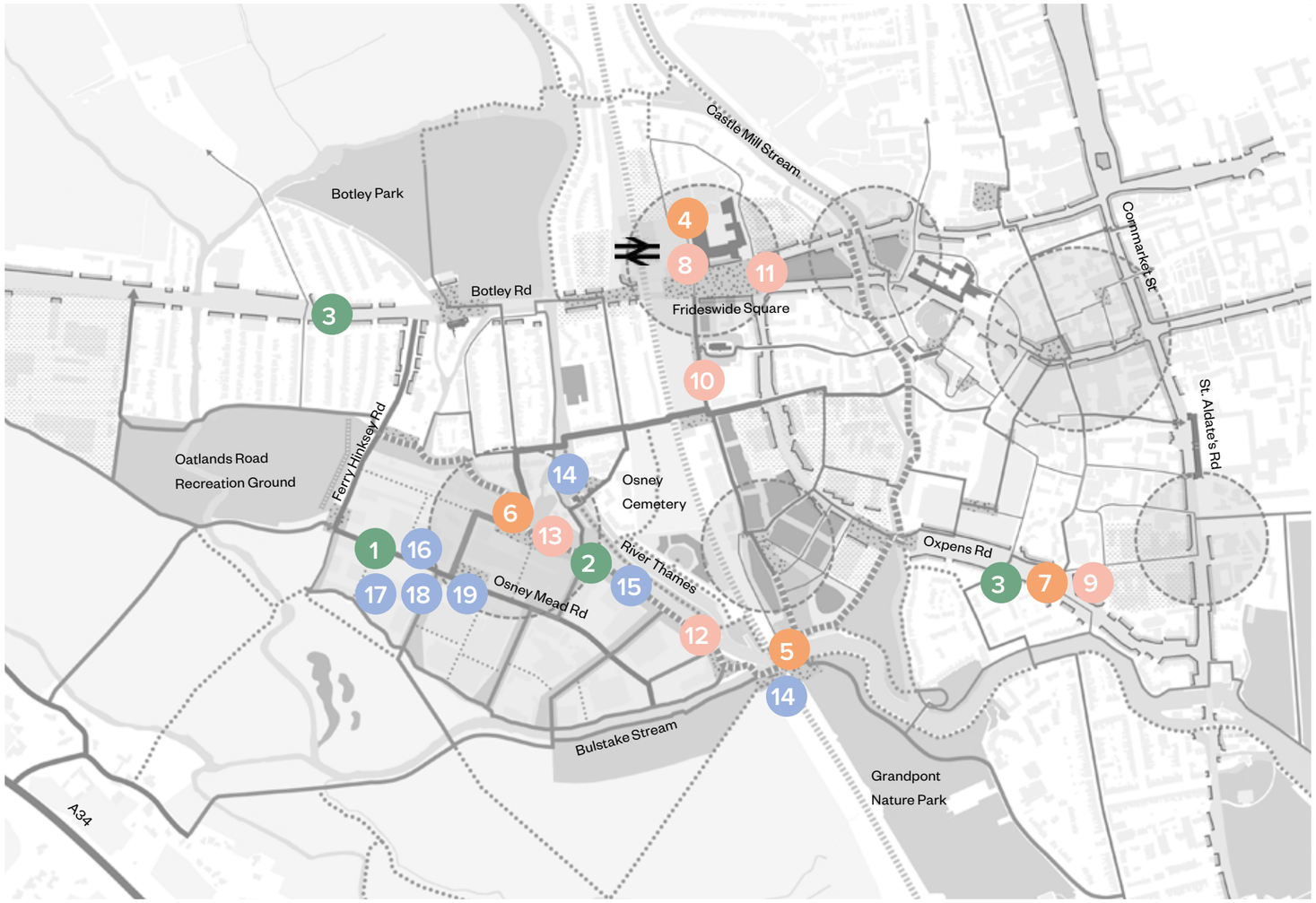
The Council will also continue to play a pivotal role in shaping Oxford's economy by leading and co-ordinating change and using all available levers and powers to achieve this, and assisting in setting up the right conditions within which **new investment and phased change** takes place.



Headline approach to successful implementation & delivery

FUNDING ESTIMATIONS FOR KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES

The key delivery priorities identified within the Spatial Framework will all be subject to viability, land acquisition, market demand and available funding stream. Within the Investment Prospectus (2022) and Volterra's report (2022) a number of costings have been considered, which are outlined in the following tables. These costings are estimated at a point in time and will be subject to change over time and as specifics of proposals are worked up.



Reference map showing the location of below Key Priorities

INDICATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS FOR KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES

Strat	Key Priority	Detail of Priority	Indicative Infrastructure Cost (Investment Prospectus & Volterra report (2022)	
Green and Blue Infrastructure	**1. Establishing a green and blue network on Osney Mead**	• New green and blue elements introduced to Osney Mead's existing routes will need to precede comprehensive development and will work to unlock the site for development • Green and blue infrastructure effective for flood mitigation, promoting biodiversity and amenity space • Designs must consider works from the Oxford Flood Alleviation scheme (OFAS) and ongoing works to watercourses	• Osney Mead and Thames improved cycle paths - £4.9m – delivery 2021–23	
	2. Opening up the Thames riverside and Osney Lock	• Opportunity for the Thames riverside to be a key place of activity, biodiversity, flood mitigation, leisure and play • Works must respond to the different characters present on the River Thames and the nearby Castle Mill Stream		
	3. Urban greening along major routes	• Greening and rationalising of movement on key roads such as Oxpens, Ferry Hinksey and Botley Road • Ensuring streets and surrounding development sites contribute positively to active travel, biodiversity and active street frontages		
Movement	**4. Railway station gateway**	• Strengthening Oxford Railway station as a local and regional transport hub through public realm and infrastructure improvements • Improving east-west connectivity to sites such as Osney Mead and Oxpens through pedestrian and cyclist prioritisation • Creating a new sense of arrival at the station	• Oxford Station West side improvements - £80–160m • Oxford Station East side improvements - £350-550m • Connecting Oxford - £60-100m– new and improved bus services and associated bus and cycle infrastructure	• Becket St to Oxford railway station Rd pedestrian / cycle bridge - £10m-16m – delivery by 2028 • Cowley branch line reopening - £50–150m – required by 2028
	5. Oxpens bridge	• Creating an important new connection between the developments at Osney Mead and Oxpens • Improving access and improving value to the area around Grandpont Nature park, Thames riverside and the green belt	• Osney Mead to Oxpens pedestrian and cycle bridge - £6m – delivery in 2023	
	6. Opening up the EA depot & Osney Lock	• Improving public access to the River Thames • Opening up key route through the EA depot connecting Osney Town and Osney Mead and introducing new permeability between the two banks of the river	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals	
	7. Oxpens Road	• Interventions could include tree planting, cycle infrastructure, building frontages, swales, and a central reservation • Oxpens road as a holistic site for delivery of infrastructure, from Frideswide Square to St Aldate's	• Zero Emission Zone - £2m – delivery dependent on Connecting Oxon • Connecting Oxford £60-100m – new and improved bus services and associated bus and cycle infrastructure	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals

Strat	Key Priority	Detail of Priority	Indicative Infrastructure Cost (Investment Prospectus & Volterra report (2022)	
Public Realm	**8. Station gateway**	• Strengthening Oxford Railway station as a local and regional transport hub through public realm and infrastructure improvements • Public realm improvements to all surrounding streets and spaces	• Oxford Station West side improvements - £80–160m • Becket Street to Oxford railway station pedestrian / cycle bridge - £10m-16m – delivery by 2028	• Oxford Station east side improvements - £350-550m • Cowley branch line reopening - £50–150m – required by 2028 • Connecting Oxford - £60-100m
	9. Oxpens Road	• Developing a consistent public realm experience from the station down to new developments at Oxpens and Osney Mead • Improved public realm connecting Oxpens and the adjacent meadows to Westgate	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals • Zero Emission Zone - £2m – delivery dependent on Oxford Station East side improvements - £350-550m	• Connecting Oxford £60-100m – new and improved bus services and associated bus and cycle infrastructure
	10. Becket Street link	• Considering the bus network necessary to determine the character of Becket Street and its relationship with its surroundings. Last mile solutions to show how a fully integrated approach to sustainable travel can be achieved. Opportunities for improved accessibility & bus layovers should be fully explored. • Considering the sensitive context of St. Thomas the Martyr Church	• Becket Street to Oxford railway station Botley Road pedestrian / cycle bridge - £10m – delivery by 2028	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals
	11. Frideswide Square/Castle Mill Stream sites	• Public realm improvements along Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street will be important alongside the development of the area • Consideration of the station as a gateway and how the site can contribute to this	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals	
	12. Opening up the riverside	• Making the most of the West End's natural resources to create high quality public space • Opening up the Thames riverside from Oxpens meadow to the EA depot site • The placement and quality of Oxpens Bridge will help define the relationship between Oxpens, Osney Mead and further afield. Considerations around where this bridge will land must be carefully considered as it will be crucial for both on the south to pick up movement routes, and the north as an entry point into the Oxpens development and the wider city centre.	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals	
	13. Osney Mead riverside square	• A new riverside square to activate Osney Mead as a new activity hub and innovation quarter • Meanwhile uses during early phases of development may aid delivery and the fostering of community support	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals	

INDICATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE COST FOR KEY DELIVERY

Strat	Key Priority	Detail of Priority	Indicative Infrastructure Cost
Osney Mead	**14. Links and connections**	• New east-west routes in and out of Osney Mead is critical. This may be provided through a multitude of connections - Osney Bridge; Osney Lock, making the EA depot publicly accessible for pedestrians; and South Street to Barrett Street • Existing connections along the Thames pathway and at Osney Lock will need to be strengthened	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals
	15. Meanwhile interventions along Thames riverside	• Meanwhile interventions should precede more substantial development and aid holistic delivery strategies • Focus of these meanwhile interventions should be at Osney Mead's riverside square and along the existing towpath	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals
	16. Securing all the land and property required for the project	• Currently with a complicated and fragmented land ownership, proposals at Osney Mead will need to engage effectively with many stakeholders • A holistic vision which enables the site to come forward in strategic phases should be agreed early on. This includes resolving existing land titles and may make use of compulsory purchase powers	
	17. Under-grounding of power lines	• The under-grounding of power lines will enable the comprehensive development of Osney Mead. Without them being put underground or removed, the site is heavily constrained in terms of new development, green and blue infrastructure and appearance • This includes the SSI substation which sits at the gateway to the site, coming in from Ferry Hinksey Road. A funding strategy for this works will need to be agreed with all stakeholders	• Underground power lines at Osney Mead - £20m – delivery TBC
	18. Green and blue infrastructure	• Establishing the green and blue network on Osney Mead will need to precede comprehensive redevelopment and offer both immediate environmental and flood defence benefits and long term benefits in opening the site up for potential redevelopment • Green and blue infrastructure must consider being highly effective in flood mitigation, promoting and protecting ecology and providing amenity space for communities using the site. Designs must consider work on the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) and ongoing works to surrounding watercourses	• Oxford flood alleviation scheme - £150m – delivery by 2030
	19. Strategy for businesses and relocations	• The treatment for existing businesses in Osney Mead must be accounted for as an infrastructure priority with the goal of protecting businesses and providing relocations of equal value	

71



Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everyone.

- Jane Jacobs

2

A VISION FOR THE WEST END

VISION: INTRODUCTION

Oxford is a centre of learning and innovation on a global scale, and forms part of the **Oxford-Cambridge Arc** which houses one of the fastest growing economies in England. Oxford should continue to be a successful and attractive city; a place that people enjoy living and working in, as well as visiting.

The **West End** and its up-and-coming developments will play a key part in growing Oxford as a liveable and equitable city that can benefit all communities; a city which celebrates innovation and creativity, and where all its citizens have a stake and no one is left behind. The West End is designated as an Area of Change in Oxford's Local Plan, and a priority project for Oxford, Oxfordshire and the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, as set out in the Local Industrial Strategy.

Underpinned by the upcoming development of Oxford Railway Station, the West End offers a once in a lifetime chance to create a new urban neighbourhood for Oxford. The area can expand and showcase the city's 'innovation ecosystem', and its world-changing ideas, inventions and companies. It can be a place that can combine workspaces and fantastic amenities, with new residential neighbourhoods that support existing and new communities alike.

Delivering new homes for Oxford is highly important (Oxford's Growth Strategy) and the West End plays an important role in dealing with the increasing challenge of cost and supply of housing in the city. The Spatial Framework sets out how the West End and its major new developments could become a thriving extension of the city's core over the next 25+ years.

The Spatial Framework and its various strategies are important tools to guide and shape future development in the West End of Oxford. Our ambition is to create a place that is welcoming to all – to live, work, enjoy leisure time and build on Oxford's strengths as a world-class city.

There is a widespread acknowledgement that **climate change** is with us and is set to intensify. The Spatial Framework also outlines a series of essential guiding principles which will help mobilise effective responses to climate change impacts. Focus here is placed, primarily, on climate change mitigation – reducing the emission of greenhouse gases – though the economic and social dimensions of sustainability are also highlighted. These considerations will need to be implemented early on, to ensure the West End is resilient for years to come.

The ambitions of the Spatial Framework look to represent the Oxford West End Investment Prospectus Draft (2022) which sets out an ambitious vision for a well-connected, green, mixed-use neighbourhood that is a place of innovation.

The purpose of the **Spatial Framework** is to:

- Promote a long term and co-ordinated approach to growth and infrastructure planning in the wider West End
- Outline a vision and priorities for growth through various spatial strategies
- Establish an overall public realm strategy for the area
- Identify broad locations for short, medium and long term growth

The realisation of the vision set out in the Spatial Framework is supported in greater detail by the **West End Design Guide**. This builds upon the broad visioning principles set out in this document and offers councillors, developers and other stakeholders confidence in the delivery process. This includes details at the design level around topics such as movement, sustainability, built form and public realm, and how they tie into the broad social, economic and sustainability goals outlined below.

The setting of **infrastructure delivery priorities** can further aid the realisation of the vision. Defining key infrastructure projects is important in setting out a cohesive delivery plan. The development of these priorities are built upon the three key golden threads of sustainability, social value and economy. These priorities, in conjunction with the guidance provided in the Design Guide, can give structure and confidence to stakeholders in delivering the ambitions of the Spatial Framework.

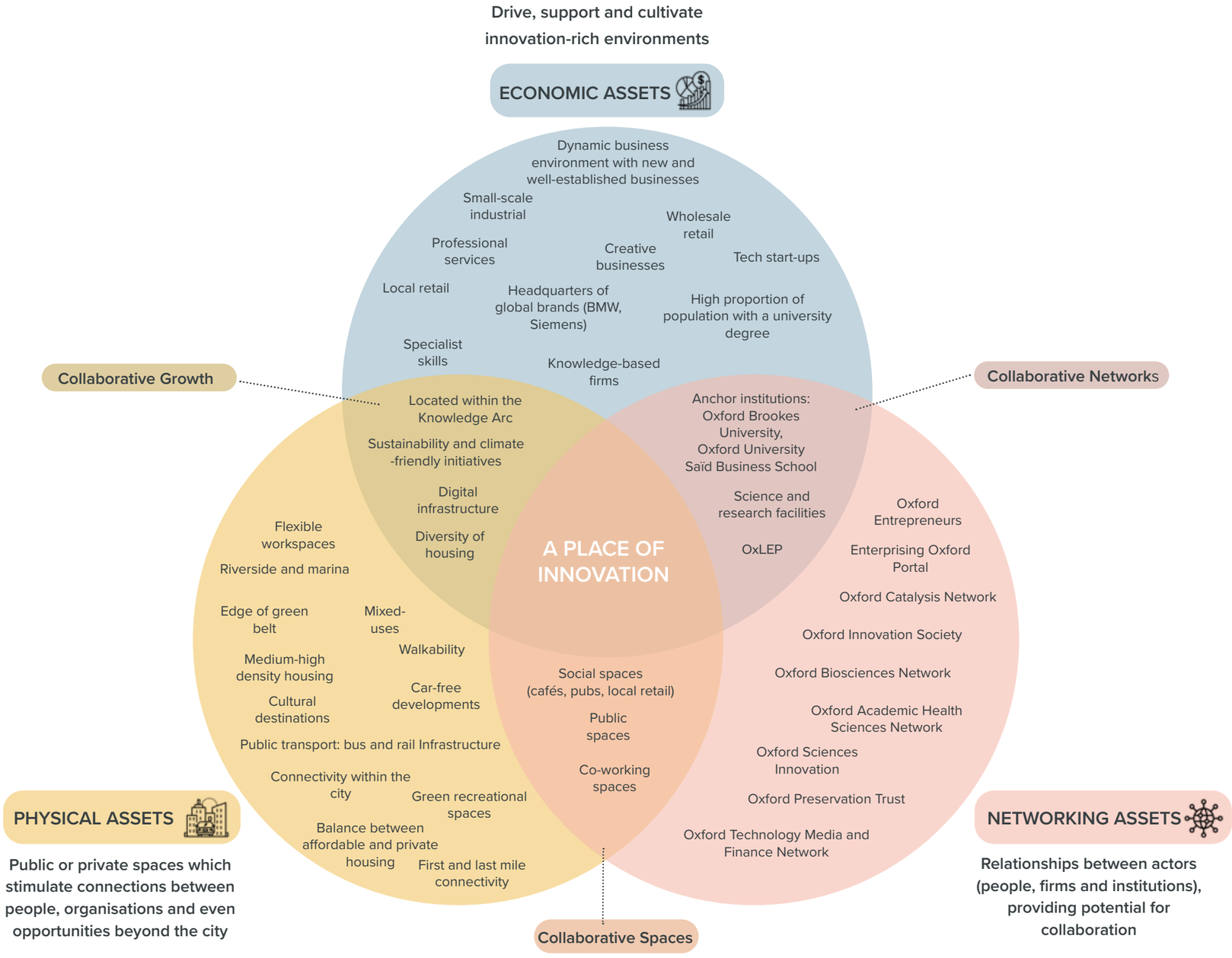
VISION IN THE CONTEXT OF AN INNOVATION DISTRICT

The Spatial Framework looks to represent the Oxford West End Investment Prospectus Draft (2022) which sets out an ambitious vision for an **'inspiring and inclusive innovation district'** which expands the city's innovative network sustainably. A well-managed balance of residential and employment uses are a prerequisite for the development of a successful innovation district.

As echoed in the Area of Change Policy of the Local Plan, the rapid expansion of the city centre has called for a more balanced mix of uses and has reached an immediate need for commercial space. This is also echoed within the Local Plan 2036 which envisages Oxford to be a centre of learning, knowledge and innovation. Policy SP2 allocates **Osney Mead** as a mixed use development where an **'innovation quarter'** is encouraged. This falls within the University's vision (2019) which aims to create a campus experience which fosters an ecosystem of innovation, in both the academic and business world. This vision for the West End has regional and national importance, as set out in the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (2019) and is a key component of the **Oxford-Cambridge Arc**.

Oxford has a number of key assets: economic assets, such as different types of businesses; physical assets, such as public realm and mixed use areas; and network assets, which are organisations which hold communities together. The overlaps which occur between assets are key for innovation and growth, ultimately fostering an environment which the city can achieve the status of an **Innovation District**.

The vision seeks to build upon these valuable assets and improve them. It aims to expand the current offer by delivering new workspaces and homes; improving connectivity and enriching the existing context.



HOW HAS THIS SPATIAL FRAMEWORK DEVELOPED?

The Spatial Framework has been set up through an iterative process as the diagram below illustrates. It has been prepared to co-ordinate development across the wider area of the West End of Oxford, comprising several sites in multiple ownerships, with widely differing delivery timescales. The framework is set out to provide flexibility for current and subsequent masterplans, to develop individual design details and ideas, but which conform to the overarching guiding principles of the framework. It will be used to spatially co-ordinate new developments, essential connections to ensure easy access between existing and new destinations, and the delivery of high quality public realm and infrastructure within the area.

The vision has developed through a series of ideas workshops and a visioning workshop with several key stakeholders, including landowners. It focuses on central guiding factors under four key themes:

- Connectivity
- Place
- People
- Enterprise.

The early contextual analysis of the wider setting, including how areas around and adjacent to the West End will influence change and growth in this area, have formed the foundations of the Spatial Framework. A key aspect of the framework is its **placemaking approach** - it sets out the spatial arrangements and hierarchy for streets, the various open spaces, infrastructure, and the built form and land uses influenced by landscape setting, topography and the waterways. It could bring multiple benefits to the area, including:

- Facilitating enterprise
- Building social capital
- Fostering economic growth and social innovation
- Attracting investment to the area by offering a competitive edge.



UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT: SPATIAL ANALYSIS	WORKING WITH STAKEHOLDERS TO SET OUT THE VISION	VISION	SPATIAL FRAMEWORK	STRATEGIC SITES	IMPLEMENTATION & DELIVERY
Baseline analysis - Appendix A	**Engagement - Appendix B**	**Chapter 2: A Vision for the West End**	**Chapter 3: The Spatial Framework**	**Chapter 4: Emerging masterplans**	**Chapter 5: Implementation & Delivery**
Desktop based research & site visits Interpretation of technical data Setting out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT)	Visioning Workshop - creating a shared vision IDEAS Workshops Technical Workshops	The Vision The Visioning Principles Challenges and Responses analysis Implementation and Delivery	Golden Threads (social value, economic, sustainability) Core strategies (green and blue, movement, public realm) Secondary strategies Key delivery priorities	Osney Mead Oxpens Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream Quarter Station Key delivery priorities	Oxford's Economic Strategy Draft Implementation & Delivery Principles The Way Forward

A VISION LED BY SUSTAINABILITY

Climate Resilience and Net Zero Carbon Approach

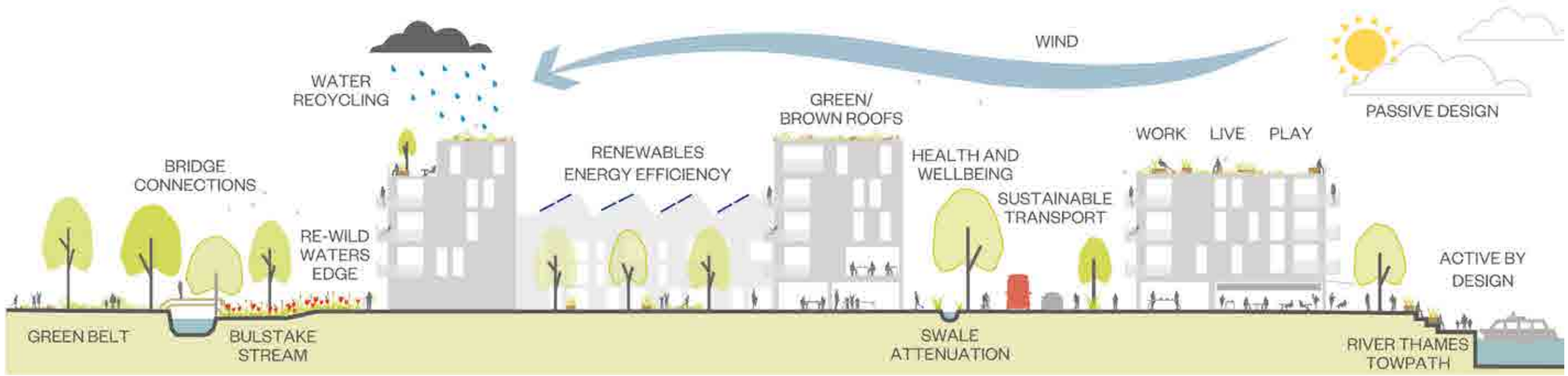
At the start of 2019, Oxford City Council declared a climate emergency and became the first City Council to hold a citizens' assembly on the issue. This assembly helped consider new carbon targets and additional measures to reduce emissions.

This ambitious approach by Oxford City Council has meant creating an **action plan** and **roadmap** for Oxford to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2040. Working in partnership with the Carbon Trust, OCC has developed a whole city approach which creates transformational change.

Achieving these targets will require a considerable step-up in national-level policy and funding support. However, some initial steps are being taken by the City Council through the **Zero Carbon Oxford Action Plan**.

The strategies of this plan will have a significant impact on how we design and develop our neighbourhoods in the coming years to meet these ambitious targets. The diagram below highlights a number of the critical sustainability aspects which need to be integrated into the design of places and neighbourhoods of the wider West End of Oxford.

The schematic section demonstrates how sustainability principles need to form an integral part of design, delivery and lifestyles to enable the West End to achieve zero carbon status by 2040.



A VISION LED BY SUSTAINABILITY

Climate Resilience and Net Zero Carbon Approach

There are a number of immediate steps prescribed in the **Zero Carbon Action Plan** which will help achieve the Council's targets. This includes a number a topics: methods for retrofitting buildings; knowledge sharing platforms for good practices; reducing costs of implementing interventions, such as solar PVs and heat pumps; and the implementation of EV charging infrastructure.

The work of the Spatial Framework seeks to strengthen the Zero Carbon Action Plan and help establish sustainable lifestyles and a resilient city in the longer term.

Each strategy within the Spatial Framework considers how the sustainability agenda can be best promoted. This includes:

- The **Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy** seeks to promote biodiversity net gain, help mitigate flooding and address health inequalities through provision of good quality public space.
- The **Movement Strategy** seeks to promote active and low carbon lifestyles which cut private car use, improves air quality, encourages walking and cycling; to promote environmental, social and economic sustainability.
- The **Public Realm Strategy** seeks to address health inequalities, cut private car use by encouraging walking and cycling and promote mental health and well-being through improved community cohesion and active travel.
- The **Heritage Strategy** considers principles of circular economy and promotes retrofitting, refurbishing and celebrating existing assets. It also helps strengthen people's identity to a place.
- The **Arts and Cultural Strategy** is vital in fostering social and economic sustainability through providing affordable and community led arts space and sharing of knowledge; whilst also creating cultural spaces which promote learning and well-being.
- The **Meanwhile Use Strategy** will be essential in fostering a new sense of community as the Spatial Framework gets built out. It also seeks to re-purpose and re-use existing urban form.
- The **Building Heights Strategy** promotes good quality living with good levels of daylight/sunlight. It also promotes legibility - something which is key to promote mental health resilience when navigating the city.
- The **Emerging Development and Land Use Distribution Strategy** both promotes low carbon movement through the promotion of 15-minute neighbourhoods; and sets out buildings to be flexible, adaptable and follow principles of the circular economy.







VISION: PLACEMAKING APPROACH

A local approach which calls on integrated thinking is crucial for the future for liveable cities.

The Spatial Framework promotes the West End of Oxford as a **liveable quarter** of the city. This is an area of the city centre where people will want to live well together, work well together and play well together.

A liveable city promotes healthy and happy people and community well-being - a place where people want to live. It will be thriving, socially inclusive, biodiverse and energy efficient. It will encourage healthy lifestyles as a primary choice for all.

A liveable city is also a **resilient city** with competitive social, economic and environmental advantages. The quality of place and its essential ingredients on offer are key factors in attracting and retaining high value knowledge, hi-tech and creative industries and exceptionally skilled workers make up a **competitive city**.

The **Spatial Framework** takes a holistic and integrated approach to place-making and setting high expectations for future developments in this gateway quarter of Oxford. This approach will involve working collaboratively with key partners to plan and deliver the necessary infrastructure which enables the unlocking of future development sites, and by utilising the creative energy which already exists in the city to find innovative ways to attract greater investment and interest in the area.

In the age of **climate crisis** and **COVID-19 pandemic recovery**, the high expectations for development will need to exceed Oxford's current sustainability operating standards for the public realm, housing, commercial developments and adaptive re-use of existing buildings.

It will involve the use of local and renewable resources for construction and future flexibility, and for smart energy use and waste management which align with **Oxford's zero carbon ambitions**.

It will promote smart mobility by placing walking, cycling and public transport as primary considerations above private cars. Greening of the urban environment will form an important part of the public realm and movement strategy.

AN ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED PLACE



A 15-minute place which has strong connections of ecology, community and digital infrastructure movement into and around the city

A CREATIVE PLACE



An innovative and creative place with easy access to a broad mix of uses encouraging live-work-play activities

A VIBRANT COMMUNITY



A liveable, diverse and inclusive place that maximises land with balanced mixed use destinations

A GLOBAL ENTERPRISE



A distinctive and unique place building on the West End's economic strengths - its innovation and creative industry mix

VISION: PLACEMAKING APPROACH

The placemaking approach sets out to create safe and prosperous communities; places where people want to live, work and do business are at the heart of the vision for this emerging new quarter of the city's extended core. Four key themes help us unpack and understand this vision. These are:

An Accessible and Connected Place:

Major public infrastructure investments are being proposed and will be essential to create better linkages between existing places and emerging new destinations within and around the West End. Forthcoming developments in the area (at any stage in the planning process) are expected to both contribute towards a collaborative delivery process and experience the benefits. Meeting resident's daily needs within a walking distance of 15-minutes underpins a sustainable community.

Easy access to places which encourage walking, cycling and improved public transport links to and from the station are primary considerations for a high quality public realm network. High speed broadband and digital infrastructure will bring greater connectivity and convenience to the heart of this place. This is a key initiative of the framework and will form a catalyst for future investments.

A Creative Place:

The Station Quarter and its redevelopment will create a welcoming new gateway into Oxford. It is a regional driver for growth and connectivity to the wider O**xford Cambridge Arc**. There is a real opportunity here to create vibrant, high density mixed use neighbourhoods (in line with Policy AOC1, Local Plan 2036) and distinct new destinations through the emerging new masterplans and future opportunity sites. With the Local Plan 2036, proposing a minimum of approximately 1,000 homes within the West End - this provides a fantastic opportunity to create **24-hour neighbourhoods** which are vibrant and diverse.

New places will need to respect and respond to the rich historic context of the city centre and enhance local biodiversity/ ecology by integrating well with the surrounding natural environment.

A Vibrant Community:

Creating opportunities for **true social capital** will help strengthen existing and build new strong local economies and promote entrepreneurship (local and global competitive edge). Places that are equitable and offer access to essential infrastructure are socially inclusive, create opportunities for a better life, provide pathways out of poverty for many and act as an engine for economic growth.

Strategies must address the significant inequality within Oxford. In particular the need for more **affordable, diverse and high quality housing** for existing and new communities. This is made every more pertinent with the expected significant population and economic growth in the coming decades (Local Plan 2036).

Mental health and well-being of local communities is another essential factor to creating successful places - the 'café culture' of various emerging mixed use neighbourhoods must ensure there are activities and places for all age groups in an inclusive environment.

Communities can exist or be created from a shared location, hobbies, lived experiences and backgrounds, or a common cause - there is immense opportunity to introduce the needed infrastructure for sharing, learning and growing together.

A Global Enterprise:

Oxford can truly claim to be world-leading given the exceptional mix of academic and facility-based research that supports new and established businesses. It is world-renowned for the excellence of its universities, innovative business culture, research, excellence in medicine and for the quality of its built and natural environment. It's impact has a much wider catchment then the City of Oxford and it's innovation has stature at regional, national and international scales. Infrastructure improvements of east-west rail and the vision for the OxCam Arc all set a trajectory for this to become ever more important.

The West End has the opportunity to build on this existing **vibrant innovation-led economy** in Oxford to drive additional high value growth, also recognising the significant contributions made by all sectors and all types of businesses.

The importance of creating economic growth which is both underpinned by an approach which is inclusive and has the strength to be influential on a global scale is highlighted in the Oxford's Economic Strategy Draft (2022). Promoting an economy which is environmentally responsible and led by green initiatives is also a key priority (Oxford's Economic Strategy Draft, 2022).

The role of housing to deliver this economic vision is particularly pertinent to ensure employers are able to attract and retain the skilled workforce Oxford requires - a challenge set out within the Local Plan 2036. This is important in helping to support economic growth in Oxford, and aligns with the Oxford Economic Strategy Draft (2022).

New emerging neighbourhoods could benefit from catalysts like meanwhile uses and innovative mixed use urban typologies which embrace - the 'live-work-play' model, helping to create social capital and attract inward investments.

'A Liveable Quarter of the City'

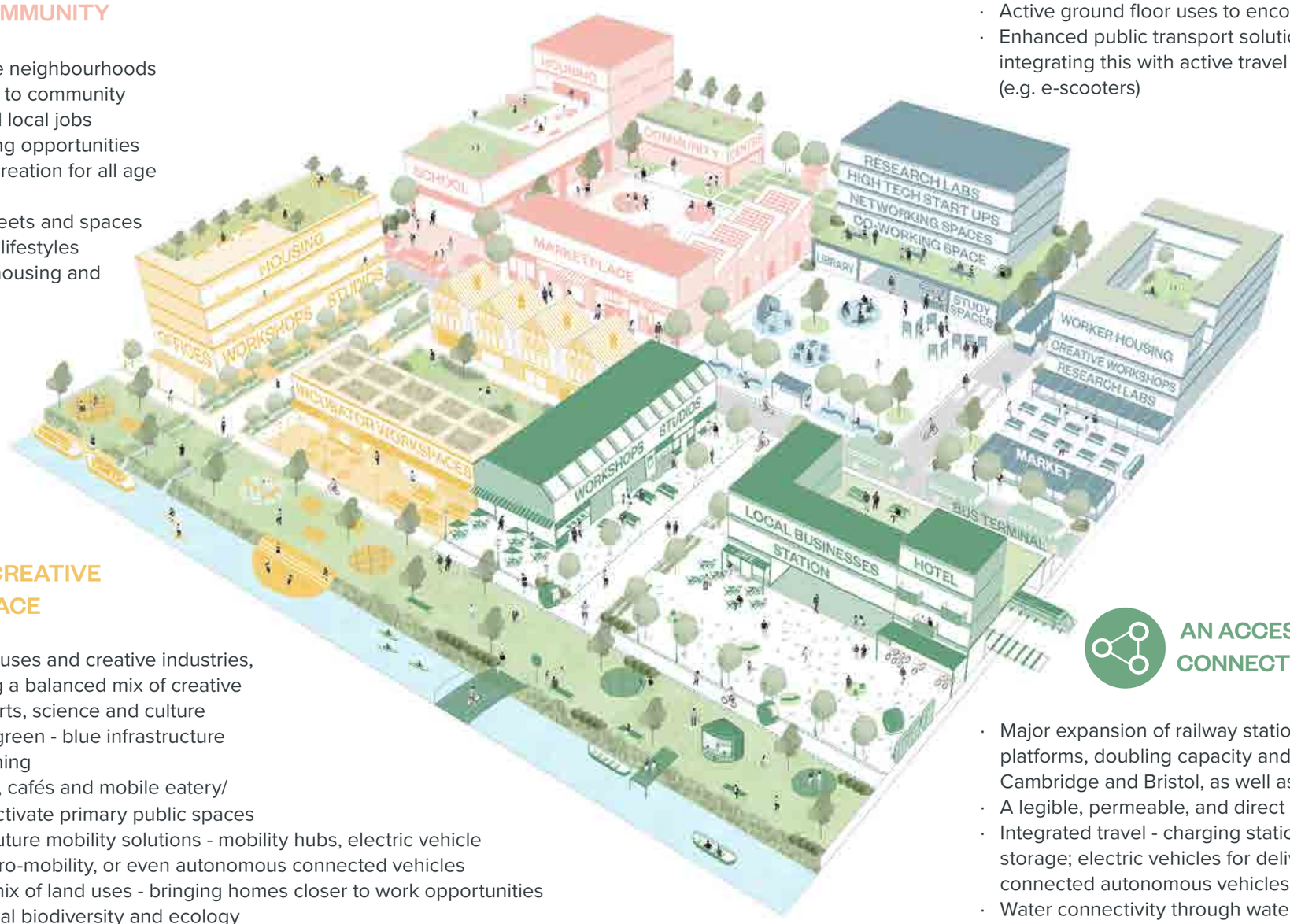
Living together, working together, playing together

A VIBRANT COMMUNITY

- Multi- tenure neighbourhoods
- Easy access to community facilities and local jobs
- Food growing opportunities
- Play and recreation for all age groups
- Inclusive streets and spaces
- Low carbon lifestyles
- Affordable housing and workplaces

A GLOBAL ENTERPRISE

- Mixed use innovative urban typologies
- A wide range of housing tenures/ typologies to support economic growth
- Multifunctional outdoor spaces - ranging in scale, character and hierarchy
- A place which fosters research, innovation and technology
- Active ground floor uses to encourage street animation
- Enhanced public transport solutions, including rapid transit, integrating this with active travel and new forms of mobility (e.g. e-scooters)



A CREATIVE PLACE

- Compatible uses and creative industries, encouraging a balanced mix of creative industries, arts, science and culture
- Integrating green - blue infrastructure
- Urban greening
- Restaurants, cafés and mobile eatery/ venues to activate primary public spaces
- Innovative future mobility solutions - mobility hubs, electric vehicle sharing, micro-mobility, or even autonomous connected vehicles
- Innovative mix of land uses - bringing homes closer to work opportunities
- Enhance local biodiversity and ecology
- Innovative meanwhile interventions to help unlock sites and work with local communities

AN ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED PLACE

- Major expansion of railway station, include 2 new railway lines and platforms, doubling capacity and unlocking potential connections to Cambridge and Bristol, as well as more trains to London and the north
- A legible, permeable, and direct active travel network accessible to all
- Integrated travel - charging stations; cycle-hire; cycle and scooter storage; electric vehicles for deliveries and servicing; and future for connected autonomous vehicles.
- Water connectivity through water taxis and leisure boards
- High quality public realm - prioritising pedestrians and cyclists
- Digital infrastructure to create safe, inclusive and resilient environments.

AN ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED PLACE

Overarching Principles

A sense of arrival and improved legibility

- Importance of the railway station to be a gateway to Oxford - the experience and connections from the station to key development areas are important (Policy WE6, AAP, 2008; Policy SP1, Local Plan 2036)
- The station building should integrate connectivity with commerce, and act as a central hub to integrate all modes of transport activated with vibrant uses and good place-making.

Movement of people between key sites

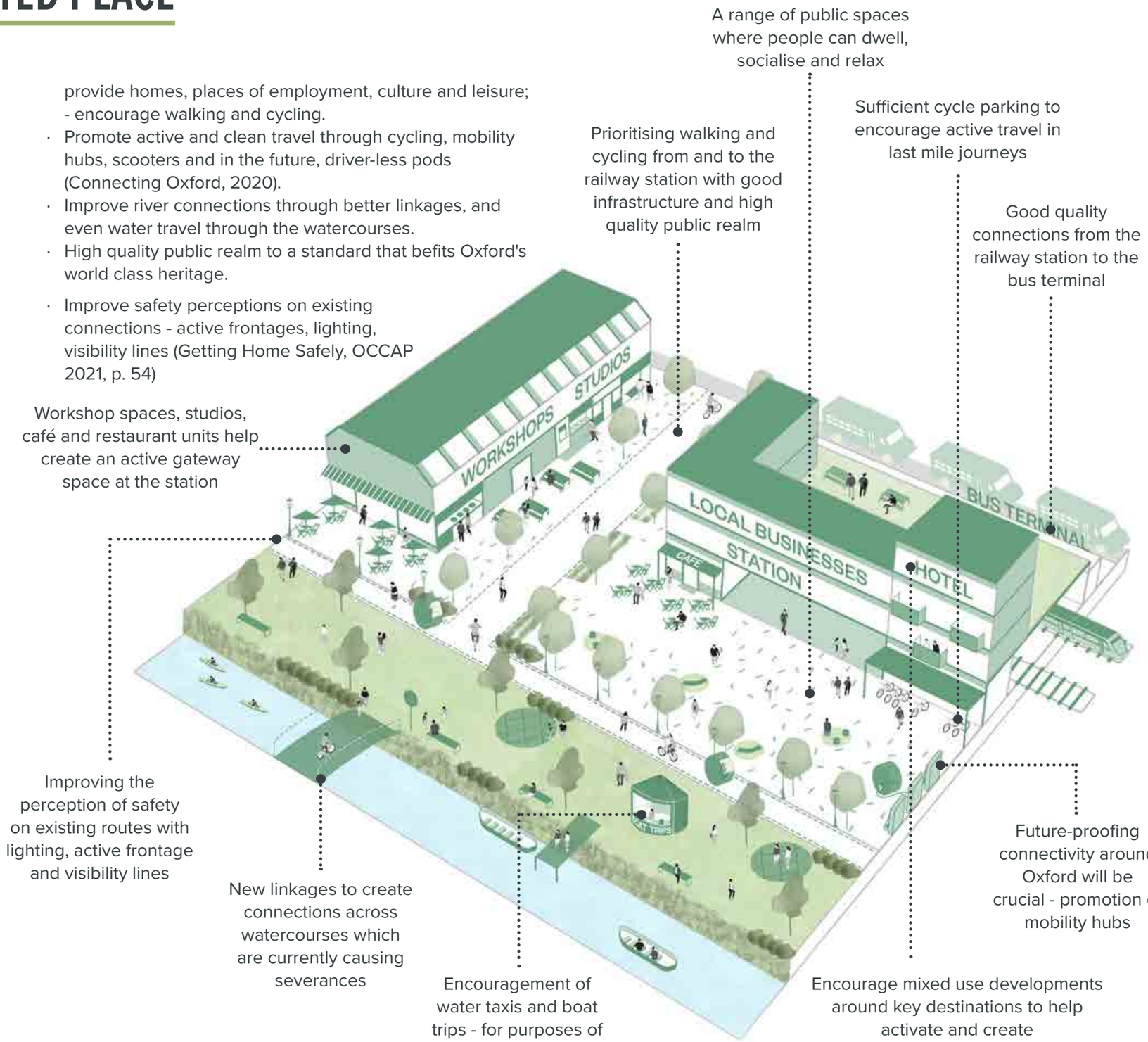
- This includes the railway station, Osney Mead and Oxpens within the West End and into the city centre (SP1, Local Plan 2036).
- This is a critical element of Oxford's Economic Strategy Draft (2022) which sees the movement of people as key to an inclusive economy which connects residents with opportunities.
- Realising the importance of the positive fundamental shift in Zero Emissions Zones and Connecting Oxford could deliver in shaping the West End (Vision of Local Plan 2036).
- Access to Osney Mead needs to be improved through an introduction of new travel routes, particularly sustainable travel modes (Policy M1, Local Plan 2036).

Access to the West End from the wider area

- Wider connections into the West End and Oxford need to be enhanced.
- Proposals of east-west rail; OxCam Arc

New and existing connections should be enhanced through walking, cycling, public transport and river access

- Connect new and existing neighbourhoods through safe pedestrian and cycle infrastructure (Policy M1, Local Plan 2036).
- Create mixed use 15-minute neighbourhoods which provide homes, places of employment, culture and leisure; - encourage walking and cycling.
- Promote active and clean travel through cycling, mobility hubs, scooters and in the future, driver-less pods (Connecting Oxford, 2020).
- Improve river connections through better linkages, and even water travel through the watercourses.
- High quality public realm to a standard that befits Oxford's world class heritage.
- Improve safety perceptions on existing connections - active frontages, lighting, visibility lines (Getting Home Safely, OCCAP 2021, p. 54)



A CREATIVE PLACE

Overarching Principles

A rich and diverse mix of uses

- Current uses need to be protected, but also enhanced (especially those of regional importance - e.g. Ice Rink - Policy WE28, Area Action Plan, 2008).
- Mix of uses should reflect feel of the area- quieter in residential areas, more vibrant in economic focused areas.
- Need to recognise diversity of uses in different areas is important, but they should be well-connected to establish a cohesive place (Policy V1, Local Plan 2036)
- Cultural uses should be encouraged (Policy WE24, Area Action Plan, 2008)
- Buildings which help fulfil Oxford's ambitious housing needs

Retaining character and heritage of Oxford

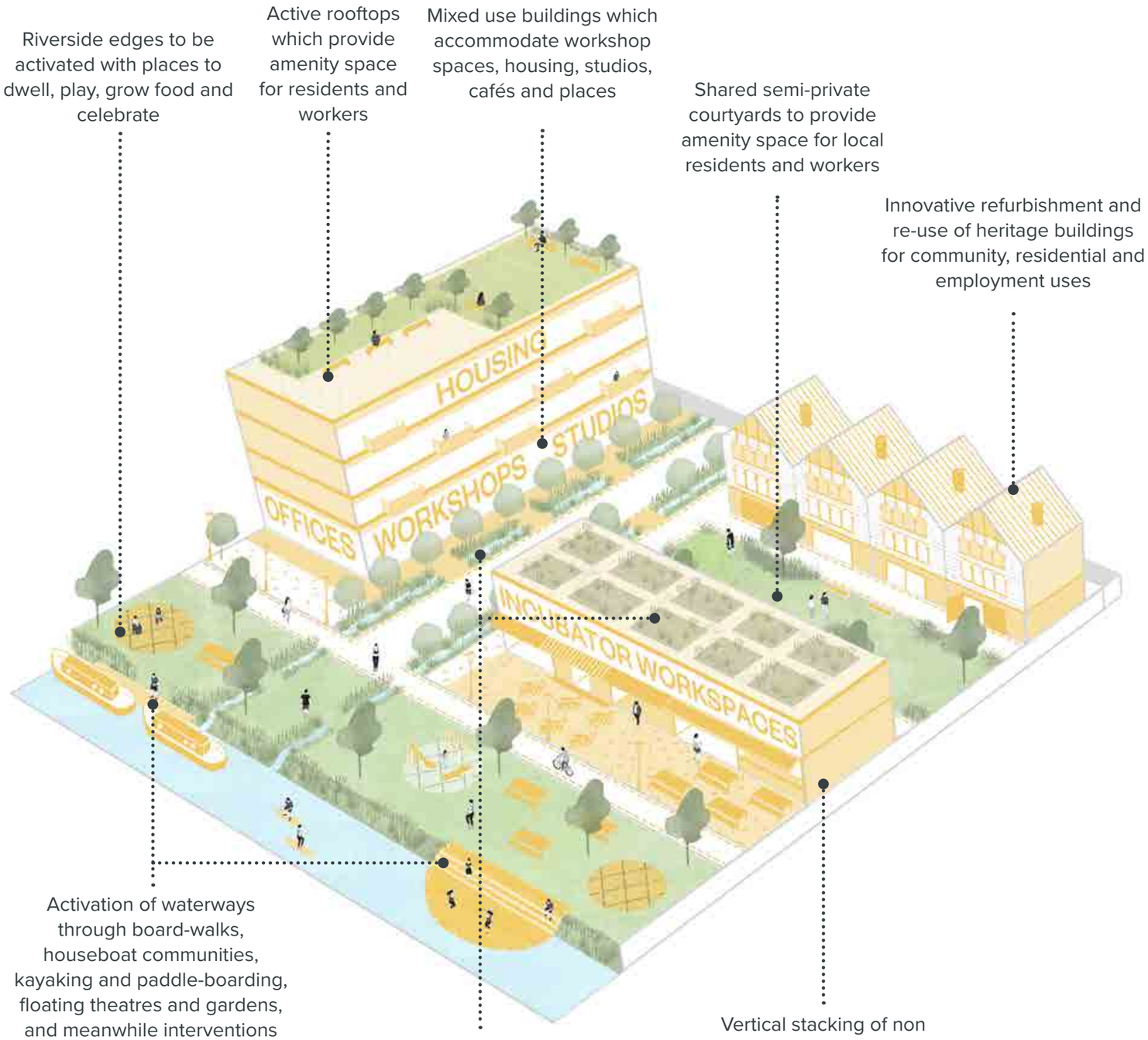
- Character of buildings and heritage areas should be retained and refurbished when possible.
- Respect the setting of conservation areas and assets and the views to them (Policy DH3, Local Plan 2036).
- Underused heritage assets should be refurbished and re purposed for a suitable use.

Activation of riverside

- Riverside should optimise routes for walking, cycling and jogging.
- Riverside spaces could be developed as destinations - introduce appropriate uses should encourage dwell time activities
- Meanwhile interventions can help to unlock and open up riverside spaces.
- Improve capacity and pedestrian experience on towpaths of watercourses (incl. Thames pathway). This is reflected in Policy WE9 in the Area Action Plan (2008).
- Distinction of riverside character areas is important.

Initiatives to enhance open spaces and streets

- Themed walks and improved access could encourage more people to use currently under-utilised open spaces like the cemetery.
- Importance of tree-lined streets and its impact on sense of place (especially for pedestrian and cyclist routes).
- Special places like Oxpens Meadows should be enhanced and improved for the local communities.



A VIBRANT COMMUNITY

Overarching Principles

Supporting local communities

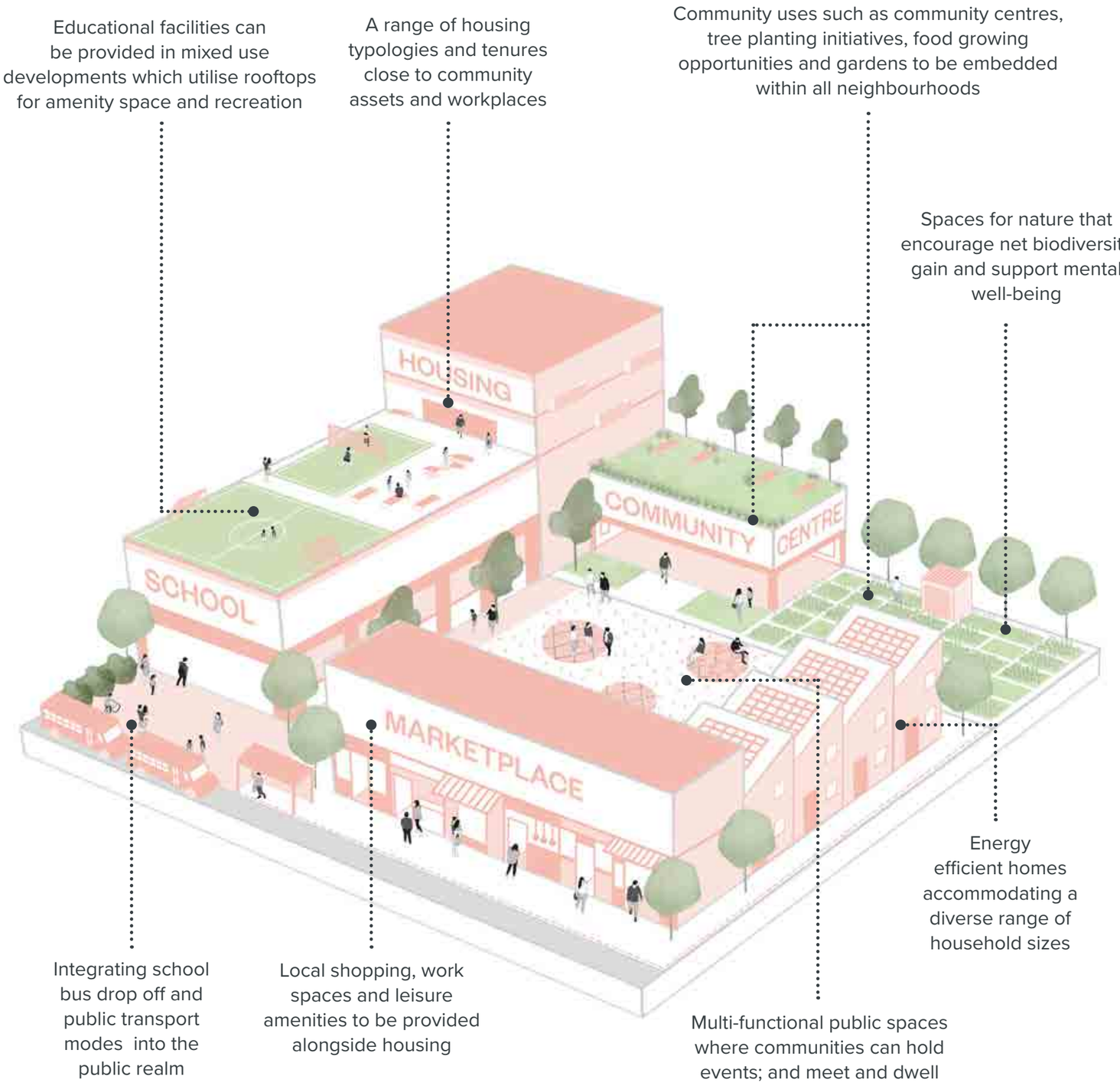
- Importance of flexible spaces and co-located community facilities creating vibrant hubs of activity (OCCAP, 2021, p. 86).
- Need for affordable and flexible work spaces to support a range of occupier requirements for local businesses
- Working with existing local supply chains as an opportunity to create social value for education, skills and training.
- Importance of a high quality environment which deals with issues of air pollution (Oxford's Economic Strategy Draft, 2022).

Providing a range of housing options

- Mix of homes, sizes and tenures are crucial, especially in achieving intergenerational communities (Policy WE15-18, Area Action Plan, 2008).
- Provision of amenities, flexibility and support facilities as people age.
- Opportunities for new and alternative communities to be formed e.g. house boats on watercourses and moorings for cruising boats.
- Providing a range of affordable housing options which meet the demand.
- Opportunity to plan housing for the future population and economic growth of Oxford.

Spaces for relaxation, recreation and bonding

- A diversity of outdoor spaces (e.g public squares; parks; informal green space; well-designed streets; private gardens; semi-private courtyard space) - public and private - is crucial for well-being for communities.
- Spaces to carry out community initiatives like edible streets and urban food production can bring communities together (Policy G4, Local Plan 2036).
- More play spaces for multi-generational recreation and activities.



A GLOBAL ENTERPRISE

Overarching Principles

Balance of businesses from different sectors

- Provision of a range of sizes and types of businesses and organisations - to benefit from economies of scale and create a culture of collaboration.
- Flexibility and adaptability of sectors is essential for the long term success of the area.
- Building on the existing specialisms of Oxford, such as health, life sciences and technology; creative production; and green and low carbon, as set out within Oxford's Economic Strategy Draft (2022).

A rich mix of uses and a vibrant quarter

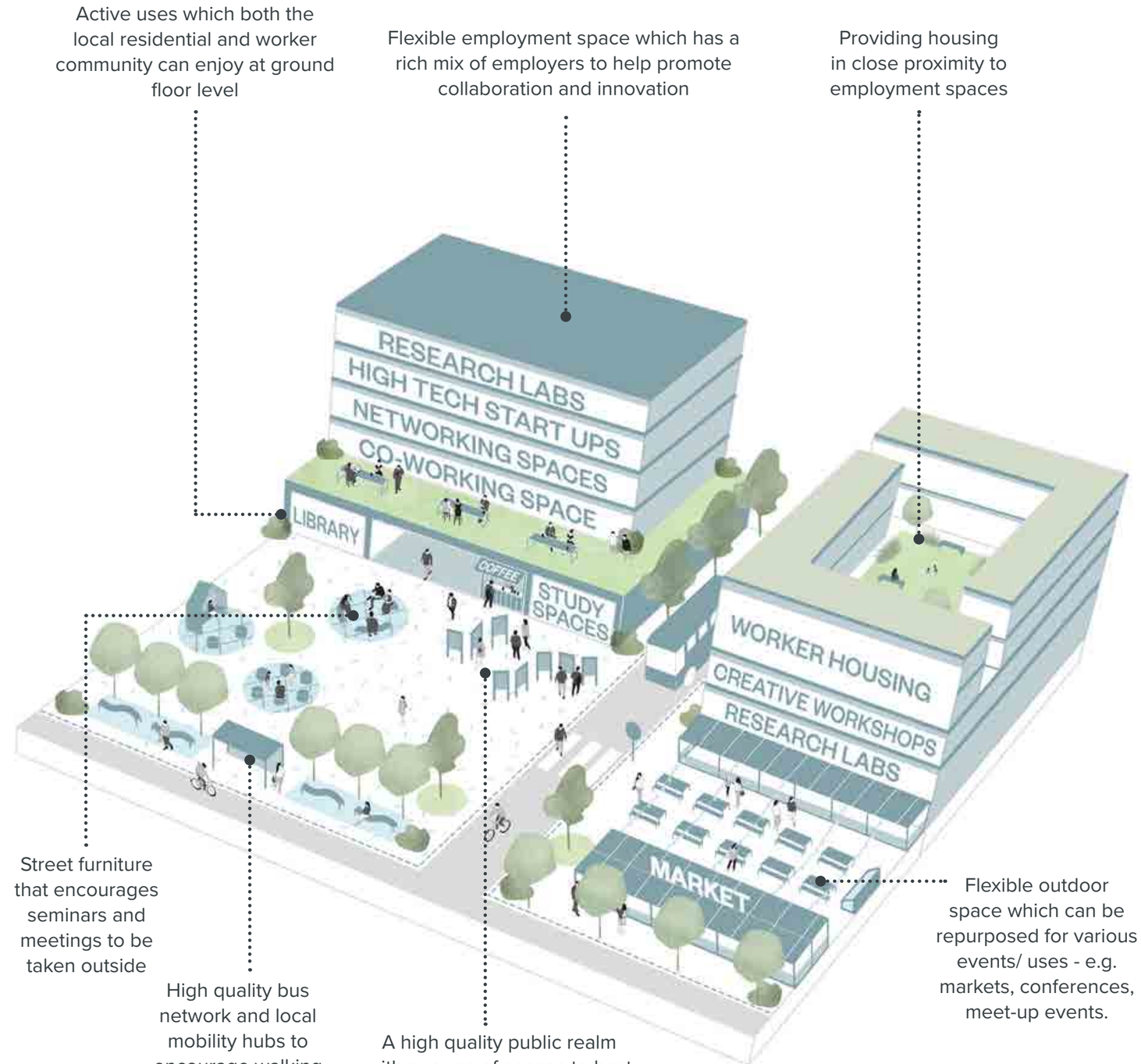
- Avoidance of a monoculture is essential to making the area resilient. This can be achieved through a mix of uses including residential, commercial, education and hospitality (Policy V1, Local Plan 2036).
- Mixed use buildings with flexible outdoor spaces which can host meetings, exhibitions, markets and performances.
- Active ground floors and good place-making principles should be adopted for vibrancy and animation of street frontages.
- A balance between supporting high value global organisations and lower threshold accessible sectors in order to provide a diversity of jobs (Oxford's Economic Strategy Draft, 2022).

Physical connectivity

- Improving connectivity to and from the West End (with regional, national and international links) is crucial in providing links between homes, jobs and facilities.
- Existing connectivity challenges of Botley Road and across the railway line and the river channels need to be resolved.
- Future-proofing streets for future trends and changes in behaviour, transport technology and new forms of mobility.

Provision of housing within the Innovation Quarter

- Proximity of student/ worker housing to jobs is crucial in attracting and retaining skilled talent.
- Availability, affordability and design of housing is important; it should support requirements of various age groups and tenures.



CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES

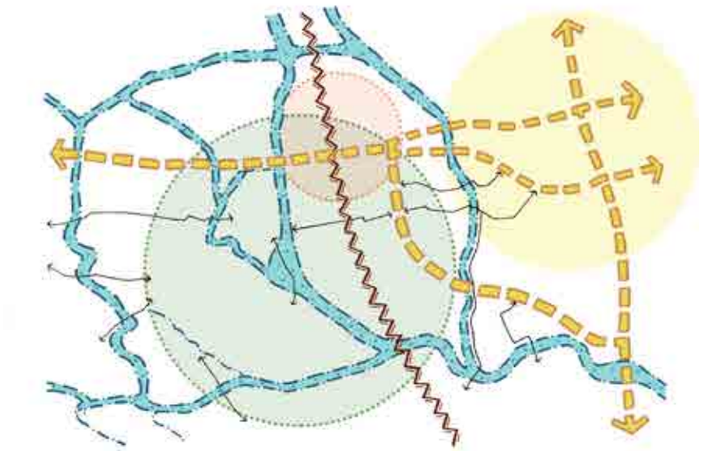
Placemaking Approach

The Placemaking Approach stems off the SWOT analysis and helps to breakdown some of the thinking which has led us to the Spatial Framework. It considers how key challenges within the West End manifest spatially and how we look to respond to these.

KEY CHALLENGES: EXISTING CONTEXT

Natural and man-made barriers

- River and railway line create severance within the West End of Oxford
- Botley and Oxpens Road lack good quality pedestrian crossings



Flood risk in many key development areas

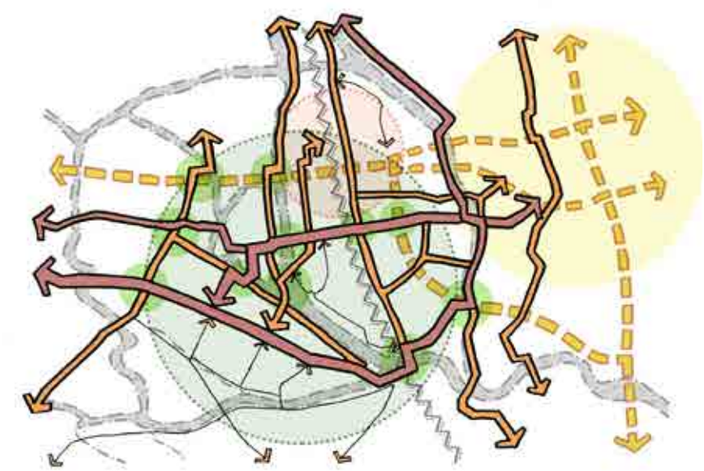
- Much of the West End sits within Flood Zone 3
- Proposed Flood Alleviation Scheme seeks to help mitigate existing flood risk in some areas
- Highly constrained with development plots in Osney Mead regeneration site



PLACE-MAKING RESPONSE TO CHALLENGE

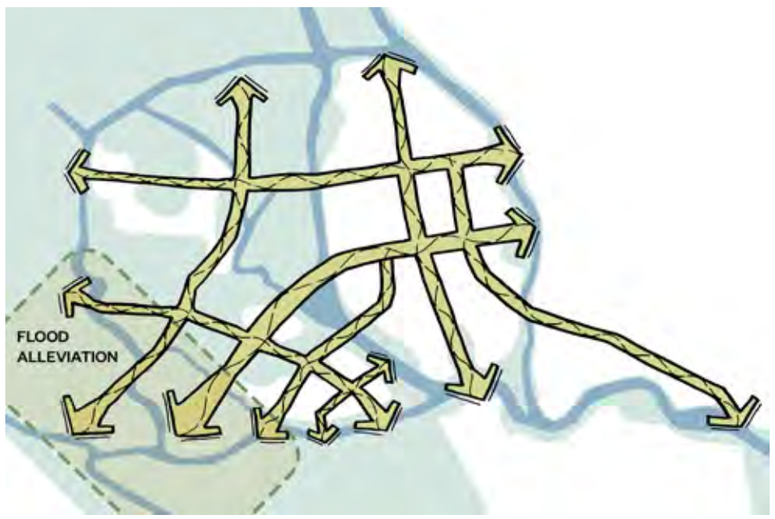
Draw West End closer to city centre

- Creation of a series of connections across barriers
- Enabling connectivity through walking and cycling
- A variety of connections with different character and qualities



Integrate blue-green infrastructure to minimise flood risk, promote biodiversity, urban cooling and health and well-being

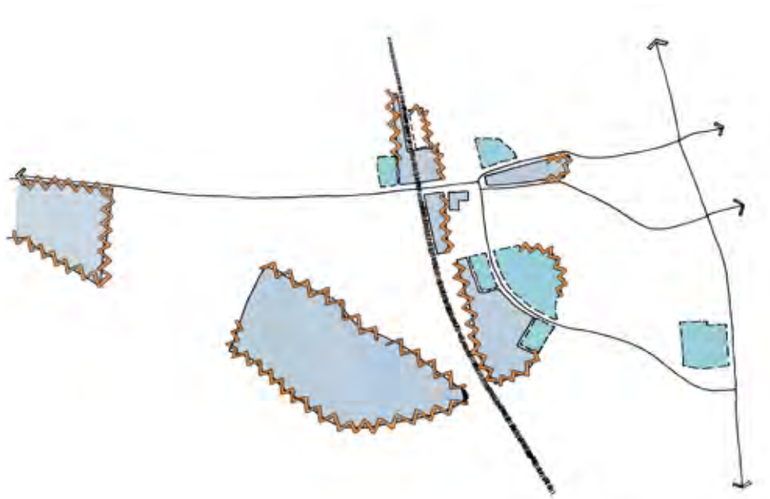
- Enhance local biodiversity and ecology
- Integrate with proposed Flood Alleviation Scheme
- Floodable landscapes which form part of the network and could be places for play/ recreation



KEY CHALLENGES:
EXISTING CONTEXT

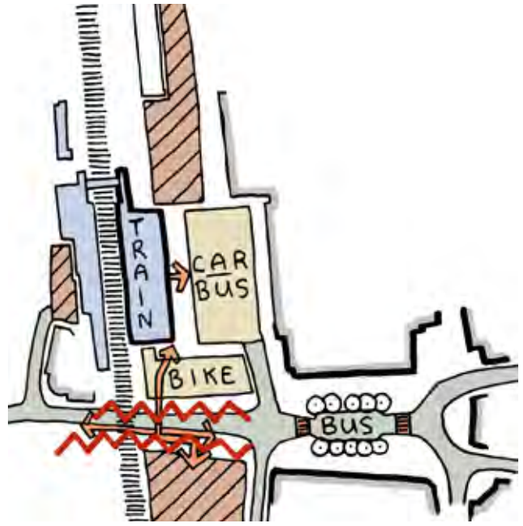
Predominance of vacant and/or underdeveloped sites

- Many vacant or under-utilised sites which have a frontage that is inaccessible or blank
- Lack of good quality connections between them create isolated sites and fragmented urban grain



Underdeveloped transport interchange at Oxford Station

- Lack of sense of arrival
- Lots of underutilised spaces
- Poorly designed and located car and cycle parking, bus stands and hard landscaping.
- Poor pedestrian/ cyclist connectivity and experience



PLACE-MAKING RESPONSE
TO CHALLENGE

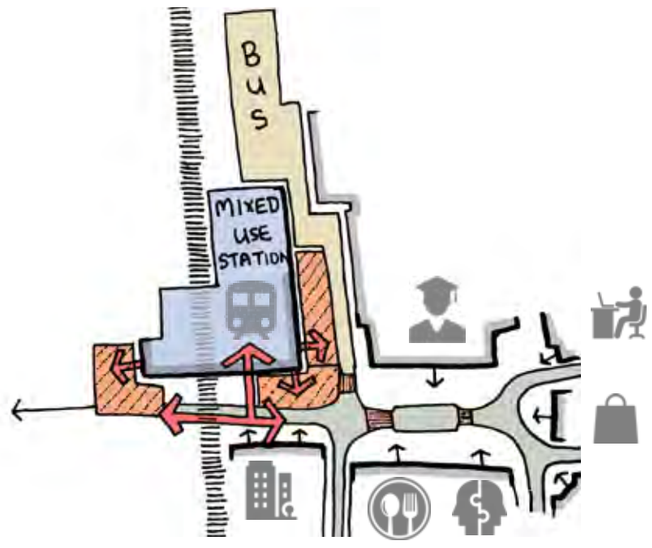
Interconnected web of distinct destinations

- Imaginatively developed sites, each with own unique character
- Interconnected with high quality links and public realm



A world class transport interchange to fit Oxford's growing need

- High quality public realm which cements it as a key gateway
- Opportunity to promote active transport - bicycle parking and good pedestrian infrastructure
- Opportunity for mixed use development within the station and around the Becket Street car park
- Opportunity to rationalise the bus network and use space to the rear of the station precinct for viable uses



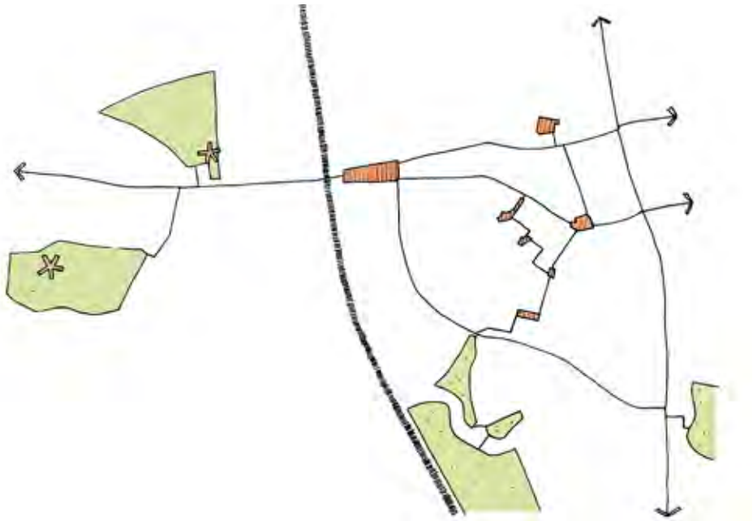
CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES

Placemaking Approach

KEY CHALLENGES: EXISTING CONTEXT

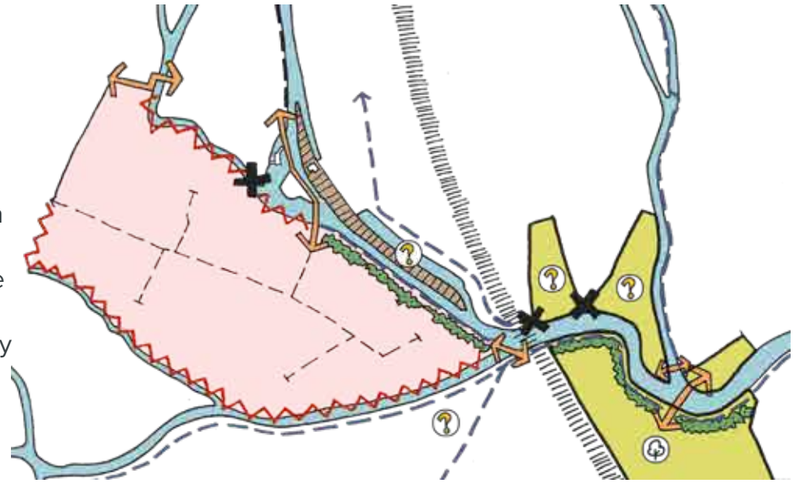
Lacking attractive safe and accessible public spaces

- Few places to sit, play and socialise in the West End
- Some poor quality existing public spaces
- Lack of opportunity to spend leisure time by the waterways



Inaccessible or underutilised waterways

- Development backs onto waterways
- Towpaths are narrow with heavy vegetation - poor perception of safety and experience
- Much of the waterways are publicly inaccessible.
- Open spaces which lack purpose and legibility



PLACE-MAKING RESPONSE TO CHALLENGE

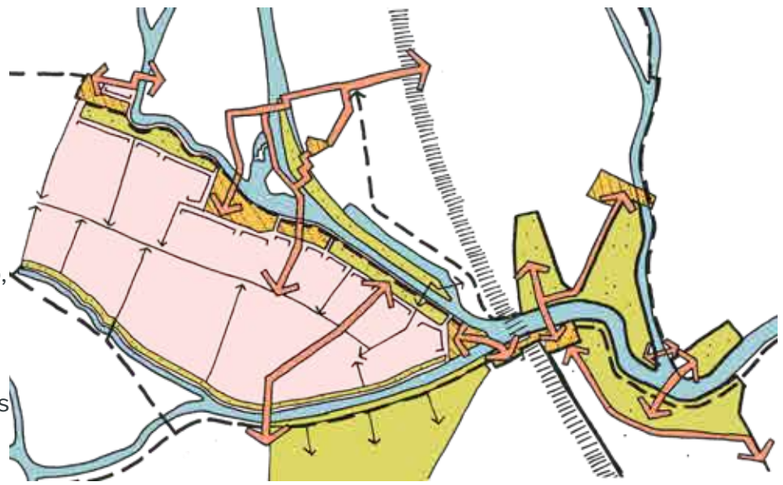
A network of new and existing public spaces

- New public spaces which are activated by surrounding uses
- Opening up the riverside
- Strong connections between public spaces
- Opportunity for more play, food growing, sports and recreation
- Spaces with different characters and purposes
- Interlinking spaces and activities within neighbourhoods



Animated and well-accessed waterways

- High quality public realm adjacent to the waterways
- Activating the waterways with boardwalks, boat moorings, a kayak club, cafés and restaurants
- A multitude of connections
- Public realm that invites you into Osney Mead and key development sites



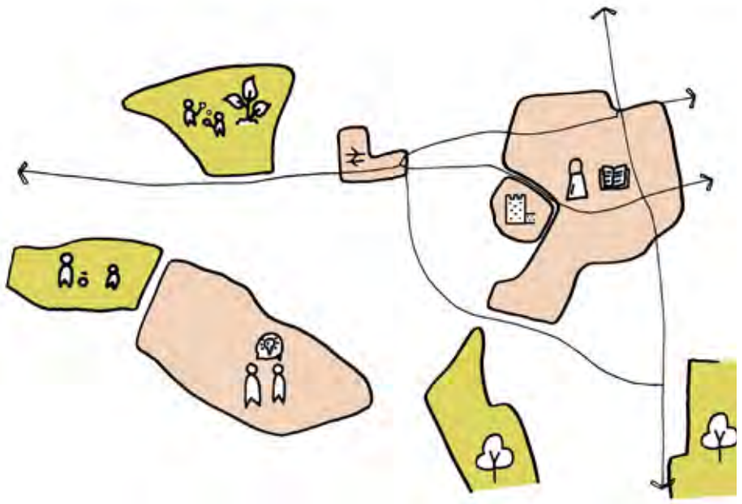
Poor legibility and setting for historic assets in the West End

- Historical assets lack appropriate setting
- Poor legibility at key gateways within the West End (e.g arrival at the station; entrance to Osney Mead Industrial Estate)



Scattered assets and activities in West End

- Hubs of activity feel disconnected and don't maximise on essential synergies needed between various sites
- A fragmented urban grain with limited dialogue between development sites



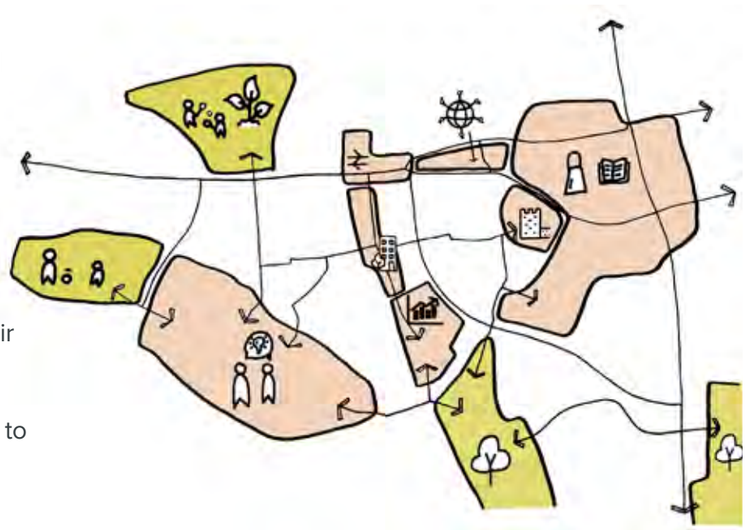
Better wayfinding and strategic tall buildings that complement the historic core

- Celebration of historic assets with good quality public realm and sensitive design
- Key gateways to be enhanced with moments of height and public realm
- Views to historical assets to be maintained and enhanced
- Improved connectivity



Create distinct activity links, cluster facilities and balance development

- Improved connectivity helps foster a culture of collaboration, sharing assets and distributing complementary uses between various development sites and their activity hubs
- Attractive destinations as places where people want to live, work and play.
- Mixed use buildings which accommodate residential use to create 24-hour neighbourhoods



Urbanism works when it creates a journey as desirable as the destination

- Paul Goldberger

3

THE SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

THE SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

Placemaking Approach

The Spatial Framework is set out in the form of broad principles of good place-making and strategic thinking for the West End. Guiding principles of the framework stem from a holistic approach - which considers stakeholder input, responding to various priorities, constraints and ambitions.

Understanding each of the strategies cannot be done in the isolation of the 'Area for Change' boundary identified in the Local Plan 2036. The strategies must be considered in the wider context - taking into account strategic movement patterns; characters of neighbouring areas; and key green and blue infrastructure considerations.

Ultimately, these strategies are set in the context of the Local Plan's vision to provide a *'liveable and sustainable environment that balances economic, social and environmental needs, ensuring that the city remains a highly desirable place to live, work and visit'* (p.6, Local Plan 2036). It seeks to deal with the city's challenges such as housing supply, traffic congestion and heritage. Principles set out within the allocation policies (Local Plan 2036) of AOC1 and SP1 are built upon within the following strategies.

Three golden threads run through each of the Core and Supporting strategies. These include sustainability, social value and economic value.

Sustainability Strategy

It sets the scene for all following strategies and it is to be embedded in all decisions. This covers interventions on water, health and well-being, active travel, net zero carbon design, and ecology and biodiversity.

Social Value Strategy

This ensures all strategies and interventions provide effective social value. It includes securing social infrastructure, involving the community at the heart of every decision and producing high quality design for all.

Economic Strategy

This builds upon Oxford's Economic Draft Strategy (2022) which provides new ideas on how the economy of Oxford can be more inclusive, global and transition towards zero carbon. The strategy sets out principles to support good practice and delivery.

Three core strategies represent many of the key moves being made in the West End. These strategies require large amounts of infrastructure and will shape how people move and dwell in spaces. For effective delivery of these strategies, key delivery priorities have been identified under each. The core strategies are:

Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

It highlights the importance of landscapes, ecology and enhancing biodiversity as an integral part of design. It also promotes green and blue infrastructure as key to the design of streets and spaces - helping to mitigate flood risk and bring communities together.

Movement Strategy

This is pivotal to the West End and the vision of creating a net zero future. It promotes low carbon lifestyles by encouraging active travel through improved connections, improved streets and spaces and good mixed use design. It highlights the importance of how good digital connectivity can support land use planning, avoiding the need to travel, allowing a greater focus on local living and working.

Public Realm Strategy

This sits ingrained within the Movement Strategy and seeks to promote high quality streets and public spaces for people to move through and dwell in. By improving many existing public spaces and introducing many new ones, this strategy aims to create a series of interconnected public spaces which are characterful, enjoyable and comfortable.

The Supporting Strategies touch on more specific topic areas, equally essential in delivering the vision for the West End. These include:

Heritage Strategy

Celebrating the rich heritage of Oxford, it seeks to ensure a diversity of heritage assets are retained and conserved; and they actively promote a sense of place; character and way-finding through the West End.

Arts and Cultural Strategy

This promotes the importance of integrating culture and arts into the West End - both supporting cultural employment and creating spaces where culture can be shared as well as spaces where culture can be created. With strong local partnerships this strategy will help shape the West End's growth and identity.

Meanwhile Use Strategy

Recognising that the vision for the West End is likely to be fulfilled over many decades - meanwhile uses will be essential catalysts for change by promoting activity, changing perceptions and creating social value in the short and medium term. Strong local partnerships and collaborations are needed to make this strategy a success.

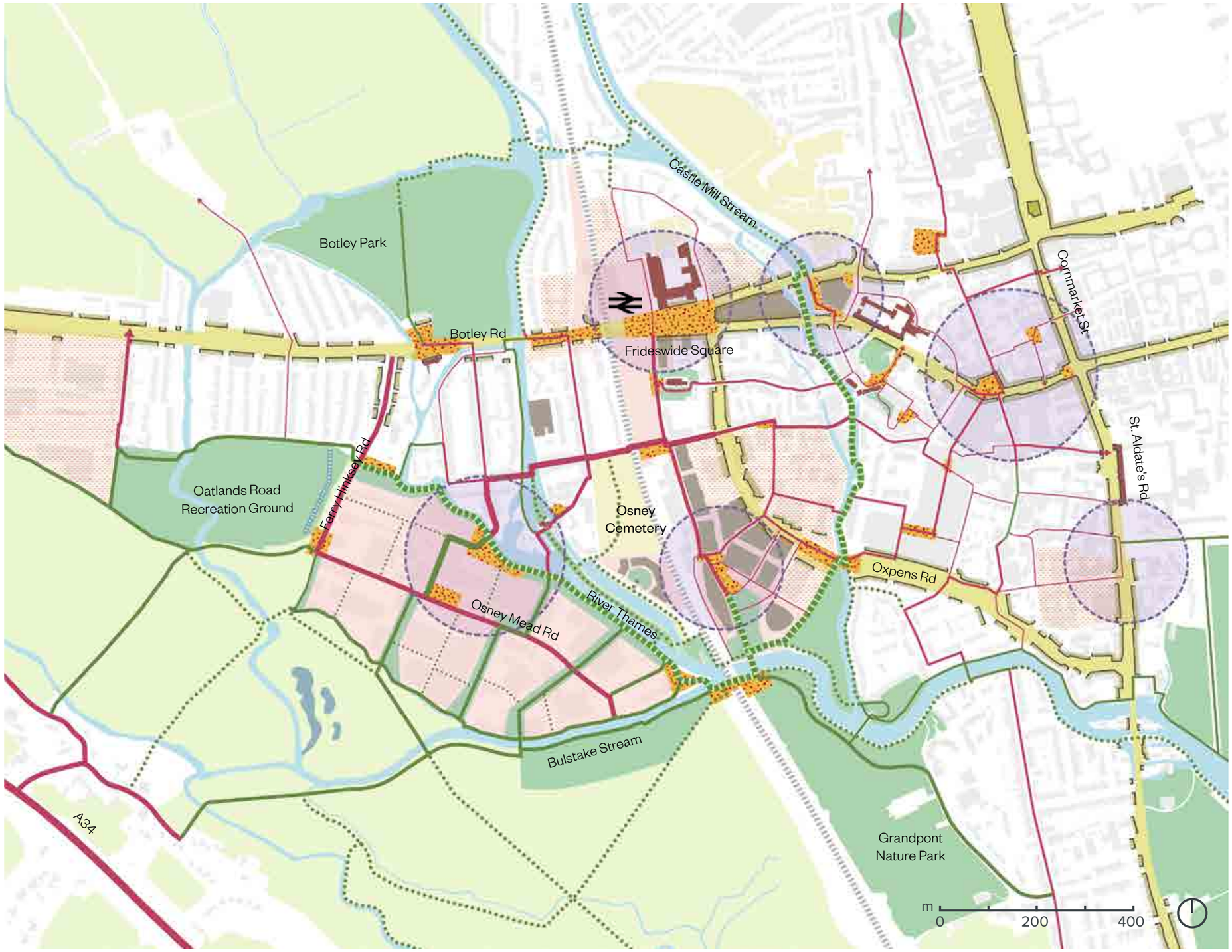
Emerging Development and Land Use Distribution Strategy

This seeks to provide the right mix of land uses across the different development sites - which seek to compliment and enhance existing networks. Ultimately it aims to provide land uses which complement each-other and foster a culture of collaboration and innovation.

Building Heights Strategy

Underpinning this strategy is the balancing of development needs while also being sensitive to viewing corridors and the settings of heritage assets. This includes the strategic placement of height to act as landmarks while not impeding heritage values. How these are to be applied have been set out with written and visual guidance.

- Major streets to be greened
- Key public spaces
- Key green spaces
- Key green routes
- Minor green routes
- Key connections
- Key frontages
- Sites for redevelopment
- Opportunity sites for redevelopment
- Emerging development proposals
- Existing buildings of significance
- Streets to be greened and pedestrians/cyclists prioritised
- Key hubs of activity



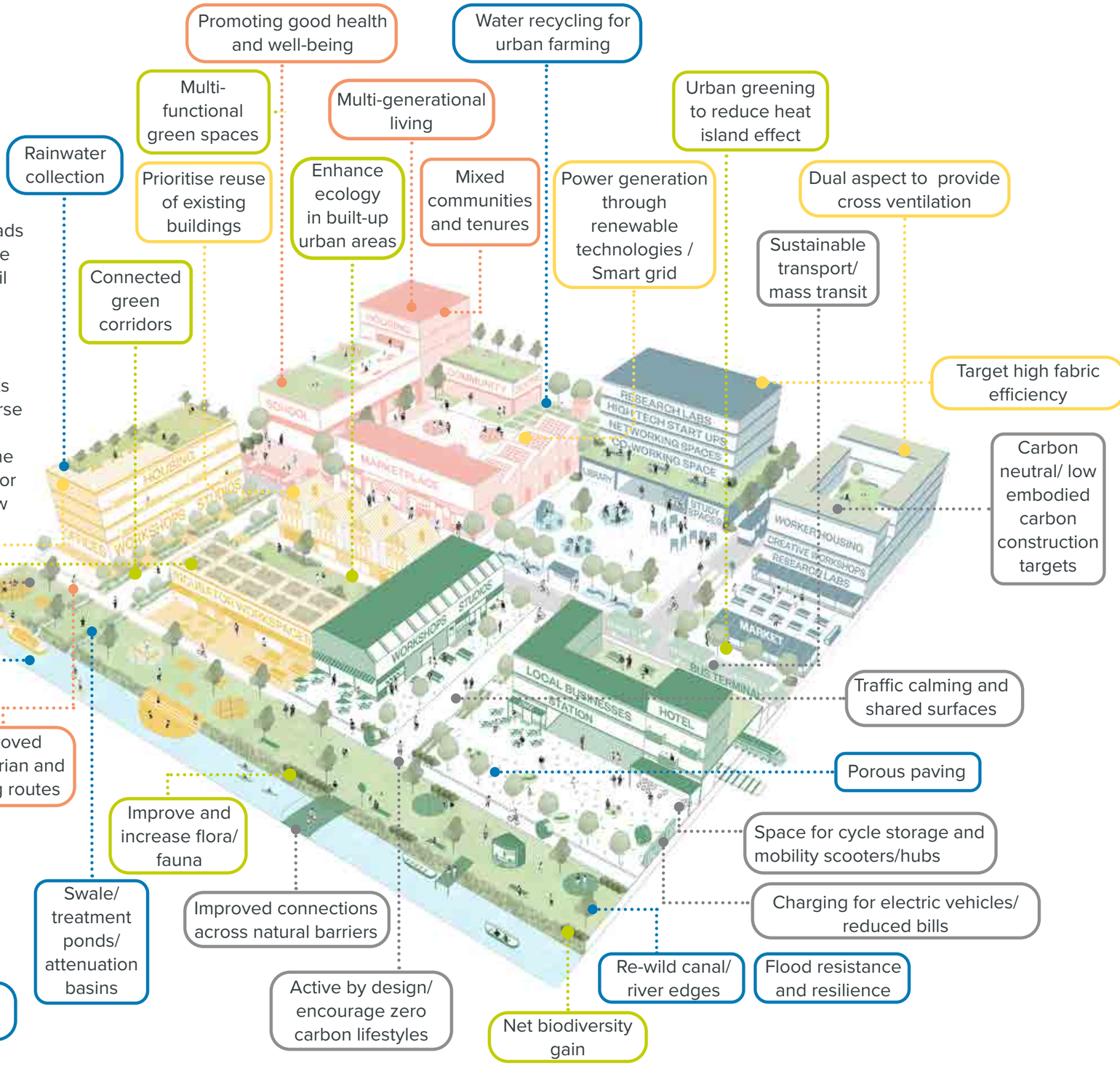
The Spatial Framework

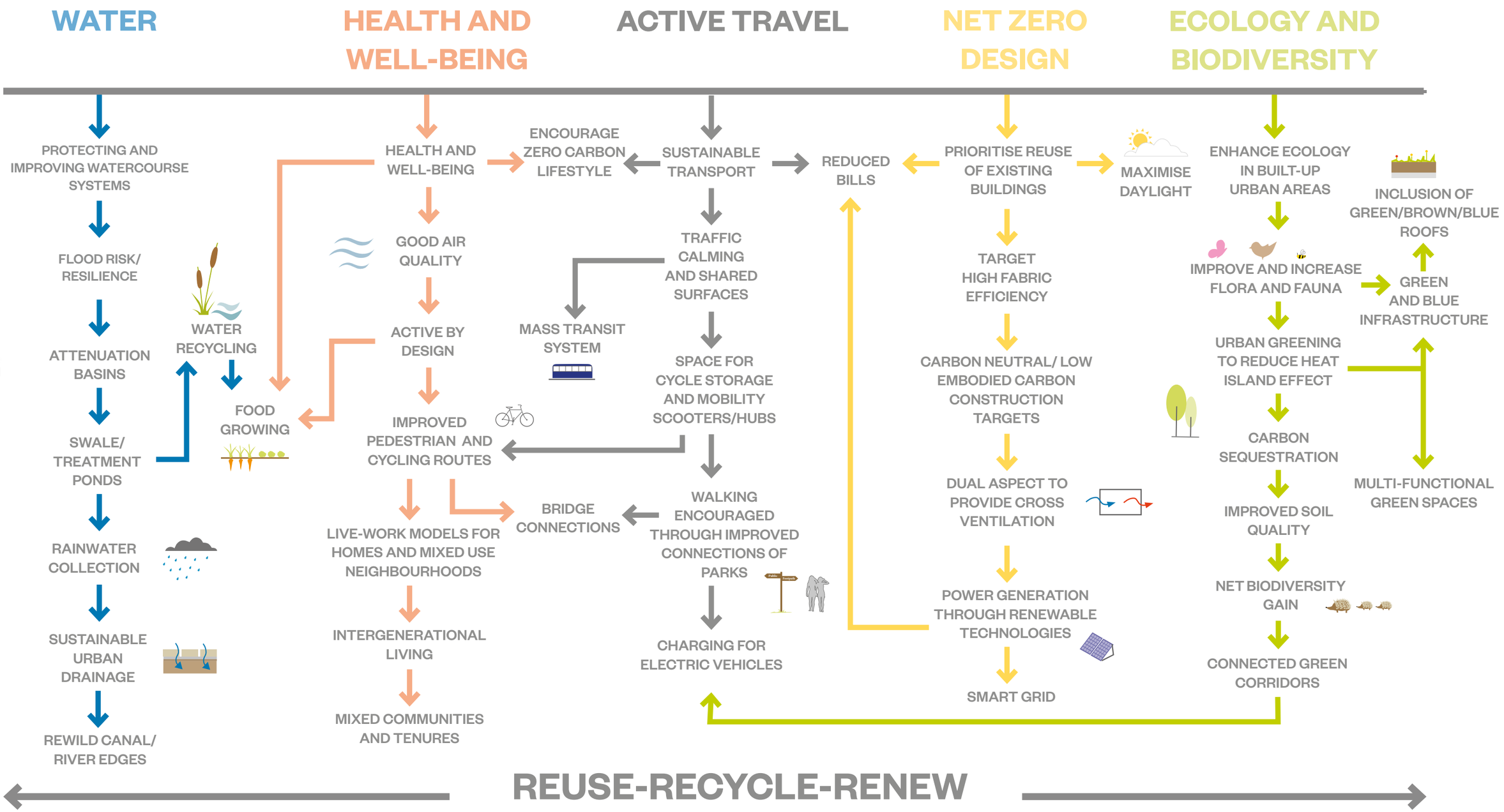
SUSTAINABILITY

The Golden Threads

The Sustainability Strategy is one of the three golden threads of the framework. In the age of a Climate Emergency, future developments must work hard to fulfil Oxford City's Council ambitious goals to achieve social, environmental and economic sustainability.

This is recognised by Oxford's Economic Draft Strategy (2022) and the Zero Carbon Action Plan (2021) which seeks to increase jobs within the zero carbon sector; create diverse and inclusive places; and promote opportunities which restore habitats and provide urban green infrastructure. The West End Investment Prospectus Draft (2022) campaigns for the expansion of the green-tech sector and embracing new sustainable approaches.




WATER
HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
ACTIVE TRAVEL
NET ZERO DESIGN
ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY
PROTECTING AND IMPROVING WATERCOURSE SYSTEMS
FLOOD RISK/ RESILIENCE
ATTENUATION BASINS
SWALE/ TREATMENT PONDS
RAINWATER COLLECTION
SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE
REWILD CANAL/ RIVER EDGES
WATER RECYCLING
FOOD GROWING
HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
GOOD AIR QUALITY
ACTIVE BY DESIGN
IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING ROUTES
LIVE-WORK MODELS FOR HOMES AND MIXED USE NEIGHBOURHOODS
INTERGENERATIONAL LIVING
MIXED COMMUNITIES AND TENURES
ENCOURAGE ZERO CARBON LIFESTYLE
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT
MASS TRANSIT SYSTEM
TRAFFIC CALMING AND SHARED SURFACES
SPACE FOR CYCLE STORAGE AND MOBILITY SCOOTERS/HUBS
BRIDGE CONNECTIONS
WALKING ENCOURAGED THROUGH IMPROVED CONNECTIONS OF PARKS
CHARGING FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES
REDUCED BILLS
PRIORITISE REUSE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS
TARGET HIGH FABRIC EFFICIENCY
CARBON NEUTRAL/ LOW EMBODIED CARBON CONSTRUCTION TARGETS
DUAL ASPECT TO PROVIDE CROSS VENTILATION
POWER GENERATION THROUGH RENEWABLE TECHNOLOGIES
SMART GRID
MAXIMISE DAYLIGHT
ENHANCE ECOLOGY IN BUILT-UP URBAN AREAS
IMPROVE AND INCREASE FLORA AND FAUNA
URBAN GREENING TO REDUCE HEAT ISLAND EFFECT
CARBON SEQUESTRATION
IMPROVED SOIL QUALITY
NET BIODIVERSITY GAIN
CONNECTED GREEN CORRIDORS
INCLUSION OF GREEN/BROWN/BLUE ROOFS
GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE
MULTI-FUNCTIONAL GREEN SPACES
REUSE-RECYCLE-RENEW

SUSTAINABILITY

The Golden Threads

A number of strategies which promote a sustainable vision are already being promoted within the West End and wider Oxfordshire. This includes:

- EV charging points
- Hydroelectric power for local residents and businesses
- Better cycle infrastructure encouraging low carbon lifestyles
- Battery Technology Centre which seeks to develop batteries at a huge scale
- New wetland habits created by the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme
- Housing such as Springfield Meadows which provides climate positive homes
- Oxford has recently become DPD's first all-electric city, with future parcel deliveries now only being made with electric vehicles
- Retrofitting existing homes with better insulation, solar panels, heat pumps and rainwater collection units, like the service of Cosy Homes Oxfordshire
- Businesses which operate with pedal-power such as Oxwash
- A completed wetland restoration project which has created a species rich environment
- Investment in EV taxi infrastructure in the Go Ultra Low Oxford Taxi Project (GULO Phase 2)
- The University of Oxford generating new clean-tech spinout companies (Oxford's Economic Draft Strategy, 2022)
- Two national energy systems demonstrator projects are based in Oxfordshire (Oxford's Economic Draft Strategy, 2022)
- Zero Emission Zone Pilot Scheme (OCCAP, 2021, p. 57).

Supporting these local initiatives, learning from them, tapping into their networks and expanding their reach will be an important part of achieving sustainable developments within the West End.



Osney Lock existing community owned Hydro uses a reverse Archimedean screw to turn the power of the river into electricity



The Council is investing in EV taxis and Westgate Shopping Centre is already offering 50 EV charging spaces



New cycle lanes have already been constructed at Osney Mead Industrial Estate. There is opportunity to expand this network and provide active frontages onto these routes



The Earth Trust is the environmental partner for the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme and aims to enrich the landscape with new wetland habitat, grazing meadows and wild flowers



Springfield Meadows development is providing 25 carbon positive homes



Oxford has recently become DPD's first all-electric city, with future parcel deliveries now only being made with electric vehicles



Chimney Meadows Wetland Restoration Project has restored the area into an area to a mosaic of floodplain meadows, wetlands, pasture and wet woodland



Oxwash is a company providing a laundry service via electric cargo bicycles. Improved cycle infrastructure could encourage these types of innovation



Cosy Homes Oxfordshire is a whole house retrofit service aiming to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes in Oxfordshire



The recently opened Johnson Matthey Battery Technology Centre in Oxford aims to develop a sustainable battery materials ecosystem

SOCIAL VALUE

The Golden Threads

Ensuring all developments and interventions provide effective social value will be critical to realising the vision of the Spatial Framework. This includes sensitively assessing what is existing and responding to context appropriately through high quality, inclusive and affordable design. Engagement of the community and stakeholders is imperative from early concept design through all stages of design and delivery. These five principles encompass this.



Protecting and enhancing existing social capital and providing new infrastructure to suit needs

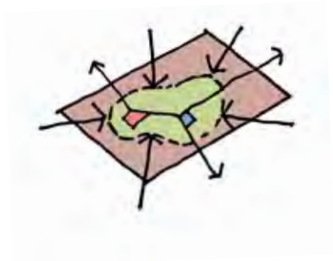


Providing diverse, tenure blind housing and sensitively and contextually designed places of play, leisure, public space, and housing types

Setting up an infrastructure

Setting up an infrastructure for a community to take ownership over the processes, decision-making and future development of an area within and beyond the design process





Considering existing social assets, businesses, and community structures and evaluating how they may continue to enhance areas



A meaningful engagement process that is inclusive, diverse and accessible to all stakeholders

SOCIAL VALUE

The Golden Threads

1 Identify social needs as a precondition for any development

A thorough survey and engagement process must precede any intervention to develop an understanding of existing communities, their needs and priorities. This is especially important in the West End whose diverse working and residential population may vary in social needs. Whilst two sites may be physically close, their social needs may be vastly different.

In practice, this identification of social needs may also operate as an enabler for development if a sufficient need is identified. This should be closely aligned with the goals set in the Local Plan 2036.

2 Protect and enhance existing social infrastructure and their networks

While every site will have specific social needs, they will simultaneously have their existing social infrastructures and networks. These may include local businesses and community groups. These networks are to be assessed and strengthened, providing a basis for evolving communities. They may provide an anchor for development and new people coming into the area, enabling social continuity in the light of physical changes.

Recognising that the West End is not a blank canvas - that it is rich in communities which come from existing homes, employment, leisure, retail and heritage, and is particularly important in carving out the area's future. Each development site coming forward already has a social network and it is important to build on this to maintain cohesive and long-lasting communities.

3 Include the community as a driver of design decisions

Successful regeneration is founded on listening to all stakeholders with a role in the future of their neighbourhood. Setting out from the onset a robust structure for a representative and meaningful consultation will greatly benefit schemes in the West End to foster thriving communities.

Proposals should be expected to provide good communication with stakeholders, reach under-represented groups and take stakeholders on the process from concept to delivery stages. Consultation should not end when the design process ends, and strong frameworks need to be developed for continued and long-term community stewardship.



Youth Engagement for Aberfeldy New Masterplan, Levitt Bernstein and ZCD Architects



Aberfeldy Street, Jan Kattein Architects



Sugarhouse Studios, Assemble Architects

SOCIAL VALUE

The Golden Threads

4 New developments must provide an affordable and diverse housing mix

Housing delivery is a significant factor in the Local Plan 2036, which foresees a great deal of population growth within the West End. It is crucial to demonstrate and justify within planning policy frameworks a scheme's affordability and housing mix, which should echo local context and viability.

This is especially important in the several sites throughout the West End which aim to deliver a significant amount of housing. This works in conjunction with the points set out in the Land Use and Emerging Developments section of this Spatial Framework.

Strategic sites will need to offer a wide range of house types to create a balanced community that is able to adapt and grow. This includes the opportunity to give tenants the ability to up size or down size their homes according to needs.

5 High quality design for all - tenure blind - whether its affordable or market

Home unaffordability is one of the greatest challenges for residents in Oxford (Local Plan 2036). For this reason, the Local Plan sets clear ambitions to provide broad and effective housing at or below the Local Housing Allowance.

Designing tenure blind schemes will help achieve these goals and work to create an equitable built environment. Housing and its surrounding public realm must be of high standard regardless of ownership type. Separate entrances and amenities for different tenure groups must be avoided.

Affordable employment units will also be an important part of creating a mixed 'Innovation Quarter'.

6 Designing public spaces which are inclusive and accessible to all

Designing accessible spaces is an important factor in bringing about a truly socially inclusive public realm. Design for all abilities and demographics should be met contextually and flexibly.

As expanded upon in the Public Realm Strategy of this Spatial Framework - accessible public realm elements such as paving, benches, public toilets and street crossings are some of the ways to ensure an inclusive space. Proposals coming forward should build out the Public Realm strategy which is underpinned by a series of interconnected public spaces with different characters.

Urban greening of streets and spaces is also a key factor - this contributes to zero carbon designs and provides opportunities to improve mental health of citizens.



Sutherland Road, Walthamstow, Levitt Bernstein



Rochester Way, Greenwich, Peter Barber Architects



Parkview, South Thamesmead, Levitt Bernstein

ECONOMIC STRATEGY

The Golden Threads

Oxford's Economic Draft Strategy (2022) marks a shift in thinking about Oxford's economy and a step-change in the City Council and partners' approach to economic development. It responds significantly to local, national and societal challenges in terms of inclusion and the climate emergency. The strategy provides new ideas on how the economy of Oxford can be more inclusive, global and transition towards zero carbon. The successful implementation of the strategy will need new collaborations and enhanced partnership under the strategic leadership of the City Council and the Economic Growth Board. A set of principles has been created to inform this, provoke new practices and support delivery:

1. **Commitment and Focus** - a shared, long-term commitment to responding to the priority challenges and opportunities identified in the economic strategy.
2. **Collaboration** - making the most of available capacity and resources that exist across the city by building on the work of partners, brokering new relationships and working across new areas.
3. **Participation** - embedding participatory principles within delivery to ensure that Oxford's residents are actively involved in idea development, decision-making and delivery.
4. **Innovation** - using the city as a 'living lab' to try innovative projects, alongside taking innovative approaches to leverage funding and realising ambitions.
5. **Agility** - continuously reviewing delivery mechanisms, project priorities and ways of working to ensure the city remains agile in responding to changing needs.
6. **Pace** - working rapidly to deliver projects that deliver positive economic, social and environmental impacts.

The following list is a selection of headlines which indicate how Oxford City Council and its partners will work together to deliver actions which support the strategy's objectives. These relate to the first five years of a ten-year plan, underpinned by the big ideas within the strategy document. Many of these actions will form the foundation for the future, providing the basis for Oxford to become an inclusive, global and zero carbon city. The full list is set out in Oxford's Economic Draft Strategy – Delivery Plan Document.

A. Increase the quantity and quality of commercial space, with a focus on supporting Life Sciences, Low Carbon, Digital and knowledge driven sectors.
B. Expedite connectivity improvements and infrastructure needed to unlock Oxford's economic potential.
C. Support businesses to recover from the pandemic and adapt to changing economic conditions.
D. Help deliver Oxford West End at pace, as a major mixed-use, sustainable neighbourhood.
E. Boost domestic and international inward investment.
F. Retain a greater proportion of spin-outs and growing companies and increase the local economic value of knowledge and innovation.
G. Support the recovery of the visitor economy and seek benefits for visitors and residents.
H. Harness the potential of Oxford's population to make the city's workforce a more distinctive factor in its success.
I. Focus recovery efforts on the needs of the most disadvantaged places, through community wealth building and community economic development.
J. Further develop and build on the Oxford Living Wage initiative.
K. Support social enterprise, cooperative businesses and civil society sectors to recover and grow.
L. Support local spend and enhance local business through procurement and targeted social value.
M. Support local people to access skills, training and education opportunities to help them prosper and adapt to structural changes to the economy.
N. Develop an Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Charter and pledge to engage all local business and institutions to play a fuller role in embedding an inclusive economy.
O. Deliver affordable workspace that supports local businesses and organisations to prosper and support community wealth building.
P. Use the principles of 15-minute neighbourhoods to give residents access to the services they need to participate in the economy and society.
Q. Explore options to deliver more affordable travel for local people to travel to key employment locations using public transport and cycling.
R. Pro-actively encourage mainstream socially and environmentally responsible business practices city-wide.
S. Reduce the negative environmental impacts of existing economic activity.
T. Mitigate environmental impacts of new development and housing growth.
U. Support the growth of the green and low carbon technology sectors through innovative partnerships and targeted business support.
V. Support and partner businesses and institutions to be more environmentally responsible and address city-wide zero carbon targets.
W. Deliver the Oxford Zero Emission Zone.

The opportunity in Oxford is one of national significance. It is therefore reasonable that the projects which will support the aspirations of the strategy should receive some investment from national government. The City Council, Economic Growth Steering Board and Oxfordshire LEP will all need to form a consistent lobby to make the case for this and ensure that any resource is used efficiently and impactfully.

GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

Spatial Framework Strategies

A strong green and blue network is essential in adapting our environment in the light of climate change, promoting health and well-being and fostering biodiversity. These key principles underpin the Green and Blue Landscape Strategy.



Landscapes for recreation, play, social life and small to medium scale urban food growing

- Neighbourhood parks
- Sports fields
- Playgrounds
- Regional parks
- Public plazas/squares
- Green ways
- Natural trails
- Farmers markets
- Gardens
- Local cemeteries

Temporary landscapes and meanwhile methods to clean soils (land re-mediation) and enable new forms of social life and creative displays



- Event spaces
- Re-mediation areas to prepare for forests
- Innovative art spaces
- Urban meadows
- Re-wilding canal/river edges



Landscapes to generate new knowledge, grow energy and food, and create new urban experiences

- Research landscape
- Urban farms
- Aquaculture and hydroponics
- Forests or energy fields
- Homesteads
- Algaculture
- Green/brown/blue roofs
- Micro-forests

Tree planting, meadows and forested areas that provide habitat and other environmental benefits

- Canal side routes and routes to the waterways
- Rivers
- Nature parks
- Wild areas
- Rapid reforestation and greening of barren dense areas
- Industrial nature paths
- Successional routes and spaces





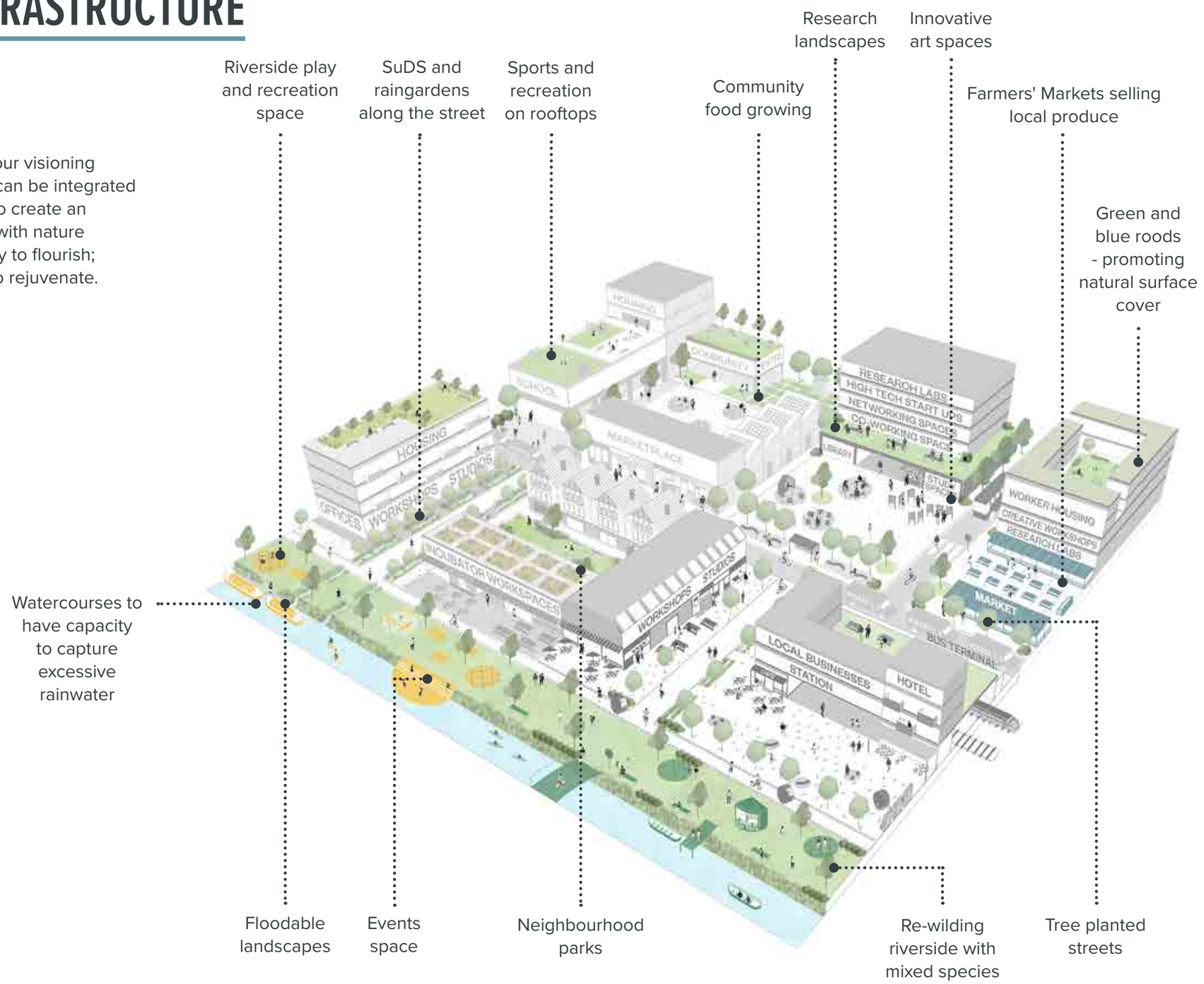
Landscapes that capture storm-water and clean air

- Urban growing swales/SuDS
- Retention ponds
- Lakes
- Infiltration parks and basins
- Roadside ponds to wider roads
- Rain gardens
- Green culture in industrial zones
- Community initiatives

GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

Spatial Framework Strategies

Ensuring that these principles underpin the four visioning themes is important. These broad principles can be integrated into streets, spaces and building typologies to create an urban environment which sits in conjunction with nature - allowing communities to enjoy it; biodiversity to flourish; mitigate flood risk and allowing landscapes to rejuvenate.



GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

Spatial Framework Strategies

The West End of Oxford has some fantastic green and blue assets – many accessible watercourses, the green belt, and some key parks and meadows.

These green and blue spaces accomplish important social, environmental and economic functions individually and as part of a wider network.

This strategy seeks to reinforce what is already there, create better connections between components and add new green and blue infrastructure which enriches the existing offering. The green and blue landscape strategy is underpinned by policy G8 (Local Plan 2036). More detailed design guidance can be found in the West End Design Guide. Principles include:

1. Greening of existing and proposed streets
2. Integration of flood risk mitigation into all elements of design
3. To make a destination for Osney Mead's riverside and lock
4. Towpaths to be key green arteries within the city
5. Putting the community at the heart of every green space
6. Improve access to the green belt areas through sports and recreation provision



GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

Spatial Framework Strategies

1 Greening of existing and proposed streets

To introduce trees and planting (of mixed species) on existing and new streets. Many streets such as Botley Road, Oxpens Road and St Aldate's - provide a scale which would allow for the reconfiguration of the street - allowing for planting and trees to segregate the carriageway and the pedestrian and cycleway.

New streets within the emerging masterplans to be strategically designed to have a hierarchy of green and blue routes. The green and blue infrastructure within Osney Mead Regeneration site are to underpin the development plots coming forward. This will be essential to mitigate flood risk, provide high quality public spaces and bring biodiversity back to the area.



Streets to be greened with trees and swales which provide an opportunity to segregate vehicles from pedestrians and cyclists



A diversity of planting within beds help to green more intimate routes through the city

2 Integration of flood risk mitigation into all elements of design

Much of the West End of Oxford lies in flood zone 2 or 3 and flood risk management needs to be integrated at every scale of design in line with policies RE3 and RE4 (Local Plan 2036). The West End needs to deal holistically to mitigate both surface water and fluvial flooding. A comprehensive strategy to Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) needs to be adopted and should include:

- Swales
- Porous hard surfaces
- Rainwater collection
- Grey water recycling
- Soakaways
- Low water use toilets and appliances
- Floodable landscapes
- Water channels
- Balancing ponds.

These measures will need to be crucially implemented in existing streets and spaces as well as new ones. They are most significant in the Osney Mead Regeneration site where flood risk is a pertinent problem to address. Solutions must work with the existing proposals for the Oxford's Flood Alleviation Scheme and should be an opportunity for place-making and biodiversity, as well as mitigation of flood risk. Further technical work into flood risk at Osney Mead Regeneration site will inform scope for future development and the mix of uses that can be delivered on site.



A strategy which mitigates flood risk but also has benefits to place-making and for local communities



Opportunity for green, brown and blue roofs which collect rainwater and recycle it

GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

Spatial Framework Strategies



A significant area of space is sunken and dedicated to capturing rainwater and improving ecology

3 To make a destination for Osney Mead's riverside and lock

As stated within the Policy SP1 (Local Plan 2036) there is great opportunity to create a greater relationship between the West End and it's watercourses with better visual and physical permeability. The area around Osney Lock provides a significant place-making opportunity to be the epicentre of this relationship and a destination, driven by its blue and green assets.

There is significant opportunity to generate activity on and alongside the River Thames with a water sports offering; food and drink; play; food growing and recreation - all to be actively overlooked by both the existing and a new mixed-use community at Osney Mead. With the opening of the Environment Agency bridge to the public, a high quality public space which includes the River Thames; Osney Island and lock - there is a real opportunity for activity on and off the water.



Opportunity for leisure on the waterfront with water-sports such as canoeing and paddle-boarding; and bars and restaurants



A floating pocket park activates underused parts of the watercourse with seating and planting

4 Towpaths to be key green arteries within the city

The recent opening up of Castle Mill Stream sets a real precedent for how Oxford's watercourses can be made more accessible, safe and enjoyable for pedestrians, promoting active travel within the city. The River Thames, Bulstake Stream, Mill Stream and Osney Stream all provide a similar opportunity.

Opening up these watercourses for pedestrians and cyclists is essential in capturing the place-making value out of the green and blue network of Oxford. New and improved links across the river help open up the riverside and connect it to key destinations / assets.

Different blue arteries may have very different characters and design approaches but by opening them up and enriching them with accessible routes, tree planting, community gardens, development frontages and activities help to promote safe and rich ecology/biodiversity corridors within the city.



Part of the existing route in Osney Mead provides a separate shared path for bikes and walkers as well as the historic tow-path

GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

Spatial Framework Strategies



Opportunity for green space adjacent to the watercourse which provides a place for planting, play and relaxation

5 Putting the community at the heart of every green space

A strong network of food growing is already established within Oxford and there are several allotment sites near the West End. However, the densification of the West End will mean there is a greater demand for food growing spaces. This provides a real opportunity for emerging sites and underutilised land to be utilised for food growing which is looked after and used by a strong community network (Policy G4, Local Plan 2036).

A network of play spaces exists within the realm of the West End but there is great opportunity to improve and expand this network alongside the emerging masterplans and the opening up of the riverside. A playful city seeks to incorporate the spirit of playfulness and curiosity in all spaces bringing joy to daily life. A place where one can sit, dwell and gather allows communities to use outdoor space flexibly.



Places to sit, dwell and socialise - can be used for business meetings, socialising, community gatherings and hobbies



Food growing opportunities bring communities together and promote a healthy lifestyle

6 Improve access to the green belt areas and sports and recreation provision

As part of promoting an active lifestyle and promoting community cohesion through sports and recreation there is great opportunity for the West End of Oxford and the surrounding area to accommodate more sports infrastructure or opportunities for outdoor activity. Currently much of outdoor sports areas in the city are owned by colleges or private schools.

In particular, the Osney Mead Regeneration site and Oxpens could utilise the playing pitches in surrounding areas. Facilities should be accessible, multi-functional and integrated with community uses.



The green belt areas adjacent to development sites provide an opportunity for sports and recreation

MOVEMENT

Spatial Framework Strategies

Considering Movement and Public Realm within Oxford needs to be done in parallel as they are intrinsically linked and complement each other. Movement and public realm are the most significant strategies within the Spatial Framework and seek to knit together isolated parts of the West End.

The **Movement Strategy** sets the skeleton of how people move around the city - how people walk, cycle, drive and travel by bus. Physical connections and strategic land use placement seek to prioritise active modes - the experience of these to be dealt with in the Public Realm Strategy.

The **Public Realm Strategy** concentrates on the experience of users as they travel and spend time around the West End. It aims to provide streets and public spaces which are safe, enjoyable and resilient - encouraging people to dwell with café uses, community uses and places to play and sit.

The importance of these strategies is highlighted in the Oxford's Economic Draft Strategy (2022) which recognises mobility as fundamental to a more inclusive city which allows people to access opportunities. More detailed design guidance can be found in the West End Design Guide.



MOVEMENT

Spatial Framework Strategies



Routes which prioritise pedestrians and cyclists

- Wide green footpaths and cycle lanes on major streets
- Car-free streets
- Good lighting
- Accessible for all
- New walking and cycling routes and bridges
- Enhanced First and Last mile connections to improve access to and from development
- Appropriate cycle parking
- Connecting up with strategic cycle routes
- Local bus stops and city interchanges
- Consolidation of delivery and servicing trips by cargo bike / electric vehicle



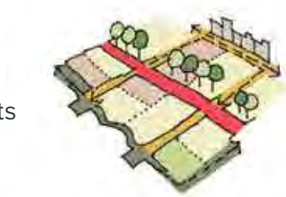
Land use distribution which ensures places have everything within a 15-minute walking distance from homes

- Schools
- Community uses
- Play and green spaces
- Local shops
- Workplaces
- Local culture
- Key transport links



Ensuring connectivity which is transpatial - promoting technology and digital innovation

- Integrated public transport systems
- Data driven design
- Good communication platforms allowing for collaboration, engagement and serendipitous encounters



A clear hierarchy of routes which have different characters improves legibility and attractiveness

- Key artery streets
- Local streets
- Car-free streets
- Watercourse paths
- School streets
- Play streets



Improved existing and new connections which mitigate existing severances

- Bridges which provide a destination
- Comprehensive and high frequency public transport network with improved access and integration
- High-quality new connections which encourage walkers and cyclists
- A hierarchy of links
- Connections which provide direct and coherent links across the area

KEY PRINCIPLES

MOVEMENT

ACTIVE AND LOW CARBON LIFESTYLES

CONNECTIONS

STREET CHARACTER AND HIERARCHY

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

15-MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOOD

MOVEMENT

Spatial Framework Strategies

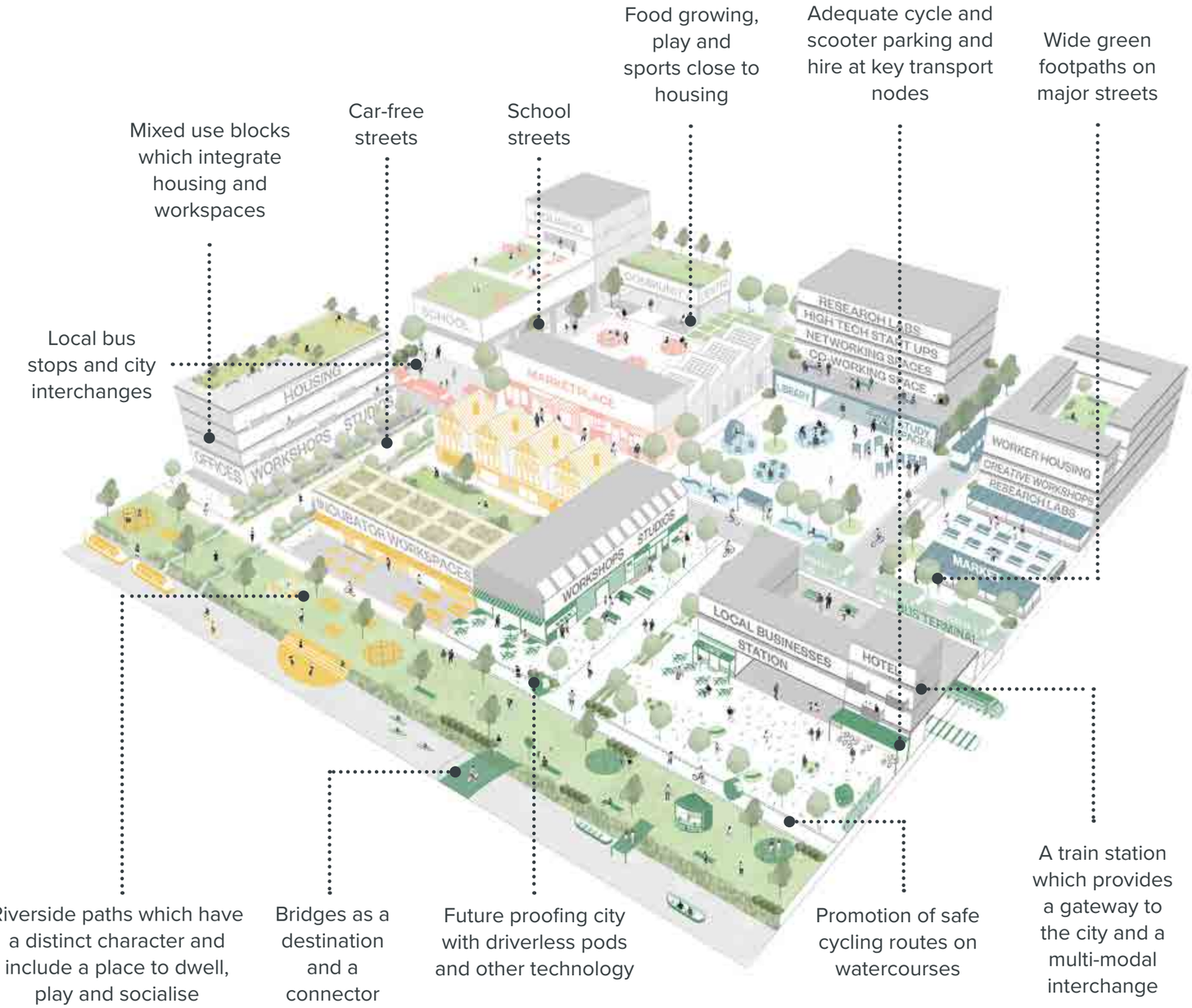
A strong movement network is pivotal to the future of the West End. Currently the West End is highly limited in connections, relying on constrained towpaths and streets which are poor in quality and connectivity. This strategy provides a real opportunity to bring the West End into the life of the bustling city centre - providing key activity hubs with high quality public realm which are interlinked with good quality walking and cycling connections.

As the residential and worker population grows, this strategy seeks to connect people to jobs and facilities through walking and cycling, encouraging a sustainable movement vision (Policy M1, Local Plan 2036). Without improvements to connectivity, proposals will not be able to come forward on key development sites. Providing new links and connections is an enabler of development and strong partnerships will be required to deliver these.

Mobility around the city and to other destinations cements the vision of the West End contributing to Oxford as global city (Oxford's Economic Draft Strategy, 2022) - one which connects Oxford to spaces nationally and internationally; and provides good digital connectivity. Introducing better connectivity to the West End will enable and enhance further public realm improvements (OCCAP, 2021, p. 54).

Connecting Oxford (2020) sets out Oxford City Council's and Oxfordshire County Council's plans to address congestion, pollution and poor transport connections into and across Oxford. Proposals put forward in Connecting Oxford include a Workplace Parking Levy and traffic filters at locations within Oxford.

The movement principals set out in the following pages reflect the initial proposals put forward. In a similar way, the key principles set out in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP, 2020) to significantly increase cycling in Oxford are reflected in the following pages.



Implementation of the measures put forward in Connecting Oxford and the Oxford LCWIP, or enhanced measures to further encourage shifts away from private car use to active, sustainable travel would be beneficial for the area.

Ensuring that these principles underpin the four visioning themes is important. How one moves through the urban environment needs a holistic approach to street design, land use placement and public realm. Ultimately moving around the City needs to be safe, easy to navigate and provide interest for the user.

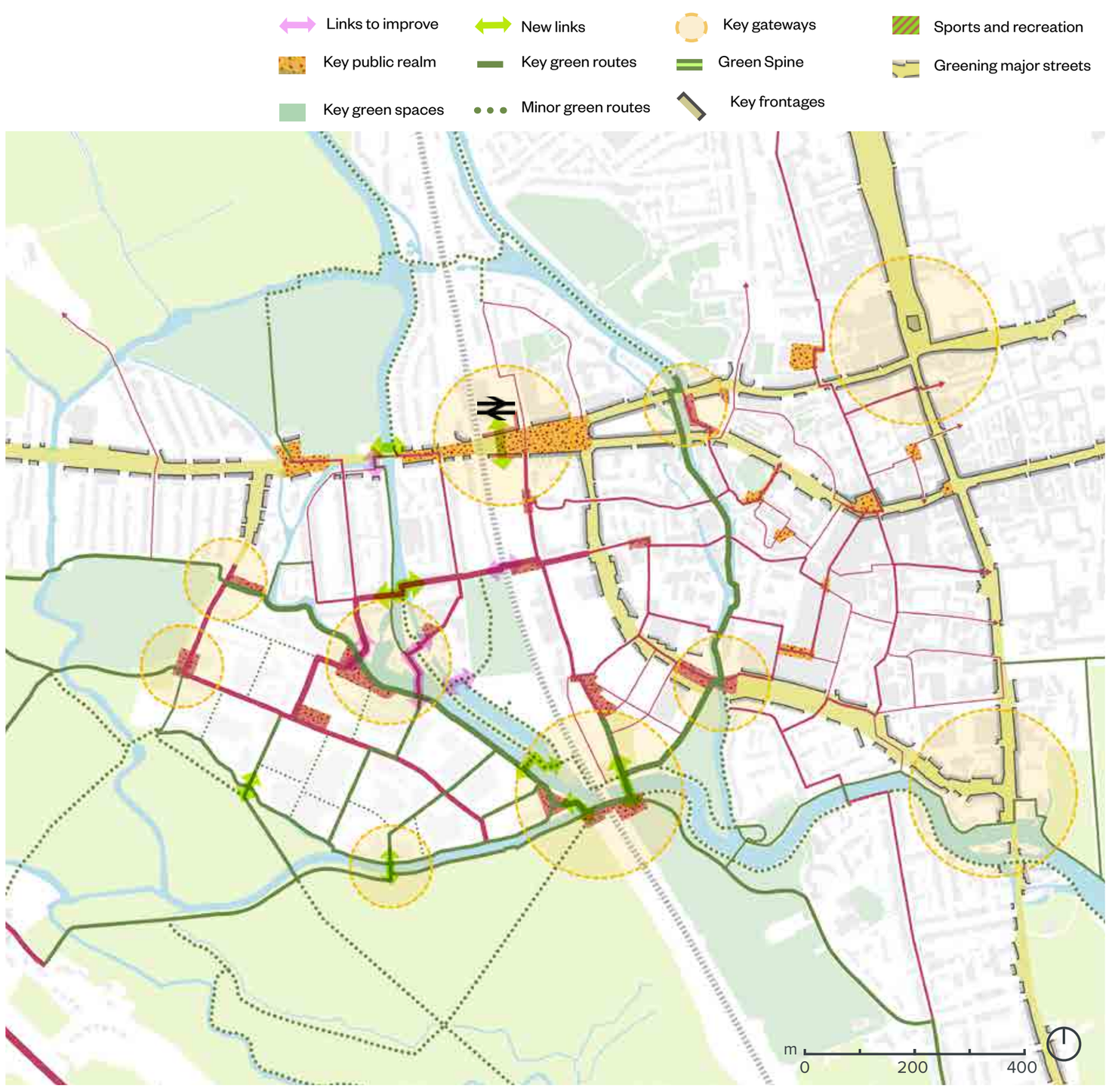
MOVEMENT

Spatial Framework Strategies

While the West End is well situated in close proximity with the historic and vibrant city centre of Oxford, poor quality connections and disjointed transport infrastructure leave the full potential of the area unrealised.

Expanding provision and support for active means of travel such as cycling and walking as well as public transit can increase accessibility between the city centre and West End and work towards broader net zero carbon ambitions. Application of the movement strategy aims to build on present transport infrastructure and introduce ad hoc strategies to transform the West End's movement networks into ones that are sustainable, efficient, and inclusive.

1. Produce a framework that seeks to build a strategy for movement that will support the decarbonisation of the transport network in Oxford and help meet its net zero ambitions
2. Create a series of new east-west links within the West End which will connect existing and future places and centres of activity
3. Realise opportunities to enhance access to the bus network and plan for future improvements in accessibility
4. Build on the re-configuration of Oxford station to create a key gateway to the City and ensure delivery and new suitable movement corridors to Osney Mead and Oxpens
5. Create a network of routes which promote active travel as the first choice for travel
6. Plan for the improved integration of public transport services with walking, cycling and micromobility to make it easier for people to travel and switch seamlessly between modes
7. Improve connections to green and open spaces adjacent to the West End to better integrate into the wider area



MOVEMENT

Spatial Framework Strategies

1 Produce a framework that seeks to build a strategy for movement that will support the decarbonisation of the transport network in Oxford and help meet its net zero ambitions

The Net Zero Oxford Action Plan sets out the ambitious target to deliver a net zero carbon Oxford by 2040. Within the theme of transport, shifts away from private car use, implementation of infrastructure changes, and incentivise public transport use are critical to realising this goal. This is supported by the Zero Emissions Zone project due for expansion in 2022 (OCCAP, 2021, p. 56).

The central location of the West End and forthcoming developments being brought forward in the area present an opportunity for the West End to be at the forefront of realising this zero carbon ambition. Within this context, the West End and new developments coming forward should have a clear prioritisation and hierarchy of modes of travel:



A strategy which prioritises walking and cycling and de-prioritises the private vehicle

- Reduce the need to travel
- Walking
- Cycling
- Public transport
- Taxi, freight and servicing
- Private vehicles.

2 Create a series of new east-west links within the West End which will connect existing and future places and centres of activity

The natural severance created by the river and railway create barriers to east-west accessibility in the West End. This means that the time taken to travel from certain areas of the West End, (particularly Osney Mead) towards the city centre does not reflect their geographical proximity to each other. Existing connections are have particular issues for people with mobility impairments and people walking and cycling.

Oxford Local Plan 2036 - Policy M1 supports the creation of good and direct walking connections. The future sites coming forward for development in the West End presents an opportunity to improve existing links and create new links for people walking and cycling. Links should focus on helping meet the Local Plan aspiration of making Osney Mead functioning as an extension of the city centre.

Different links may have varying design approaches and characteristics, owing to constraints presented by the existing urban environment. However, new links should wherever possible should be inclusive by catering for people from all walks of life.



Introducing cycle parking and tree planting which create a more human scale street



Promoting leisure routes for health and well-being

3 Realise opportunities to enhance access to the bus network and plan for future improvements in accessibility

Oxford benefits from multiple bus services which serve a wide range of destinations within Oxfordshire and wider. Most terminating buses are currently concentrated on the Station.

A comprehensive and high frequency network of buses is critical in helping realise net zero ambitions. However, a balance also needs to be struck at the Station between provision for buses and ensuring high quality walking and cycling facilities can be delivered while ensuring an attractive streetscape that respects heritage assets such as St Thomas's Church.

The nature of Oxford, as a city which attracts large numbers of visitors and tourists, means that it attracts a large number of visitor coaches. A balance needs to be struck between encouraging visitors to Oxford and reducing coach movements in areas which experience high levels of footfall and on streets close to the city centre which are less suitable for accommodating coach movements. A comprehensive strategy to address the large amount of visitor coaches needs to be considered, with the aim of reducing coach movements close to the city centre and providing appropriate standing

spaces for coaches. This approach would help greatly reduce city centre congestion and set out Oxford to be certified as a 'Coach friendly City' (OCCAP, 2021, p.64).

Oxford benefits from a park & ride system, with park & ride sites on most key routes into Oxford. The Oxford Park & Ride Future Strategy Development (2016) set out proposals for the park & ride network in Oxfordshire, including an expansion and reconfiguration of the system with the aim of intercepting more car journeys into the city centre. These changes would help contribute towards the overarching aim of reducing vehicular dominance in the West End Area and support car-free developments and reductions in car parking at key sites within the West End.

It is critical that large-scale new developments in the area, particularly Osney Mean and Oxpens, are suitably connected to the bus network. This is supported by Local Plan 2036 - Policy M1 which requires new developments to promote buses, secure necessary improvements to bus services and be designed to accommodate bus movements where appropriate.



Rationalising Oxford's busy coach and bus network is critical to realising net zero ambitions and improving the public realm

Connections to the bus network will help to ensure that the scale of development at these sites can be delivered, and help enable the delivery of car-free developments. Further investigation would be required between bus operators, the County Council and developers to help create these new connections, and developer contributions may be required to help fund these improvements. New bus services to access development sites would need to run at a frequency which is sufficient to ensure that buses are an attractive and suitable mode of travel for those who need them.

4 Build on the re-configuration of Oxford Station to create a key gateway to the City and ensure delivery of new movement corridors to Osney Mead and Oxpens

Oxford station is the key gateway into Oxford through which the majority of visitors to the City initially arrive and depart.

Improvements to Frideswide Square that have been delivered in recent years have helped create new places within the public realm in the area, however the station itself is still dominated by hard landscaping, parking and vehicles and which do not create a welcoming environment to the City. The redevelopment of the station presents the opportunity to change this, by creating a gateway befitting the status of Oxford as a global city.

The central location and strategic importance of the station should be capitalised on by ensuring that it acts as a world-class transport hub and interchange. The focus should be on ensuring that seamless onwards connections can be made by walking and cycling within the West End to areas such as Osney Mead and Oxpens. Further, focused improvements to public realm, which prioritise active travel users within the station boundary and to the east and west of the station,



High quality public realm strengthens a railway station as a key gateway to a city

would help realise this vision. Buses should also be easily accessible and provide access to key destinations in the West End and wider area.

The hierarchy of modes outlined previously in this framework should be the key consideration when redeveloping the station. Any re-provided car parking should first and foremost be considered in the context of Oxford's net zero ambitions, and Local Plan 2036 - Policy M3 which encourages redeveloped non-residential sites to reduce their levels of car parking.

MOVEMENT

Spatial Framework Strategies

5 Create a network of routes which promote active travel as the first choice for travel

The creation of new links and connections within the West End is vital, however these new links and those existing connections need to be well designed to promote active travel and to create an environment that feels safe and welcoming for all. To realise net zero carbon ambitions and increase walking and cycling, streets need to perform more than just a functionary role; they need to be safe, pleasant and attractive places to be.

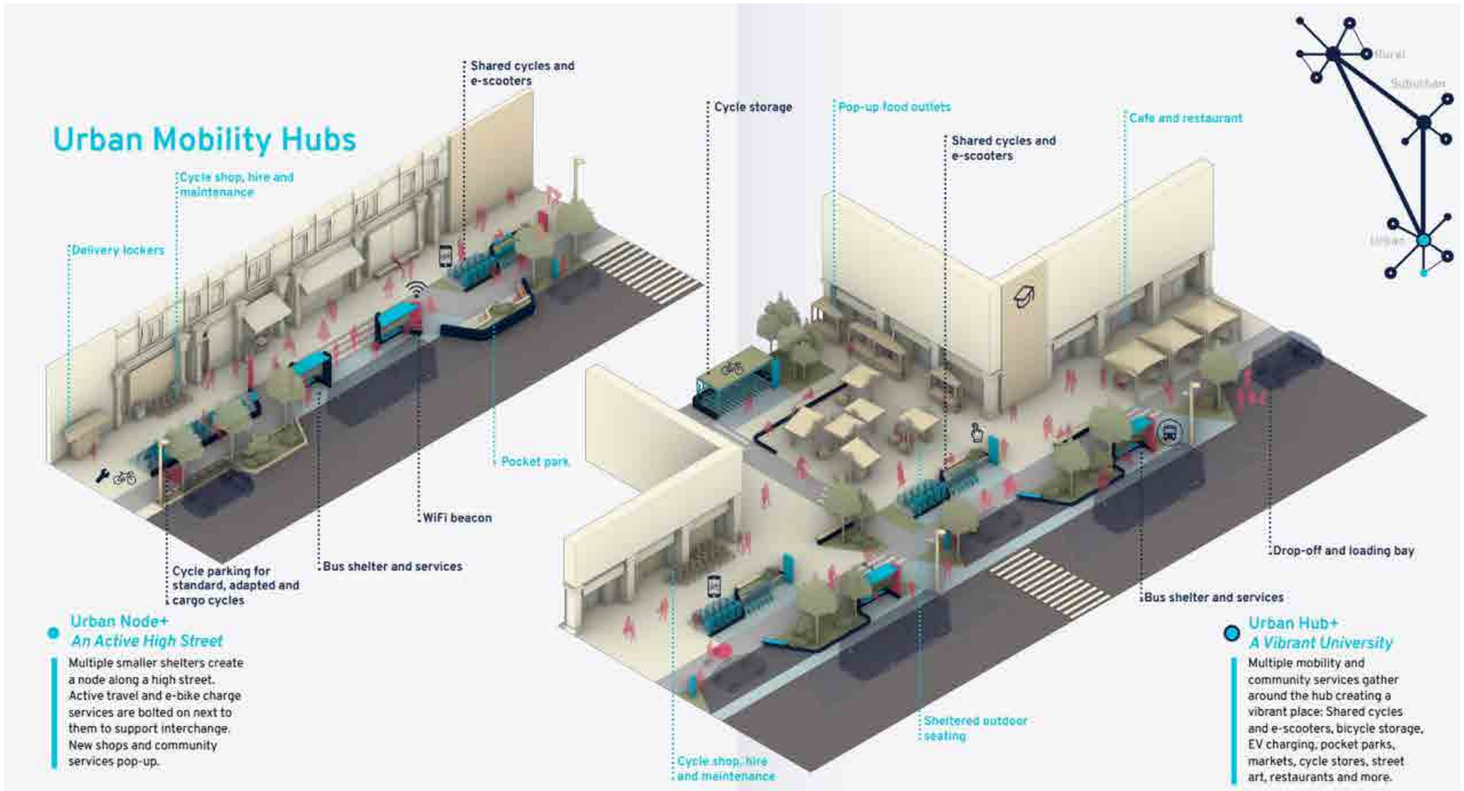


Healthy Streets Approach is a new framework which places human health and experience at the heart of future planning

The West End could look to the 'Healthy Streets' approach that has been introduced by Transport for London as a means of creating a network of well designed streets. The Healthy Streets approach is underpinned by ten evidence based indicators of what makes streets attractive places to be. The incorporation of high quality design standards for new and existing streets is crucial to delivering this outcome that enables a fully accessible and inclusive streetscape for people of all demographics, backgrounds, experiences and mobility requirements.

6 Plan for the improved integration of public transport services with walking, cycling, and micromobility to make it easier for people to travel and switch seamlessly between modes

Transport and travel characteristics within cities have been changing rapidly in recent years. To realise future net zero ambitions, as well as wider inclusivity and health ambitions, cities are expected to undergo further changes in the coming years.



Urban Mobility Hubs

MOVEMENT

Spatial Framework Strategies

To reflect its status of Oxford as a city of innovation and research, the West End needs to be prepared to accommodate these future changes. Consideration should be given to mobility hubs, which are a network of structures which cluster together complementary transport modes, as well as passenger facilities, to allow people to complete journeys in a more convenient, efficient, sustainable and cost-effective way.

Mobility hubs could include bus stops, shared cycle hire / e-scooters, cycle parking repair stations, seating / planting or pop-up food outlets. The provision of mobility hubs at key locations within the West End would help to create an integrated and connected transport network within the area. These may work in conjunction with delivery and collection strategies in defining parcel collection points in strategic areas to reduce the number of heavy vehicles in the city centre (OCCAP, 2021, p. 62-63).

Other trends and changes in transport should also be considered and accommodated within the West End. For example, increased delivery and servicing activity could be met through the provision of consolidation centres and use of cargo bikes and low emission vehicles.



Utilising cargo bicycle for deliver


A bridge which improves connectivity and is a destination in itself

7 Improve connections to green and open spaces adjacent to the West End to better integrate into the wider area

The West End is surrounded by a wide range of green and open spaces. Connections to these spaces should be prioritised, in order to promote active and healthy lifestyles. The West End should be an outward looking area which is well integrated with its surroundings; both to encourage visitors into this area and ensure that residents and people living / working here experience the benefits available in the surrounding area.


A bridge which promotes cycling

MOVEMENT

Spatial Framework Strategies

How will people cycle through the area?

Creating Oxford as a 'world-class cycling city' is embedded within the Local Plan's aspirations (Policy M1, Local Plan 2036). Key to this strategy is to provide connected and high quality cycle routes which link in with the existing and future urban fabric. Sufficient public cycle parking which is integrated into the public realm will also need to be provided at key points - railway station; Westgate Shopping Centre; and the new epicentres of Oxpens, Osney Mead and Nuffield College Sites.

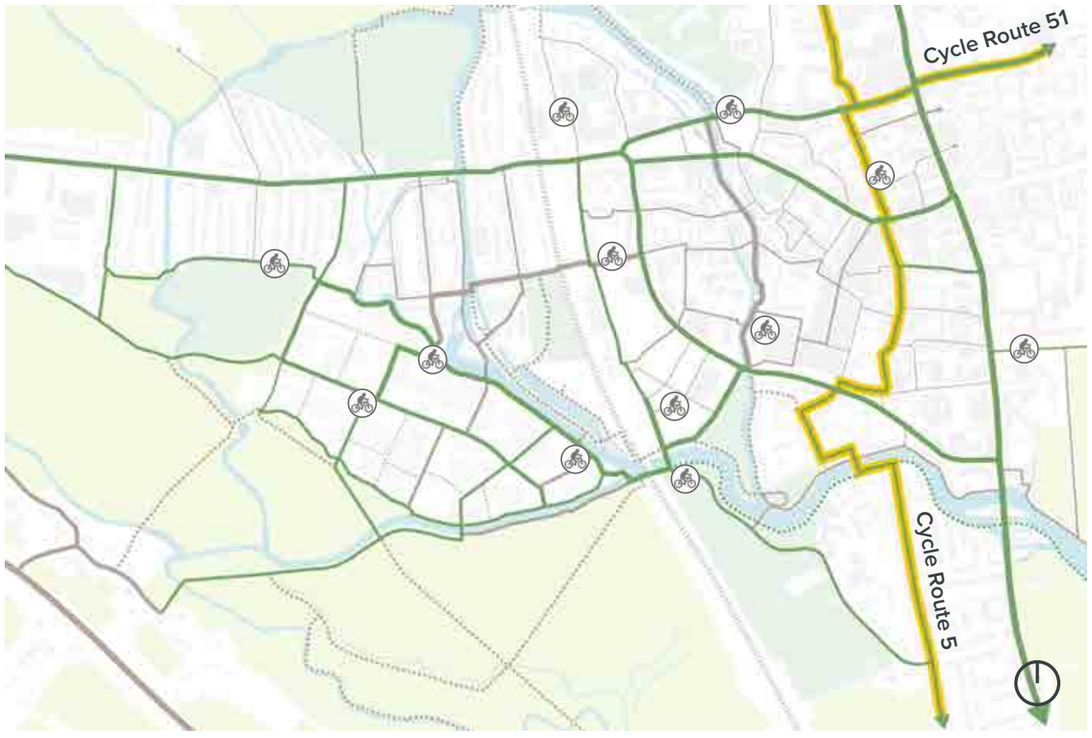
Routes highlighted are ones which cycling infrastructure should be particularly enhanced on. This could be through a variety of treatments including segregated cycle lanes, shared cycle and pedestrian lanes or cycle friendly/priority routes.

How will people walk through the area?

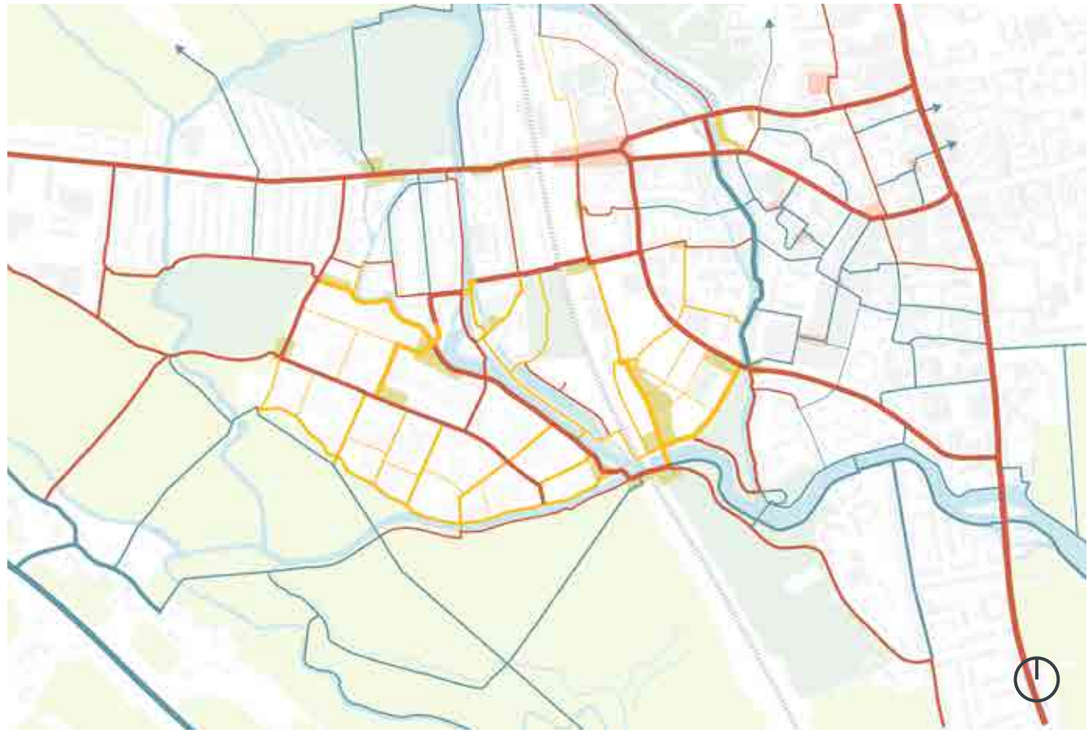
Many of the streets within the West End are not conducive to pedestrian movement - there are problems with lack of human scale; narrow and poor quality footpaths; conflicts with bus transport; vehicle dominated streets; and poor pedestrian crossings. (Policy WE1, Area Action Plan, 2008). This strategy seeks to improve pedestrian experience on many key streets; as well as add a series of new routes.

In particular, the experience of pedestrians will need to be considered on the highlighted routes - this could be a range of improvements from re-surfacing, widening of footpaths, signage or tree planting. Further technical work will need to be achieved. A number of new routes will also be created, predominately in Osney Mead, Oxpens and Nuffield. Routes within new developments will need to connect well with existing routes and follow design principles set out within Policy M1 (Local Plan 2036) and other design guidance.

A balanced approach needs to be taken to main vehicle carrying routes in the area, namely Oxpens Road and Botley Road. Improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists on these routes is necessary, as these provide critical and well used east-west and north-south routes in the area. However, this needs to be balanced with the fact that these are likely to remain key routes for vehicles too, unless significant traffic restrictions are implemented.



Cycle routes Locations of significant bicycle parking National Cycle Network



Walking routes to be improved New routes created Existing routes

How will public transport move through the area?

A high quality, well-connected and high frequency public transport system is needed to meet the overarching movement needs of the West End and aims of this framework. New developments need to be well-connected to the bus network, in order to help deliver car-free schemes and the scale of development envisaged. Last mile solutions to show how a fully integrated approach to sustainable travel can be achieved. Opportunities for improved accessibility & bus layovers should be fully explored.

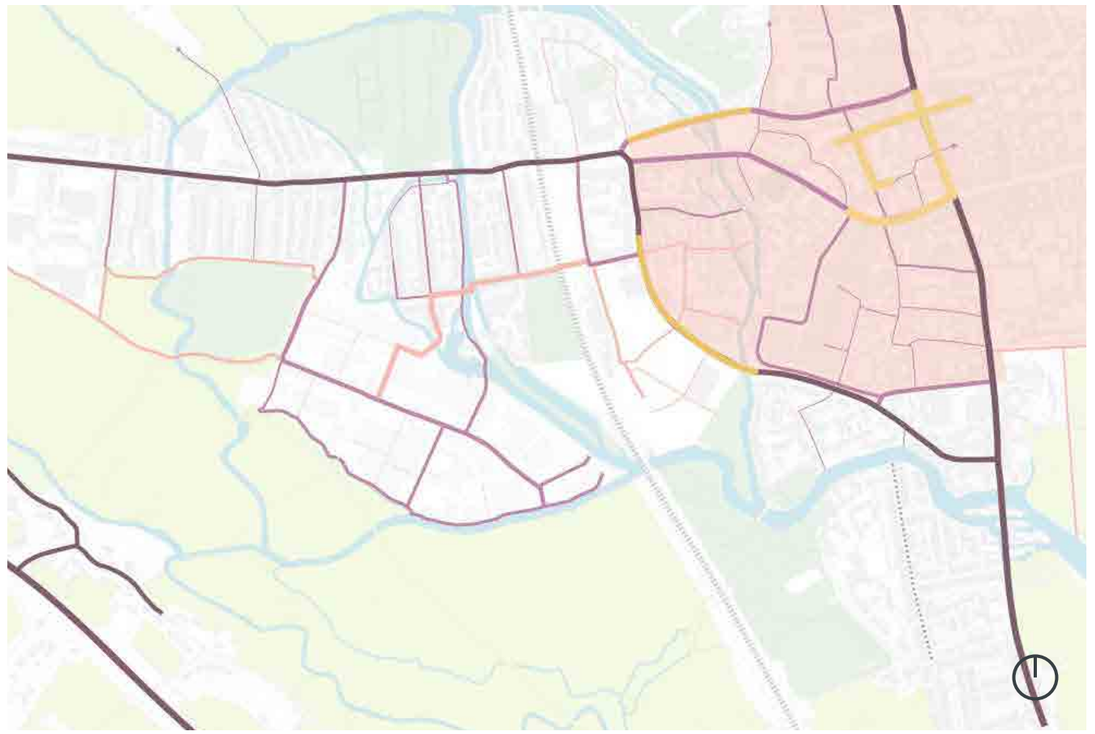
Whilst Oxford is, and will remain, a renowned tourist destination, tourist coaches should be dealt with sensitively and not prevent improvements to walking and cycling networks. Within that context, the existing and future bus networks should not constrain future opportunities to pedestrianise key streets in the area or prioritise their use for walking and cycling.

How will vehicles move through the area?

The de-prioritisation of vehicular movements is a key pillar of the Spatial Framework, however it is recognised that the need for a limited number of vehicles to safely and efficiently navigate the West End is also important. Ensuring that the West End accommodates future trends in vehicular use, in particular the expected increase in electric vehicle usage and changes in delivery and servicing trends, is important. In accordance with the Local Plan 2036, Policy M3, residential developments falling with Controlled Parking Zones should be car-free and for re-provided parking at non-residential developments, reductions in car parking should be sought where there is good accessibility to a range of facilities. Ultimately, all developments should be aiming for a shift away from private motorised transport towards active, sustainable travel.



Existing bus routes
Potential future bus routes
Existing bus stop
Potential future bus stop
Existing coach stop
Rail station



Primary routes
Secondary routes
Residents/servicing only
Pedestrian only
Pilot Zero Emissions Zone Streets
Modal Filter (Indicative locations)

MOVEMENT AND CONNECTIVITY ACROSS THE RIVER THAMES

Spatial Framework Strategies

As a minimum, new developments are expected to not worsen connectivity in the area, and should be encouraged to positively contribute towards it. Links into Osney Mead will become increasingly important in future, and existing routes which provide connections from the city centre towards Osney Mead will also be important in facilitating access. This includes the limited number of crossing points that currently exist over the river and railway.

The Council have the intent of re-providing the bridge which crosses the railway line connecting the two parts of Osney Lane. Therefore, the link further westwards over the River Thames and into Osney Mead regeneration site is becoming ever more important.

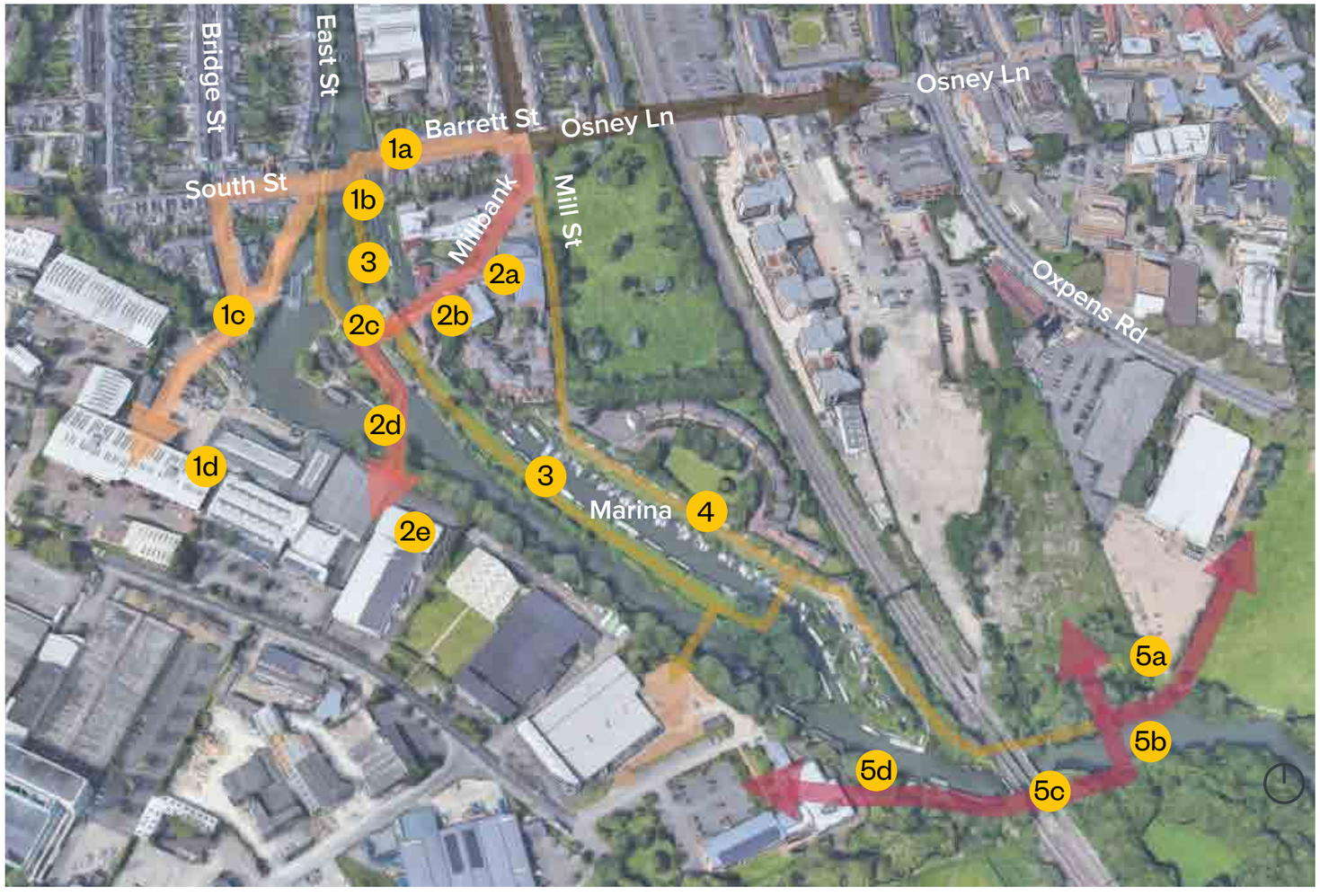
The aim is:

- To provide options for residents, workers and visitors who are travelling from the railway station, the city centre and Oxpens into the Osney Mead Regeneration site. Ambitions to connect Oxpens and Osney Mead are echoed in the OCCAP (2021).
- Constrained local streets such as Bridge and East Street aren't flooded with increased footfall which hinders the character and already constrained streets
- Promoting 15-minute neighbourhood principles enhancing liveability and sustainability.

Movement across and within areas of the River Thames can be thought of within several routes

- Route 1: Along Barrett Street crossing the two channels of the River Thames to South Street and then through Bridge Street and across the existing bridge into the redeveloped EA depot site
- Route 2: Along Mill Street and Millbank and into Osney Mead marina - across an improved connection over Osney Lock and across the existing footbridge.
- Route 3: Along the central green space around Osney Lock and the marina
- Route 4: the northern side of the River Thames
- Route 5: Connecting Oxpens and Osney Mead.

As well as providing new walking and cycling routes in the West End, these new routes could also serve micromobility in the area. The routes could also help to activate the river frontage, bringing more people into the area.



Ensuring that the urban environment is permeable with good and direct connections within and across the wider network is supported by Local Plan 2036 - Policy M1. The importance of providing continuous pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the City is also highlighted by this policy. Local Plan 2036 - Policy AO1 regarding the West End and Osney Mean note that there is potential to better integrate the area with the city centre.

The provision of improved connections from Osney Mead and the West End area towards the city centre is therefore a key aspect of the Movement Strategy, in order for the area to 'reflect Oxford's internal reputation and live up to its potential' (Local Plan Policy AO1).



A drawbridge could be a destination in itself and provide connectivity with the allowance for boat traffic

1 Route 1: From Barrett Street to the redeveloped EA depot on Osney Mead regeneration site

This route will require a number of interventions, including:

1A: Land ownership and spatial issues at the Barrett Street side of the river would need to be explored in order to provide a suitable area for a bridge landing point

1B: A bridge or two bridges will need to be provided here. With constrained space for ramps or lifts, these could be swing, draw or rolling bridges which utilise the central green space as a midpoint. A landing point will need to land on south street and integrate with the existing Thames tow-path. There is opportunity to link in with an additional walking route which links down the central green space to Osney Lock (ref.3 of adjacent aerial image).

1C: Currently the Environment Agency Depot has two parallel bridges that connect Bridge Street with the depot. There is opportunity to open these up to the public as a key walking and cycling route; and emergency access for vehicles - especially important in times of flooding.

1D: A new public square could provide the landing point for this newly opened up EA bridge and be a vibrant heart of Osney Mead - with a rich mix of uses facing onto it. This would require the EA depot to relocate to another suitable location within the Osney Mead regeneration area.



A key public space which is activated with a rich mix of uses signifies the heart of Osney Mead regeneration site



A rolling bridge provides a connection opportunity in a constrained space

MOVEMENT AND CONNECTIVITY ACROSS THE RIVER THAMES

Spatial Framework Strategies

2 Route 2: From Mill Street to Osney Mead regeneration site via Osney Lock

This route will require a number of interventions, including:

2A: the opening up of the Osney Mill area - transforming the existing car park into a new public square with marina uses, heritage assets, the college building and residential fronting onto it.



Opportunity to integrate the remnants of the 15th Century Osney Abbey into the public realm

2B: Currently there is a private connection from Osney Lock to Osney Mill area - to make this route work there is a requirement to open this up to the public.

2C: Currently, Osney Lock provides a small pedestrian crossing when the lock is closed. This is currently private. For this route to work a more major, publicly accessible connection is needed.



A more significant connection is needed across Osney Lock

2D: This existing bridge provides a crucial connection from Osney Island into Osney Mead regeneration site. There is opportunity to improve the width of this bridge to accommodate increased footfall.



The existing bridge connecting Osney Island with Osney Mead regeneration site could be improved



Opportunity for a café or other active use to be at the landing point for the existing bridge

2E: With the redevelopment of Osney Mead regeneration site, the bridge needs to land in a good quality piece of public realm which is activated.

3 Route 3: Along the central green space

This route links the two east-west connections and seeks to be a green space where people can dwell, socialise and play. It would also be framed by the Grade II listed Osney Mill Cottage and the marina.

Opening up this route aims to provide more activity along the river - encouraging water-sports; an increase houseboat community; and a sunny spot where residents and workers can sit and have lunch.

It would also offer alternative routes into Osney Mead regeneration site, greater connecting the West End.

This would require cooperation with the Osney Mill Cottage and the Marina.



Opportunity for central green space to be a space where locals and visits can dwell in the sun

4 Route 4: Connecting Mill Street with Oxpens

With the redevelopment of Gibbs Crescent and a new activity node emerging at Oxpens, the northern side of the River Thames will see an increased amount of footfall in the future. This link will be critical for local residents, users of the marina and local workers in navigating the West End.

5 Route 5: Connecting Oxpens to Osney Mead

The link connecting Osney Mead to Oxpens and further to Westgate Shopping Centre to the east and direction legible route to the Station and Frideswide Square to the north, is one that is critical to the connectivity of the West End.

5A: Its landing point onto Oxpens will need to be carefully designed and the bridge must land onto a good quality piece of public realm which both directs pedestrians and cyclists into the heart of Oxpens and into Oxpens Meadows and connects into the Westgate Shopping Centre and Castle Mill Stream.

5B: Oxpens bridge needs to be significant in size and design quality and it will need to accommodate a high footfall of pedestrians and cyclists safely. It's landing point into Grandpont Nature Park is particularly important. This new gateway into the park must navigate users into the park and southwards onto the National Cycleway 5; and westwards under the railway underpass into Osney Mead regeneration site.

5C: The highly constrained railway underpass will need to be carefully considered and a design developed which activates it through interventions such as a café; public art; play; seating; or waterfront activity.



Canal and barges used as performance space or commercial units can activate previously underused space

5D: A public square and gateway building will need to act as a point of reference to welcome people into the site. This location will be a key convergence between Osney Mead regeneration site; Oxpens; sports and recreation on the green belt; Grandpont Nature Park and activity on the river.

MOVEMENT AND CONNECTIVITY ACROSS THE RIVER THAMES

Spatial Framework Strategies

The potential bridge options set out on the previous pages require a collaborative approach between Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and local developers if they are to be delivered. Further technical work, viability and deliverability considerations would need to be undertaken carefully considered by key stakeholders - to ascertain scope and types of bridge connections which might be possible to deliver here.

Meridian Water Masterplan



Location: Enfield, London

New bridges provided as part of the Meridian Water Masterplan will help to link areas that are severed by the River Lea Navigation and enable the delivery of a large-scale residential-led masterplan.

The provision of new bridges to improve east-west connectivity in the area is supported in Local Plan policy terms and is fundamental to better linking Osney Mead with Oxford city centre and promoting the concept of 15-minute neighbourhoods.

The Gateshead Millennium Bridge



Location: Newcastle-upon-Tyne

The Gateshead Millennium Bridge provides an innovative tilting design. As well as being a landmark in the area, it provides a vital link for commuters travelling between the north and south of the River Tyne.

As well as improving connectivity, new bridges can also have high-quality, innovative designs thereby act as landmarks or focal points, provide views over Oxford's historic city centre, and help activate areas of the river. An example of a bridge which perform this function in other locations is provided above.

123

SCENARIO OPTIONS FOR THE MOVEMENT STRATEGY

Spatial Framework Strategies

Once viability and deliverability considerations have been analysed in detail, it may not be possible to deliver all routes. Here we explore different scenarios for deliverability.

Scenario 1: All routes delivered

Delivering all of these connections will be key to creating a vibrant, mixed use community which accommodates a diverse residential and innovation led employment community; and provides a destination for culture, arts and leisure.

This scenario provides ten points of access to the Osney Mead regeneration site - this includes:

- Five routes towards the city centre and station - each of different character and prioritisation of a mode of transportation
- Two routes towards Botley Retail Park - essential for future-proofing the area with this site up for redevelopment
- Three routes into the green belt - this allows for the opportunity of opening up the green belt for recreational uses and to connect in with North Hinksey.



Urban gateways
Green gateways
Primary Routes
Secondary and tertiary routes

There are a number of pros and cons to this scenario:

- A multitude of different connections which prioritise pedestrians and cyclists provide a web of routes - allowing for key connections from Osney Mead regeneration site to:
  - Railway station
  - Oxpens
  - Westgate shopping centre
  - City centre
  - North Hinksey
  - Botley retail park
- Promotion of a network of connections which promotes low carbon lifestyles, a strong sustainability agenda and car-free development
- Allowance for key access and egress points in times of flooding
- The redevelopment and relocation of the EA depot allows a new heart with a strong relationship to Osney Lock to be established
- It relieves future footfall pressure on the streets within the Osney Town Conservation Area - most significantly Bridge and East Street
- A new public square is Osney Mill's which celebrates the history of the site and is a place to walk through and dwell
- It utilises the central green space within the River Thames for leisure
- Land ownership and spatial issues at the Barrett Street side of the river would need to be explored in order to provide a suitable area for a bridge landing point
- Some streets may experience localised increases in footfall at certain times of the day
- Local businesses - stakeholders located at Osney Mill may need to reconfigure parking/public realm
- Environment Agency would need to relocate or provide a good quality access point

Scenario 2: Some routes delivered

If a viability and deliverability assessment shows that scenario 1 is not possible - it may be that not all routes are delivered. Despite it providing a less permeable web of routes, it is important that those delivered are designed and implemented to a high standard. This is essential to deal with the demands of high footfall and the need for high quality public realm within the Osney Mead regeneration site.

In this scenario, the first scenario's five routes towards the city centre and station are reduced to three routes. This scenario excludes 1) the route which requires the bridge connection from Barrett Street to South Street, and the opening up of the EA depot access point; and 2) the bridge connections linking onto the central green space and marina.



Urban gateways
Green gateways
Primary Routes
Secondary and tertiary routes

There are a number of pros and cons to this scenario:

- ✓ An improvement in east-west connectivity
- ✓ It slightly relieves future footfall pressure on the streets within the Osney Town Conservation Area - most significantly Bridge and East Street
- ✓ Would provide less disruption for residents in the short term and may be easier to deliver
- ✓ A new public square is Osney Mills which celebrates the history of the site and is a place to walk through and dwell.
- ✗ Retained lack of connectivity for existing residents living in Osney Island to Osney Mead regeneration site
- ✗ The Osney Lock connection relies on the existing bridge between Osney Island and Osney Mead regeneration site for a large proportion of its footfall. This bridge is approximately 1.5m-wide which does not provide sufficient width for pedestrians and cyclists to pass, and may struggle to accommodate future increases in footfall
- ✗ Excluding the opening up of the EA depot bridge for public access (even emergency only for vehicles) limits the access/egress from the site in a time of flooding
- ✗ Loss of opportunity to utilise the central green space and marina as good quality green space
- ✗ Puts footfall pressure on constrained and characterful Osney lock and island

Scenario 3: Limited routes delivered

If the deliverability of Osney Lock connections; the opening up of the EA depot connection and link from Barrett to South Street; and the link to the marina is not able to be delivered, the ability to improve connectivity is limited. And connections from the West End to the city centre will need to rely on the connection under the railway line and the new Oxpens bridge; and the existing Ferry Hinksey Road.

There would be opportunity to improve the public realm of these connections through changing street design and activating the routes with gateway uses. However, this scenario doesn't provide the level of connectivity needed to realise the vision and undermines the West End's future as an Innovation District.



There are a number of pros and cons to this scenario:

- ✓ Opportunity to improve existing connection to Botley Road and Oxpens Meadows
- ✓ Easiest to deliver in terms of cost and time
- ✗ Limited improvement in connectivity within the West End
- ✗ Lack of new routes to take increased footfall off existing streets which will be detrimental to character and usage of the streets; and may be a concern to local residents - in particular East and Bridge Street
- ✗ Lack of connections significantly limits the access/egress from the site in a time of flooding
- ✗ Loss of opportunity to utilise the central green space and marina as good quality green space
- ✗ Heavy reliance on the underpass under the railway and narrow bridge across Bulstake Stream which is highly constrained in terms of space and does not provide an attractive sense of arrival.

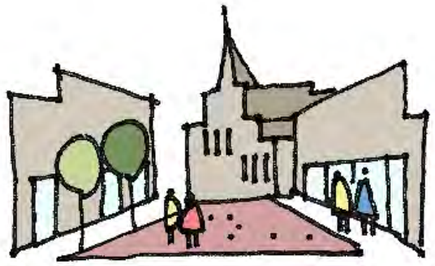
Summary

In order to achieve this, a collaborative approach is required between Oxford City Council, Country Council and Highways, with landowner involvement; lots of technical work needs to be undertaken and key negotiations with appropriate stakeholders. However, provision of new connections supports policy objectives and has several benefits.

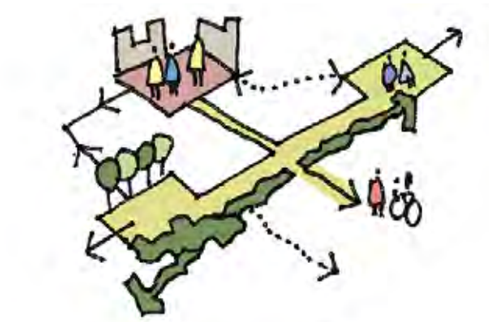
PUBLIC REALM

Spatial Framework Strategies

Public streets and spaces are central to how we live - to how we create connections; stay active; move through the city and bring joy to our lives. The following principles are characteristics that need to be embedded in all public spaces.

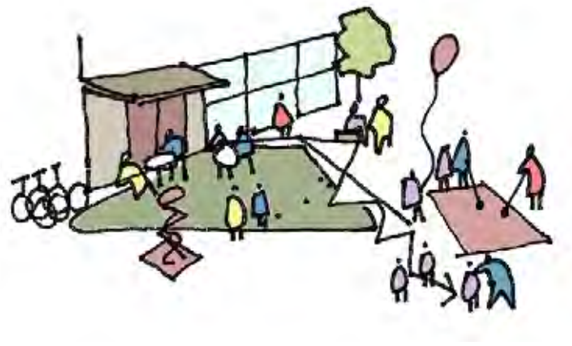


CHARACTERFUL



CONNECTED

ENJOYABLE

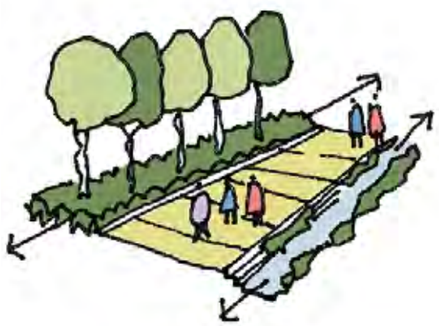


HIGH QUALITY STREETS AND PUBLIC SPACES

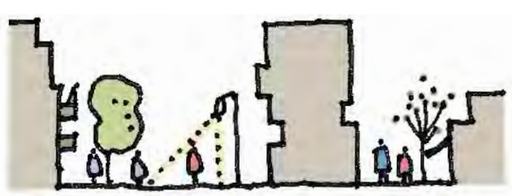


FLEXIBLE

RESILIENT



COMFORTABLE



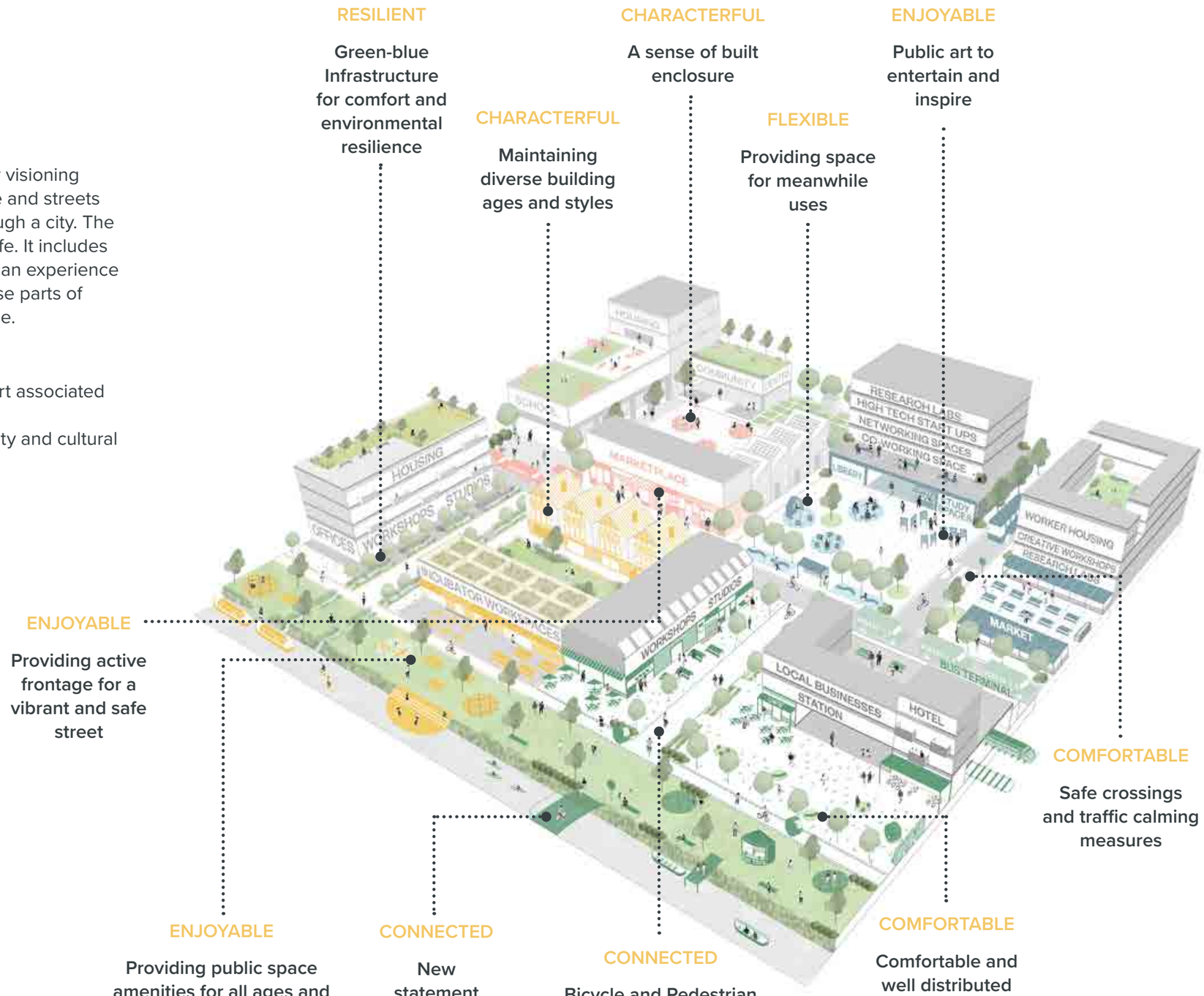
PUBLIC REALM

Spatial Framework Strategies

Ensuring that these principles underpin the four visioning themes is important. The quality of public space and streets is pivotal to how we experience and move through a city. The public realm provides a setting for community life. It includes all parts of the urban environment that people can experience or access - public space and buildings, and those parts of private development that impact on public space.

A high quality public realm can:

- Increase the use of public space and support associated local businesses and mixed use living
- Encourage greater participation in community and cultural activities
- Enhance personal safety.



PUBLIC REALM

Spatial Framework Strategies

Characterful



Urban character is made up of the distinctive features of a community and place which make it recognisable from others. These features are made up of those found in the built environment (buildings, streets, public spaces) as well as the experiences, activities and routines of its users. A characterful place is more than a collection of pleasing buildings but a place whose identity is constantly expressed through how its users use its public spaces. Characterful places are places of living heritage (both listed and unlisted) in which the past and present are woven together in active daily use. The West End's setting, natural resources, and active community is in some cases overshadowed by weaknesses in its urban character has a great deal of potential when considering interventions.

- Maintaining diverse building styles, materials, and functions
- Keeping building proportions in line with the human scale
- Maintaining built enclosure when appropriate
- Allowing the integration of the cultural and artistic expressions of residents into urban design
- Recognising minor heritage and cultural assets important to the make up of a town, for example elevating and finding appropriate uses for buildings on local heritage lists
- Promotion of independent businesses providing locally sourced retail
- Identifying and maintaining scenic sight lines around new development
- An active heritage management strategy which equally protects heritage while allowing it to be an active part of modern urban life
- Introducing new urban landmarks to complement existing ones
- Design advice for shopfronts to protect quality and character (OCCAP, 2021, p. 74-75).



Aabenraa city centre in Denmark is an example of how enclosure, building rhythm, and proportionate space builds upon a distinct sense of character



Bath's Union Street is characterful through its heritage buildings and the active use they continue to maintain



The Square of Traditional Crafts in Varaždin, Croatia, puts the community's craft and art at the forefront, as the public realm becomes a place of local culture



Birmingham's Canalside reflects how industrial heritage can be both symbolic of a place's history but simultaneously its future



Carnaby Street in London expresses its character through its diverse architecture and retail offerings

Enjoyable



Making a space enjoyable is key in shaping a successful space, beyond looking and feeling nice, a place ultimately must be fun. Parks, streets, and squares are hubs of recreation as they foster interaction and can support space for varied enjoyment including play, shopping, and the appreciation of art. Enjoyment is a broad spectrum that varies person to person. An enjoyable space also plays an important part in supporting local economies. Offering diverse recreation amenities would be a boost to the West End's businesses and its consumers.

- Spaces where public events of varying scales can be held
- Spaces for physical activity for all age groups
- Provision of services and supplies in suitable locations to support temporary uses
- Comfortable, multi-purpose urban furniture allowing engagement with the built environment in varying ways including desks, recliners, benches etc
- Well located and accessible public infrastructure such as toilets and baby changing stations
- Public art works that engage and inspire creativity in the public
- An enjoyable public realm should encourage social interaction
- Maintain a 24-hour economy throughout various amenities and spaces ensuring space is constantly active
- A wide range of public spaces varying in character, design, and function to create choice for locals and visitors alike
- Streets and spaces with active ground floor uses to create a welcoming and engaging atmosphere encouraging social interactions and movement between spaces
- Spaces protected from vehicle traffic and the associated noise and pollution
- Easy access to local amenities for all users through walkable streets and legible routes.



A Superblock in Barcelona which provides open ended recreation space



Rundle Mall in Adelaide is a pedestrian concourse with amenities easily accessible and active street frontages inviting interaction between building and street



The New Road in Brighton sustains a 24-hour economy providing lively entertainment at all times of day



A'Beckett Square in Melbourne offers diverse structured and non-structured recreation opportunities from sport to rest



Urban Street Furniture can provide important places for rest and relaxation in busy spaces

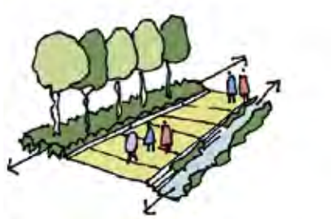


Public art in spaces can create activities of engagement for all age groups

PUBLIC REALM

Spatial Framework Strategies

Resilient



A resilient public realm will work to create a mutually beneficial relationship between cities, residents, and their natural environment. Just as natural organisms need to develop defence mechanisms to thrive, so do cities. A resilient city ensures the long term health of its residents and environment. Every city, under its layers of brick and concrete reveals an intricate biome of natural life that is in many cases under threat, the West End is no different. Floods for example, are a tangible threat to the West End's environment and call for built responses.

- Use of locally-sourced, high quality, materials to take part in the circular economy
- Imaginative approaches to green and blue infrastructure, these may include tree planting, rain gardens, SuDS, and rainwater harvesting
- Use local plant and tree species to provide green coverage
- Increasing biodiversity through wildlife habitats, living roofs
- Easily legible and well distributed emission monitoring stations to provide an accessible and more detailed reading of daily air quality
- Encouraging education and engagement with people on their natural environment to nurture sense of stewardship
- Creating a more natural interface between built and natural environments, for example, re-wilding of riverside
- Promoting greater use of canal and riversides to protect and minimise intrusion into fragile ecosystems
- Encouraging active travel such as walking and cycling to reduce carbon emissions and benefit personal health
- Climate management through tree planting to provide shade from heat and rain and reduce urban heat island effect
- Planting biodiverse meadows instead of less sustainable manicured grass.



Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, such as in Eddington, Cambridge, work to restore natural water cycles and create a circular economy



Hafencity in Hamburg integrates flood protection into its landscape design providing both a positive contribution to the public realm as well as environmental resilience



Green roofs, like the one seen here in London, naturally insulate buildings, reduce the urban heat island effect, and purify air



The Xuhui Runway Park in Shanghai restored biodiversity to a former industrial site to the benefit of residents and their environment

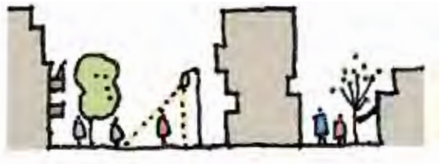


Urban rain gardens are built into the streets of Portland, USA, to counter flooding



Västra Hamnen, Malmö in Sweden created a greener canal interface in a former industrial area

Comfortable



Comfort is of great importance in the public realm as people will choose to spend time in a place in which they feel comfortable. Comfort is a concept that can be felt physically as well as psychologically which is why strategies around comfort are diverse and broad reaching. A comfortable place carries associations of safety from environmental threats, the ability to detach oneself from the bustle of urban life, senses of friendliness, and playfulness.

- Providing high quality public lighting to ensure safety and encourage night time activity (OCCAP, 2021, p. 92-93)
- Generous and regular safe road crossings
- Shared surfaces to provide a clear priority between pedestrians, cyclists, and cars
- Traffic calming measures to ensure safer streets while avoiding conflict including planting, street furniture, and surface treatments
- Active ground floor uses and building frontages to encourage use and provide safety
- Inclusive design that ensures equal access to people of all ages and abilities
- Prioritising the public transport and the needs of cyclists and pedestrians
- Reduction of unnecessary signs, posts, and advertisements causing street clutter; whilst ensuring legibility and wayfinding (OCCAP, 2021, p. 92-93)
- Shaded and sheltered areas for protection including integrated tree planting strategies
- Providing seating away from heat stress, heavy rainfall, noise and air pollution - to allow quiet relaxation.



A junction in Seattle, USA, which includes accessible level street paving and traffic calming measures



Superkilen in Copenhagen is an example of a public space which encourages interactivity through street furniture and landscaping



Dongshan South Square Park, Guangzhou, is an urban space that provides comfortable seating and natural shade



City Thread in Chattanooga, USA, is an example of a lighthearted approach to public art that passers-by interact with as they navigate space



The King's Cross Square Lighting Project uses illumination to provide wayfinding, a safer and accessible space at night



La Rambla in Barcelona is one of the most famous examples of a pedestrian street with active ground floor uses throughout encouraging a range of activities and providing safety

PUBLIC REALM

Spatial Framework Strategies

Flexible



Flexibility in the public realm opens it up and prepares it for spontaneous change, good and bad. Flexibility makes the built environment more dynamic and ultimately a more successful space as it can accommodate future change without significant redesign. Flexibility also protects spaces from long term structural or economic change, allowing changes of function to suit needs. Capability to capitalise on changing circumstances is greatly beneficial to the social and financial stability of a place. Flexibility at the day to day level is key in maintaining a space that is continuously engaging and interesting.

- Supporting Economic activity across the West End through interventions that will help stimulate investment and create employment
- Building a degree of cultural and economic self-sufficiency and reduce reliance on external sources
- Publicly accessible service points able to accommodate a wide range of performance related events such as markets and performances
- Street furniture that can be re-instated, removed, and re-purposed allowing residents to choose how they use their space
- Temporary and changing public art to enliven and refresh already familiar spaces

- Accommodating temporary uses and events without much disruption or additional cost
- Co-locate utilities in shared service areas to maximise public realm benefits
- Multi-functional spaces where future activities and opportunities can be planned
- Adaptability through all aspects of public space, built, social, and natural environments.



Railway arches in Deptford re-purposed into retail show how flexibility in the face of change can produce positive economic and social opportunities



Tandem Space in Madrid created multi-functional spaces in which the community manages and regulates energy usage



Blue House Yard in Haringey provides maker spaces and public space, and retail space to enliven the community's small business-led economy

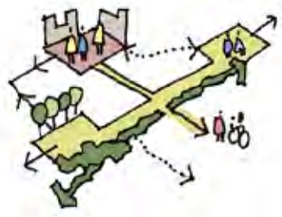


Knit the Bridge is a recurring community-led arts project that sees the community imprint its artistic expression on a public feature in a spontaneous way



Gillett Square in Dalston, London, is a multi-functional community driven space where the activity of its users defines its function, from pop-up shops to performances

Connected



A connected public realm is what makes any urban activity function. Without it, there would be little character, enjoyment, or comfort. Connection is more than getting from A to B, it involves how the individual reads and navigates through their environment and the relationship between a place and the outside world. More tangibly, the problems of poor street safety, lack of cycling infrastructure, illegible streets, and inefficient public transport negatively affect urban connectivity. While many spaces in the West End have these characteristics, capitalising on the area's key opportunities will bring its residents closer to each other and their community.

- Key roads in the West End, such as Botley Road and Oxpens Road, are busy and less than ideally suited for pedestrians and cyclists
- Using design and infrastructure measures to calm traffic at junctions to make them more pedestrian-friendly
- Legible routes with clear lines of sight and smart information points to assist in wayfinding
- A convenient place that encourages active transport, such as walking, cycling and public transport
- Accommodating digital connectivity and infrastructure in the public realm to help meet consumer demands for greater mobile connectivity and urban management
- Using design and infrastructure measures to calm traffic at busy streets, such as Botley Road or Oxpens Road to make them more pedestrian-friendly
- Imaginative new links provide a once in a generation opportunity to improve linkages across disconnected landscapes, such as at Barrett and South Street in Osney Mead
- Public transport stops located at convenient and appropriate locations
- Following pedestrian desire lines as much as possible and avoiding cumbersome diversions.



The Umea Station of Being in Sweden uses smart systems to alert passengers of approaching buses with sound and light



Traffic Calming dots in Melbourne are an imaginative yet effective way of regulating vehicle speed and ensuring calmer and safer streets



This protected Cycle lane in Queens, USA, creates a safe environment for efficient bicycle commuting



This Public Information Point in New York City feeds the user real time information on transit as well as a legible street map



The Luchtsingel pedestrian bridge in Rotterdam connects formerly disconnected areas through a bridge which is an architectural statement in itself



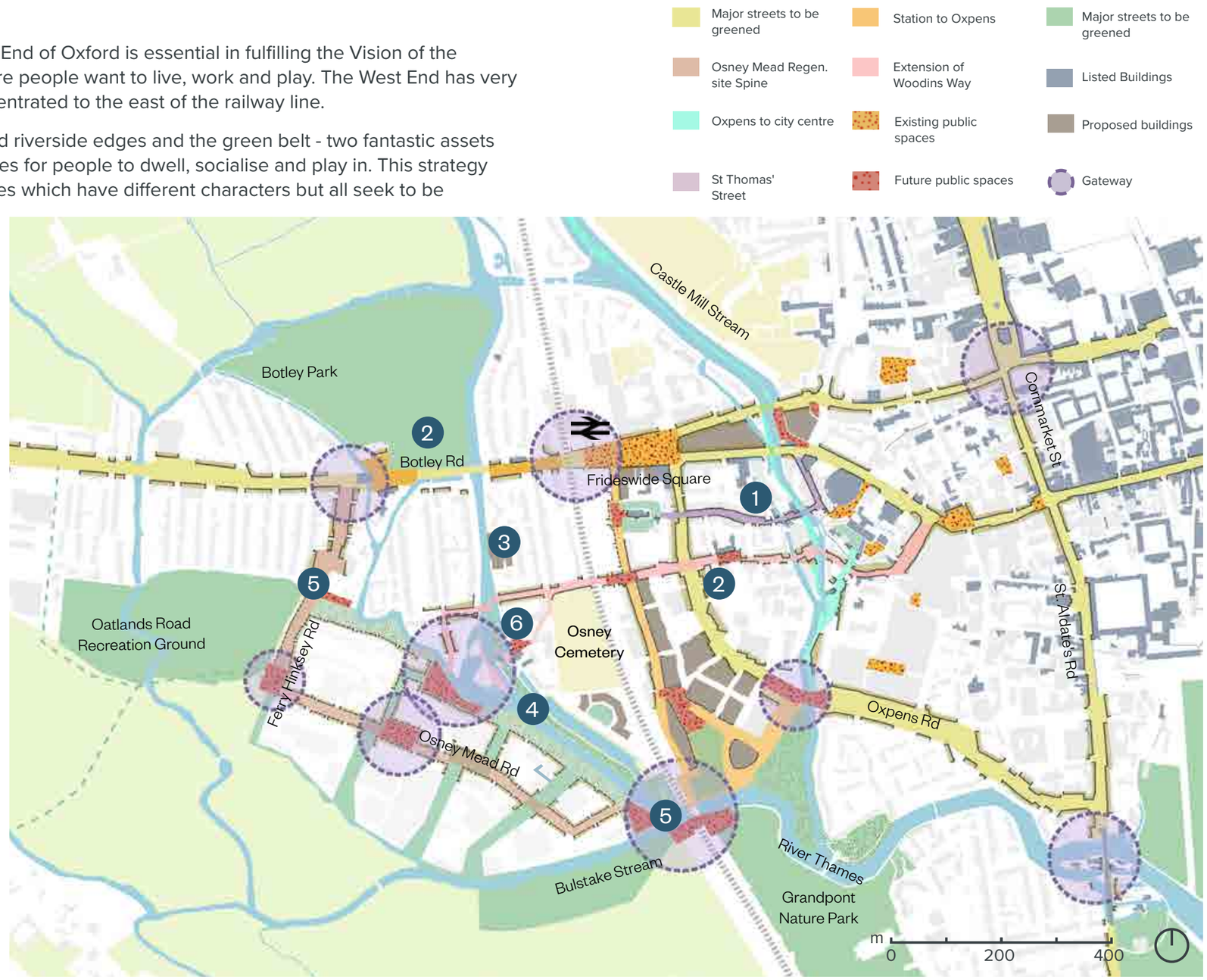
Bicycle Storage infrastructure makes everyday bicycle use more feasible and more secure

PUBLIC REALM

Spatial Framework Strategies

Looking holistically at the public realm within the West End of Oxford is essential in fulfilling the Vision of the Spatial Framework - one which is a liveable place where people want to live, work and play. The West End has very limited public spaces and all sizeable spaces are concentrated to the east of the railway line.

The west of the railway line is limited to the constrained riverside edges and the green belt - two fantastic assets but more needs to be done to create established spaces for people to dwell, socialise and play in. This strategy seeks to create a series of interconnected public spaces which have different characters but all seek to be enjoyable, resilient, comfortable and flexible.



1. Interconnected public spaces to anchor future development
2. Humanising and greening major streets which are vehicle dominated
3. Improving and creating east-west connections which provide a good quality pedestrian experience from Osney Mead regeneration site to Oxford city centre
4. Improving public realm around the watercourses to create a destination
5. Improvement of wayfinding through design with the creation of gateway spaces
6. Public Realm which celebrates heritage assets

1 Interconnected public spaces to anchor future development

With a significant amount of change happening within the West End, this provides an opportunity for a public realm and landscape led Spatial Framework which sets out the urban armature and allows development plots to work with it.

Existing public spaces are to be interconnected with new ones to create a set of public spaces which differ in character. Some to be at the heart of active uses of cafés, retail and leisure; others to be spaces defined by their innovative users; and some to have a more residential and community feel.

This strategy sets out a series of connected public spaces, each with their own purpose and response to the assets which currently or in the future will surround it. Encouraging cultural activity and street activities to help provide each space with their own feel and function; and is also outlined in Policy WE5 of the Area Action Plan (2008) shares.



Public space which provides seating, play, planting is essential for a health community



Surrounding a hard urban square, new and existing buildings are activated with non-residential uses and good quality public realm

2 Humanising and greening major streets which are vehicle dominated

In their current form, streets of Botley Road; Oxpens Road and St Aldate's are dominated by vehicles; lack human scale; and provide a poor pedestrian and cyclist experience.

Streets are to be greened; footpaths and cycle routes to be widened and improved; and new active frontages to be sensitively designed.

Existing improvements to various streets are already happening under the Connecting Oxfordshire project. Currently Botley Road is already undergoing existing improvements which include bus priority measures, major cycle improvements, improved pedestrian provision and road surface repairs.



Carriageway of Oxpens Road to be narrowed and planting and widened footpath to be incorporated

3 Improving and creating east-west connections which provide a good quality pedestrian experience from Osney Mead Regeneration site to Oxford city centre

With increased connections, this significantly improves the physical linkages of Osney Mead to Oxford city centre. The experience of pedestrians and cyclists on these links are an essential component of the Public Realm Strategy.

Improvements of Woodins Way and the western extension of this route across the River Thames and into the existing EA depot site.

PUBLIC REALM

Spatial Framework Strategies

Improvements from Osney Mead Regeneration site to Westgate shopping centre along the Oxpens Meadows and new bridge. This new route will be critical in connecting Osney Mead with the city centre and will connect up a series of key public spaces - Oxpens Meadows; Grandpont Nature Park; Oxpens new public square and the new improved river-front at Osney Mead regeneration site.

Both these connections present an opportunity to include a multitude of improvements:

- Public art interventions
- Tree planting
- Improved paving / surfacing
- Improved lighting
- New development which is able to provide a positive and active edge onto route
- Meanwhile uses - e.g markets, events.



Routes with distinct character and opportunities to host seasonal activities (e.g. markets)

Additionally, similar improvements should be made to the public realm by the northern section of Castle Mill Stream, located adjacent to Worcester car park. This would further the improvement of the station as a gateway, as it is part of the route between the station and city centre.

Public realm around the southern part of Castle Mill Stream has already been improved, incorporating lighting, seating and greening. This holistic development of activating the watercourses in the West End could significantly boost Oxford's riverside character and encourage more interaction with the riverside as well.



Pedestrian only routes that are green; have good lighting and development fronts onto them

4 Improving public realm around the watercourses to create a destination

Significant investment in the public realm adjacent to the River Thames is needed to improve the perception of safety and attractiveness of the Thames pathway.

Public realm to incorporate interventions aimed at mitigating flood risk; creating a safer route for pedestrians and cyclists; and interconnecting the new bridge connections.

This includes creating a significant open space which runs to the north-east of the Osney Mead Regeneration site - to include spaces to play, grow food, play sport, dwell and socialise. Designing spaces which are multi-use and flexible will be crucial.



Public realm which is flexible and incorporates both hard and green characters



A waterfront space with lots of seating and one which can be used flexibly

5 Improvement of wayfinding through design with the creation of gateway spaces

Gateway spaces will be crucial in making new development sites more prominent, attracting activity and people to the space. This could be in the form of public spaces with temporary uses, significant structures/buildings and elements of play and wayfinding.

This would be especially important in guiding people into Osney Mead, where it is currently difficult to access and needs improvement in legibility.



Celebrating the historic context and creating spaces of appropriate scale for suitable activities



Flexibility in the public realm to host meanwhile art, events and gatherings



Incorporating play into wayfinding elements, creating a distinct feature in the public realm

6 Public Realm which celebrates heritage assets

Historic buildings and structures which were designed for a different purpose could be refurbished and reused. Creative solutions and innovative spaces which celebrate these assets are essential and will form part of the public realm network within the West End.

The Osney Mill Marina is a private marina along the River Thames. Routes along and across this setting into Osney Mead could be carefully designed with good lighting, linkages and spaces to pause for views across the river and towards the Mill.

LIST OF PUBLIC REALM AND INFRASTRUCTURE INTERVENTIONS

Spatial Framework Strategies

The above strategy looks at how principles for public realm and movement are applied at an Oxford West End scale. Here some consideration is given to particular interventions which are important in realising the wider vision and connectivity aspects of the Spatial Framework.

These are separated into:

- Routes
- Exceptional public spaces
- Key junctions.

Detailed design and technical work will need to be undertaken to understand the complexities of each intervention; and how different stakeholders can work together to prepare detailed designs, organise funding for short, medium and longer term projects and implement these interventions.



ROUTES

REF	LOCATION	INTERVENTIONS	POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT
1	Botley Road	Segregated cycle route Improved settings of bus stops Improved pedestrian crossings (at Ferry Hinksey Road and Mill Street-Cripley Street) and widening footpaths Improvements to the pedestrian/cycle connection under the railway line Tree Planting - Continuing tree lined character of the western approach of Botley Road	Existing improvements are being made to provide better bus, cycle and pedestrian movement Phase 2 of the station improves connection under the railway line - further improvements may be needed
2	Oxpens Road/ Hollybush Row/ Thames Street	Trees, SuDS and planting from Frideswide Square to Castle Mill Stream Narrowing vehicular carriageways Provision of improved cycle lane Proposals coming forward on Oxpens, College site to provide active ground floor uses/positive active ground floor uses/positive frontage Improved pedestrian crossings and central reservation (connecting Oxpens/Castle Mill stream; crossing of Osney Lane; crossing of St Thomas' Street) and widening footpaths	Masterplan for Oxpens is being developed which includes improvements to Oxpens Road Street identified as important in the OCCAP as an enabler to deliver the mixed use innovation district sustaining 12,400 new jobs by 2040 and be a key crossing point into the West End for Oxpens and Osney Mead developments (OCCAP 2021, p.132)
3	Hythe Bridge Street	Narrowing vehicular carriageways Segregated cycle route Proposals coming forward on Nuffield and Beaver House to provide positive/active frontage Introduce tree planting Creation of a safe pedestrian crossings into Nuffield's new public square Widening of footpaths	Masterplan for the Nuffield sites is being developed which includes improvements on both Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street. Ambitions for Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street to build upon pedestrian and cyclist improvements at Frideswide Square and to create new pedestrian and cycle links making up new key routes from Oxford Rail Station (OCCAP 2021, p.130-131)
4	Park End Street/ New Road	Improved cycleway Widening of footpaths Proposals coming forward on Nuffield site to provide positive/active frontage Introduce tree planting Improved settings of bus stops	
5	Becket Street	Street to celebrate and be sensitive to St Thomas Church and its setting Retain and celebrate street trees Proposals coming forward on car park site to provide positive/active frontage Widening of footpaths and improved pedestrian crossings Narrowing vehicular carriageways Consideration of relationship with Osney Lane railway bridge	
6	Woodins Way/ Osney Lane and the western extension	Opportunity for public art interventions Opportunity for planting depending on scale of area Improved lighting Opportunity for regular events, such as markets Proposals coming forward to provide positive/active frontage Improved paving	
7	Ferry Hinksey Road	Improvements in pedestrian crossings at junction with Botley Road Improved signage of street at Botley Road Consideration of the street's relationship with flood defence (OFAS) Improved paving Tree Planting Improvements in street's relationship with West Oxford Primary School	Masterplan for Osney Mead regeneration site to include improvements to Ferry Hinksey Road as a key access route into the site
8	Mill Street into Osney Lock	Opening up of Osney Mill and Osney Lock to public as a welcoming route Signage required to improve wayfinding Tree planting Car parking in Osney Mill area to be rationalised and minimised	
9	Osney Mead Road	Trees, SuDS and planting which integrates with strategic blue infrastructure Improved cycleway and widening of footpaths Existing trees to be retained Proposals coming forward on Osney Mead Regen. site to provide positive/active frontage	Masterplan for Osney Mead regeneration site to include design improvements for Osney Mead Road
10	Bulstake Stream Road	A new low grade street which is only for residents with accessibility needs, local businesses, deliveries and taxis Better relationship with Bulstake Stream Opportunity for food growing and play on the way Proposals on Osney Mead regeneration. site provide opportunity to re-shape threshold with a positive interface along green belt edge	Masterplan for Osney Mead regeneration site to include technical survey, design and implementation strategy for this route
11	Green belt routes	Works to ensure footpaths are safe and accessible and clear of fallen trees Bridge improvements and new bridges Connections from existing network into new network at Osney Mead/Oxpens	Improvements to Willow walk and committed replacement bridge OFAS maintenance track
12	Towpaths and their links	Works to ensure footpaths are safe and accessible and clear of fallen trees Bridge improvements and new bridges Character of towpath will be informed by surrounding context Creating connections into new network created by proposals	Improvements to tow-path from Hythe Bridge Street to Iffley Lock Gasworks and Pipe bridges are to be improved (scoping work has already been undertaken)
13	City College site	Proposals for this site must improve pedestrian and cyclist connections from Osney Mead/Oxpens to the city centre Proposals must link into to existing east-west connections - Woodins Way and Castle Mill Stream Proposals must provide a positive and active frontage to Oxpens Road	

EXCEPTIONAL PUBLIC SPACES

REF	LOCATION	INTERVENTIONS	POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT
1	Frideswide Square	Proposals of Nuffield College Sites to respond to scale of square Improved pedestrian crossings which are legible Rationalisation of bus movement through square Mature tree planting which responds to scale of square SuDS which integrate with strategic green-blue infrastructure Implementation of a way-finding strategy	
2	St Thomas Church Becket St Square	Creation of a square which frames the entrance to St Thomas' Church Retention of mature trees Improvements in the fencing of Street Thomas Church's setting Proposals on Becket St (by the Nuffield College Sites masterplan) to frame new public square Sensitive design which promotes walking and cycling and minimises vehicular usage - important to mitigate this as a congested route to Oxpens development site	Proposals coming forward for Becket Street car park as part of the masterplan for Oxford station
3	Oxpens Meadows	Safer pedestrian crossing across Oxpens Road from Castle Mill Stream to Oxpens Meadow Routes through the meadows to link into the new Oxpens bridge Proposals at Oxpens to provide a positive and active frontage to the green space Promotion of active space on Oxpens Meadows - sports, recreation and play Opportunity for the green space to have a better relationship with adjacent Castle Mill Stream	Masterplan for Oxpens is being developed which includes impact and interface of proposed buildings with Oxpens Meadow and a new public space design (Oxpens Heart)
4	Oxpens Heart	Creation of a new public square at the heart of Oxpens masterplan Ground floor uses that are active, inclusive and interactive Interventions of an outside amphitheatre; water and water gardens Focal points of height and interest to help way-finding and legibility Proposals to work in line with proposed Oxpens Bridge Sensitivity to preserve the heritage and community value of Oxpens Meadows and waterfront	
5	Oxpens bridge southern landing point	Public realm improvements at the north of Grandpont Park to facilitate landing of Oxpens bridge Public realm improvements to railway underpass to lead to key gateway of Osney Mead Regen. site. Good cycle infrastructure to connect to National Cycle Route 5	Placemaking principles and spatial strategy objectives set out in this Spatial Framework to help inform public space design
6	West Oxford Community School Square	Creation of a gateway space to Osney Mead Regen. site which incorporates school, possible residential uses and other community uses Linking into new riverside edge and existing bridge to Swan Street Good quality public realm which provides a sense of arrival into the site	
140	Osney Mead Regen. Site Community Heart	EA depot bridge to be publicly accessible (negotiations with EA authorities needed to understand their access requirements - possible relocation of the depot site along River Thames) Proposals on Osney Mead to provide a positive and active frontage Flexibility within public space Tree, SuDS and planting which integrates with strategic green-blue infrastructure Opportunities for food growing, play, recreation, entertainment space and exhibitions	
9	Osney Mead Regen. Site Working Heart	Flexible space which can be used by surrounding employment uses - outside exhibitions; conferences Proposals on Osney Mead to provide mixed use buildings which activate the space Trees, SuDS and planting which integrates with strategic green-blue infrastructure	
11	Osney Lock and surrounding green	Opening up of Osney Lock and central green island as additional natural amenity space for local communities Celebration of heritage assets Opportunity for food growing and community / education and learning projects Encourage biodiversity through planting New openable bridges to create a number of links and easier access through this island site	
8	Osney Mead Regen. Site Riverfront	Vegetation of good value to be retained and incorporated public realm Improved biodiversity Well integrated pedestrian and cycle links Opportunities for food growing, play, recreation and exhibitions Proposals on Osney Mead to provide a positive and active frontage	Discussing design aspirations and redevelopment proposals with the Environmental Agency (who manages the River Thames) will be beneficial. Included in Policy SP1 (Local Plan 2036)
10	Osney Mill Square	Celebration of heritage of Osney Abbey Tree planting Re-configuration of surrounding uses to activate square Improved lighting Car parking in Osney Mill area to be rationalised and minimised	
12	Osney Lane Square	A space which links people between the railway station, Osney Mead, Oxpens and city centre Incorporation of square design with railway bridge	Emerging masterplan at Oxpens and at Becket Street car park (Oxford Station masterplan) to inform square design

	REF	LOCATION	INTERVENTIONS			POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT
JUNCTIONS	1	Botley Road/ Ferry Hinksey Road	Improvements in pedestrian crossings	Improved signage to improve legibility	Proposal at Osney Mead Regen. site to provide view of landmark or a gateway building	
	2	Eastern Frideswide Square	Vehicular movement between Hythe Bridge Street; Rewley Road; Park End Street; Hollybush Row to be rationalised	Improvements in pedestrian crossings	Proposals coming forward on Nuffield College Sites to provide positive and active frontage; and an urban form/ mass which is sensitive and responds to the scale of the square	Masterplan for the Nuffield sites is being developed which looks at improving junctions
	3	Hythe Bridge Street / Worcester Street / George Street	Rationalisation of how vehicles, cycles and pedestrians use junction	Proposals for a new active public square at Nuffield College Sites on Junction to help pedestrian and cycle movement	Sensitive design to historic wall and view of Nuffield College	
	4	Oxpens Meadows/ Oxpens Road	Improvements in public realm which link Oxpens Meadows to existing crossing	Improvements to space surrounding the ice rink to provide active interface to space that leads to public square in Oxpens	Improved signage and wayfinding for measures to guide pedestrians and cyclists through and beyond the site and onto Oxpens bridge	Masterplan for the Oxpens site is being developed which looks at improving junction
	5	Speedwell Street / Thames Street	Rationalisation of how vehicles, cycles and pedestrians use junction	Opportunity to improve Cycle Route 5 and it's relationship with the junction		
	6	Thames Steet / St Aldate's	Rationalisation of how vehicles, cycles and pedestrians use junction	Improved signage and wayfing measures to guide flows towards Oxford Centre and the West End		The OCCAP (2021 p. 118-119) identifies this junction as a major gateway into the city centre and highlights the need to review its scale, public realm and the potential for Speedwell Street to be a strategic bus and coach hub

SUMMARY OF KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES

Core Strategies

Key delivery priorities have been identified for the three Core Strategies. To ensure successful and comprehensive development which will be delivered over a long period of time, these key delivery priorities are essential to help unlock sites and projects within the West End.

Green and Blue Landscape Strategy

1. Establishing the green and blue network on Osney Mead

Establishing the green and blue network on Osney Mead is a key infrastructural priority which aims to introduce significant green and blue elements to Osney Mead's existing routes. This will need to precede comprehensive redevelopment and offer both immediate environmental and flood defence benefits and long term benefits in opening the site up for potential redevelopment.

Green and blue infrastructure must consider being highly effective in flood mitigation, promoting and protecting ecology and providing amenity space for communities using the site. Designs must consider work on the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) and ongoing works to surrounding watercourses.

2. Opening up the Thames riverside and Osney Lock

Opening up the Thames riverside must have an integrated approach with the green and blue network of Osney Mead. There is opportunity for the Thames Riverside to be a key place of activity, biodiversity, flood mitigation, leisure and play. Works here must respond to changing character of the River Thames from the Thames at St Ebbs to the north at Osney; and the character of nearby Castle Mill Stream.

Discussions with stakeholders such as the Environmental Agency, Osney Lock Hydro and residents will needed to open up Osney Lock.

3. Urban greening along major routes

Oxpens Road, Ferry Hinksey Road and Botley Road significantly needed greening and movement rationalising. These streets and development sites off them will need to contribute positively to creating streets which prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement, foster biodiversity and activate the street frontage.

Movement Strategy

1. **Railway station gateway**

The station gateway is the highest priority project for the Movement Strategy as its development holds implications throughout all of the West End's transport network; and strengthens it's importance as a regional transport hub.

It will be critical to address current deficiencies that the existing station provides. This includes poor east-west connectivity along Botley Road and wider networks; a poor sense of arrival; and a confused and an environment that doesn't prioritise pedestrians or cyclists. An improved gateway and linkages is critical. Connectivity and gateway of the station need to be carefully considered on the eastern and western side of the station. This will be especially significant to sites such as Osney Mead, Oxpens and Nuffield.

2. **Oxpens bridge**

The Oxpens bridge is a key piece of movement infrastructure that will facilitate the development of a world class innovation district in both Osney Mead and Oxpens. This connection will work to connect these new developments to each other and to the city as a whole and bring value to the area around Grandpont Nature park. Consideration of how and where the bridge lands on both sides will need to be carefully considered.

3. **Opening up of the EA depot and lock**

Osney Lock and the Thames riverside are great assets that are currently under utilised as movement routes. A significant connection between Osney Town and Osney Mead may be facilitated through the opening up of the EA depot to the public for walking and cycling. This will allow greater permeability into the Osney Mead site and better public access to the riverside. An emergency only vehicular access also could be considered.

4. **Oxpens Road**

While Oxpens Road is already a key transport link in the city, its improvement, especially for pedestrians and cyclists will be a critical goal. Oxpens road must be thought of holistically, from Frideswide Square to St Aldate's and options regarding tree planting, cycle infrastructure, a central reservation, safe crossings, frontages and swales must be considered.

Public Realm and Infrastructure strategy

1. **Station gateway**

The station gateway aims to deliver a new and improved arrival into Oxford and signifies the West End. This project is set at the highest priority because of its aforementioned prominence as a transport gateway. A holistic vision will be needed for the station which include public realm improvements to all surrounding streets and spaces.

2. **Oxpens Road**

Establishing a network of public space building off of the improvements to the station is similarly a significant infrastructure priority. This will allow the development of a consistent public realm experience from the station to the new developments at Oxpens and Osney Mead. Public realm connecting Oxpens and the adjacent Meadows to Westgate is also particularly important.

3. **Becket Street link**

Improvement to Becket Street will greatly improve the pedestrian experience from the station to Oxpens and Osney Mead. Last mile solutions to show how a fully integrated approach to sustainable travel can be achieved. Opportunities for improved accessibility & bus layovers should be fully explored. St Thomas the Martyr Church and it's setting will need to be sensitively considered.

4. **South Frideswide Sq and Castle Mill stream**

Public realm improvements along Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street will be critical in unlocking the island site. Improvements to public realm also need to consider the station gateway and strategic route into the city centre.

5. **Opening up the riverside**

Opening up the riverfront offers great potential to make the most of the West End's natural resources to create high quality public space. This involves opening up Oxpens meadow up to where the EA depot site. This will require significant stakeholder cooperation, therefore its application may be on the longer term.

6. **Osney Mead riverside square**

A new riverside square in Osney Mead will be integral to unlocking the site. Meanwhile uses during early phases of development may be used to activate the public realm and foster community support. Such inventive strategies can aid delivery.

INDICATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS FOR KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES

Strat	Key Priority	Detail of Priority	Indicative Infrastructure Cost (Investment Prospectus & Volterra report (2022)	
Green and Blue Infrastructure	**1. Establishing a green and blue network on Osney Mead**	• New green and blue elements introduced to Osney Mead's existing routes will need to precede comprehensive development and will work to unlock the site for development • Green and blue infrastructure effective for flood mitigation, promoting biodiversity and amenity space • Designs must consider works from the Oxford Flood Alleviation scheme (OFAS) and ongoing works to watercourses	• Osney Mead and Thames improved cycle paths - £4.9m – delivery 2021–23	
	2. Opening up the Thames riverside and Osney Lock	• Opportunity for the Thames riverside to be a key place of activity, biodiversity, flood mitigation, leisure and play • Works must respond to the different characters present on the River Thames and the nearby Castle Mill Stream		
	3. Urban greening along major routes	• Greening and rationalising of movement on key roads such as Oxpens, Ferry Hinksey and Botley Road • Ensuring streets and surrounding development sites contribute positively to active travel, biodiversity and active street frontages		
Movement	**4. Railway station gateway**	• Strengthening Oxford Railway station as a local and regional transport hub through public realm and infrastructure improvements • Improving east-west connectivity to sites such as Osney Mead and Oxpens through pedestrian and cyclist prioritisation • Creating a new sense of arrival at the station	• Oxford Station West side improvements - £80–160m • Oxford Station East side improvements - £350-550m • Connecting Oxford - £60-100m– new and improved bus services and associated bus and cycle infrastructure	• Becket St to Oxford railway station Rd pedestrian / cycle bridge - £10m-16m – delivery by 2028 • Cowley branch line reopening - £50–150m – required by 2028
	5. Oxpens bridge	• Creating an important new connection between the developments at Osney Mead and Oxpens • Improving access and improving value to the area around Grandpont Nature park, Thames riverside and the green belt	• Osney Mead to Oxpens pedestrian and cycle bridge - £6m – delivery in 2023	
	6. Opening up the EA depot & Osney Lock	• Improving public access to the River Thames • Opening up key route through the EA depot connecting Osney Town and Osney Mead and introducing new permeability between the two banks of the river	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals	
	7. Oxpens Road	• Interventions could include tree planting, cycle infrastructure, building frontages, swales, and a central reservation • Oxpens road as a holistic site for delivery of infrastructure, from Frideswide Square to St Aldate's	• Zero Emission Zone - £2m – delivery dependent on Connecting Oxon • Connecting Oxford £60-100m – new and improved bus services and associated bus and cycle infrastructure	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals

Strat	Key Priority	Detail of Priority	Indicative Infrastructure Cost (Investment Prospectus & Volterra report (2022)	
Public Realm	**8. Station gateway**	• Strengthening Oxford Railway station as a local and regional transport hub through public realm and infrastructure improvements • Public realm improvements to all surrounding streets and spaces	• Oxford Station West side improvements - £80–160m • Becket Street to Oxford railway station pedestrian / cycle bridge - £10m-16m – delivery by 2028	• Oxford Station east side improvements - £350-550m • Cowley branch line reopening - £50–150m – required by 2028 • Connecting Oxford - £60-100m
	9. Oxpens Road	• Developing a consistent public realm experience from the station down to new developments at Oxpens and Osney Mead • Improved public realm connecting Oxpens and the adjacent meadows to Westgate	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals • Zero Emission Zone - £2m – delivery dependent on Oxford Station East side improvements - £350-550m	• Connecting Oxford £60-100m – new and improved bus services and associated bus and cycle infrastructure
	10. Becket Street link	• Considering the bus network necessary to determine the character of Becket Street and its relationship with its surroundings. Last mile solutions to show how a fully integrated approach to sustainable travel can be achieved. Opportunities for improved accessibility & bus layovers should be fully explored. • Considering the sensitive context of St. Thomas the Martyr Church	• Becket Street to Oxford railway station Botley Road pedestrian / cycle bridge - £10m – delivery by 2028	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals
	11. Frideswide Square/Castle Mill Stream sites	• Public realm improvements along Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street will be important alongside the development of the area • Consideration of the station as a gateway and how the site can contribute to this	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals	
	12. Opening up the riverside	• Making the most of the West End's natural resources to create high quality public space • Opening up the Thames riverside from Oxpens meadow to the EA depot site • The placement and quality of Oxpens Bridge will help define the relationship between Oxpens, Osney Mead and further afield. Considerations around where this bridge will land must be carefully considered as it will be crucial for both on the south to pick up movement routes, and the north as an entry point into the Oxpens development and the wider city centre.	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals	
	13. Osney Mead riverside square	• A new riverside square to activate Osney Mead as a new activity hub and innovation quarter • Meanwhile uses during early phases of development may aid delivery and the fostering of community support	• An element of West End public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals	

HERITAGE

Spatial Framework Strategies

Oxford is an iconic place amongst the top rank of European cities, famous for learning, its green setting and its historic buildings and institutions.

The heritage is much more than these high-ranking assets, for it also includes local places, features and associations: minor buildings, paths and open spaces, viewpoints and events. This history and heritage is of significance for the local communities of people who live and work in the city and feel a sense of belonging and ownership, which is reinforced by the continuity of experience that the heritage provides.

The historical diversity across the West End must be recognised. The Spatial Framework seeks to both celebrate and conserve existing heritage assets; use them to anchor a sense of place and character; and be a key asset in wayfinding across and into the historic core of the city.



Enhancing and opening heritage assets with improved settings - recognising the diversity of heritage within the city

- Educational
- Manufacturing
- Industrial
- Cultural
- Birth of Oxford

CELEBRATING DIVERSE HERITAGE

KEY PRINCIPLES

HERITAGE

SENSE OF PLACE AND CHARACTER



Using the character of heritage assets to improve the sense of place

- Shared memories and heritage
- Attractiveness

HERITAGE FOR WAYFINDING



Using heritage assets as a wayfinding tool for people moving through the city of Oxford

- Short distance views
- Long distance views
- Marker buildings
- A place to meet and dwell

CONSERVING HERITAGE



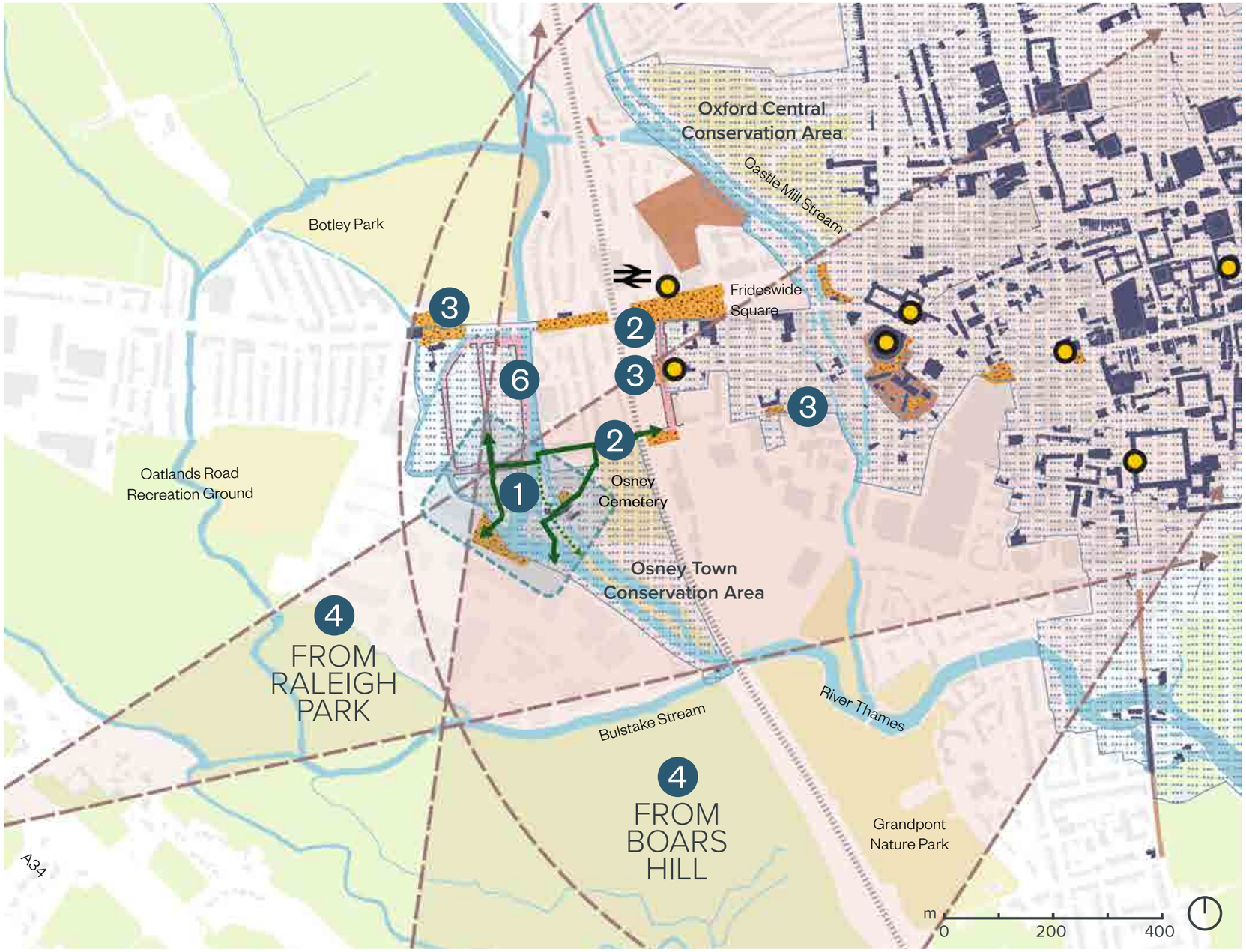
Enhancing and conserving heritage assets and their settings through sensitive design and refurbishment and reuse

RETAINING AND RECYCLING THE BUILT FORM



Retaining and reusing existing built form considering principles of a circular economy

1. Re-establishing the historic relationship of the River Thames and its heritage assets
2. Ensuring the protection of heritage assets from increased footfall and traffic - taking a holistic approach to connectivity
3. Improving public realm to celebrate key heritage assets
4. Ensuring short and long distance heritage views are maintained
5. Proposed heights need to be sensitive and respond to existing heritage assets
6. Creating a culture of reusing, recycling and retaining and promoting the principles of circular economy



- Conservation Areas
- Listed Buildings
- Long distance viewing corridors and historic core
- Moments of height which have key heritage value
- Scheduled monuments
- Public spaces key to protect heritage setting
- Heritage streets to be maintained in character and not hindered by increased movement
- Re-establish historic connection with River

HERITAGE

Spatial Framework Strategies

1 Re-establishing the historic relationship of the River Thames and its heritage assets

In the early development of Oxford, Osney Mead had a much closer relationship with the riverside and Osney Abbey provided a focal point for the area and city. Then from the 1800s, the River Thames became an important transport network for industrial uses. Now much of the area's heritage turns its back on the River. Working with the sensitivities set out within the Osney Town Conservation Area, the Spatial Framework seeks to re-establish this historic relationship.

By opening up the remnants of Osney Abbey and Osney Mill Cottage with public realm improvements, new connections and activity along the riverside - this seeks to bring back the river back into the heart of the Conservation Area. Furthermore, the opening up of the EA depot and its bridge connection to the public would significantly improve accessibility from Bridge Street to the river.

This strategy seeks to celebrate heritage assets within Osney Mead and re-establish the River Thames as a key component in the character of the area.



Historic photos of Osney Abbey cathedral and Osney Lock show their relationship with the River Thames



Opportunity for space adjacent to the watercourse which provides a place to dwell, planting and play



Opportunity for a modern extension to a heritage asset which rejuvenates it as an active use

2 Ensuring the protection of heritage assets from increased footfall and traffic - taking a holistic approach to connectivity

With many development sites coming forward, there will be increased footfall through the West End - in the form of pedestrians, cyclists, buses and vehicles. However, the effect on existing streets and spaces which have a strong heritage and character value need to be mitigated.

This calls for a holistic Movement Strategy (p.68) which carefully balances footfall through the West End and creates new routes which relieve pressure on more constrained spaces. Furthermore, it requires strategic planning on where different modes of transport can go and what the quality of routes are.

This includes ensuring the following areas are protected:

- Osney Mead's Bridge, East, West and South Street
- Becket Street and the surroundings of St Thomas the Martyr Church
- Osney Mead's Cemetery
- Walking routes across the green belt to North Hinksey village.

This protection of heritage assets is supported by Policy DH3 (Local Plan 2036) which values the importance of protecting heritage assets and their settings.





Osney Town Conservation Area is defined by tight streets, which have narrow footpaths, little or no front gardens and an intimate human scale

3 Improving public realm to celebrate key heritage assets

Many of the key heritage assets within the West End have poor settings which erode their community value. In conjunction with the Public Realm Strategy, the Heritage Strategy seeks to celebrate key assets with improved settings in line with Policy WE10 (Area Action Plan, 2008).

This could include providing landscape improvements, places to sit and a strategy which allows people to learn about the rich heritage of various assets. Public realm improvements should be made at:

- Osney Abbey and Lock
- St Thomas the Martyr's Church
- St Frideswide's Church
- Nuffield College Sites
- Oxford Castle



Activating an existing heritage asset with a meanwhile space and extension which houses a café and outdoor seating space



The River Thames helps define the character of Osney Town Conservation Area



Opportunity for St Thomas Church to frame a key public space on the site of Becket Street car park



Opportunity to re-purpose a heritage asset as a community use with a modern extension

HERITAGE

Spatial Framework Strategies

4 Ensuring short and long distance heritage views are maintained

Oxford's Local Plan sets out the importance of protecting short and long distance views within Oxford *(Policy DH2, Local Plan 2036)*. Oxford has a rich set of spires and moments of height, including at Nuffield College, the Castle Mound and Tom Tower at Christ Church College. These not only have heritage value but are important in navigating through the city and anchoring a sense of place for locals and visitors.

Long distance views also have navigational and heritage value. Of particular significance is the proposals for Osney Mead Industrial Estate and Oxpens; and their impact on the historic view from Raleigh Park. There is opportunity to design a sensitive roofscape and to have a strong landscape strategy. This is in line with *Policy DH2* which states roofscapes of new development must be carefully considered and heights should ge nerally not exceed 18.2m within the Historic Core Area (*Local Plan 2036*).



The spire of Nuffield College and the Castle Mound can be seen from a number of points within the city centre



View of Oxford city centre from Raleigh Park

5 Proposed heights need to be sensitive and respond to existing heritage assets

The built form within the West End is predominately 2-5 storeys and the Local Plan 2036 states that proposals should generally not exceed 18.2m within the Historic Core Area which covers most of the West End.

In addition to this, there are design considerations needed for particular heritage assets including:

- St Thomas's Church and proposals on Becket Street
- Nuffield College and Castle Mound and proposals on Nuffield College Sites
- Christchurch Old Buildings and proposals on Osney Lane
- Rewley Abbey Scheduled Monument and proposals on Rewley Road Fire Station and Oxford Station depot site.



Being sensitive with building heights on development proposals in close proximity to heritage assets is essential

Osney Mead Regeneration site has few heritage assets on and therefore proposed heights and urban form will not need to respond to or take specific heritage assets into consideration. However, its massing and urban form will have an impact on long distance views, which will need to be taken into account.

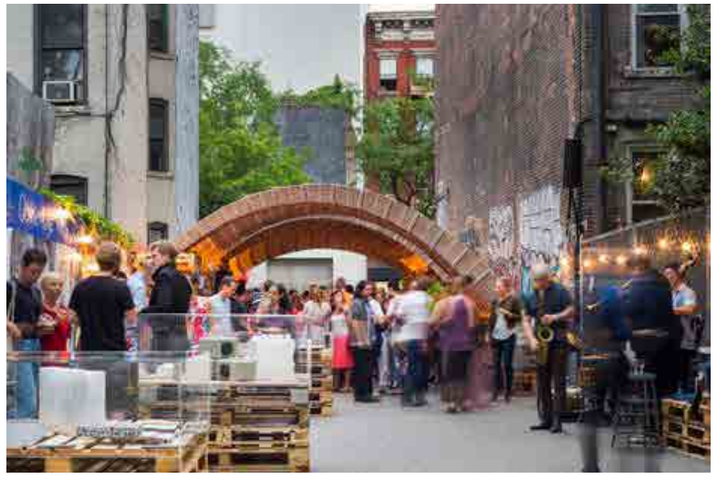
6 Creating a culture of reusing, recycling and retaining and promoting the principles of circular economy

With so many sites of opportunity identified, there will be a lot of new development within Oxford. However, many of these sites of opportunity include existing heritage assets on. The Heritage Strategy asks proposals to re-use, recycle or retain existing built form wherever possible and integrate this into the new urban fabric of the emerging new destinations.

This could be retaining a historic wall within a piece of public realm or re-using bricks from a demolished building within the public realm. This has benefits for carbon (embodied) as well as heritage.



Existing historic features could be re-used as a point of interest for a public space



Recycled building waste materials could be repurposed to create meanwhile/movable exhibition spaces within the public realm



New development could be made out of recycled concrete, re-purposed double glazing and discarded floor boards to promote circular economy principles



Adaptive reuse of old warehouses can provide unique living and work spaces

ARTS AND CULTURE

Spatial Framework Strategies

Culture and arts have a multitude of socio-economic benefits which are crucial in realising the Vision for Oxford. It provides an opportunity to improve the skills and diversity of the creative workforce and helps to foster social capital in the various destinations which attract locals and visitors. These principles underpin *Policy WE24 (Area Action Plan, 2008*) which seeks to promote cultural employment and attractions.

Oxford's Economic Draft Strategy (2022) highlights the importance of culture in embracing Oxford as a global city - one which capitalises on its already rich culture.

With COVID-19 having an adverse impact on culture - it is more important then ever to promote spaces for culture and creative energy to foster local community spirit and create opportunity for public participation in a city.



Creating a community led environment which is open and allows for creative development which encourages diverse culture and growth of skills

- Community and Council led curation
- Co-creation
- Local training and upskilling
- Connecting various age groups through culture

SUPPORTING DIVERSE CULTURAL GROWTH

KEY PRINCIPLES

ARTS AND CULTURE

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

Strong partnerships with national and local stakeholders ensure delivery and vitality of culture within Oxford

- Public and private partnerships
- Arts council
- Youth groups
- Arts groups
- Schools



IDENTITY AND PRIDE OF PLACE



Promoting a strong identity and sense of belonging through culture by creating a distinctive place which is animated and community driven

- Public art
- Public art programmes
- Guaranteed funding mechanisms
- Supporting creative economy
- Meanwhile art to preserve/refurbish buildings

DRIVER OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Culture as an opportunity for regeneration and revitalisation. Cultural activity to kick-start economic development through:

- Increased footfall and creation of a new destination
- Improved perception of the area
- Programme of events

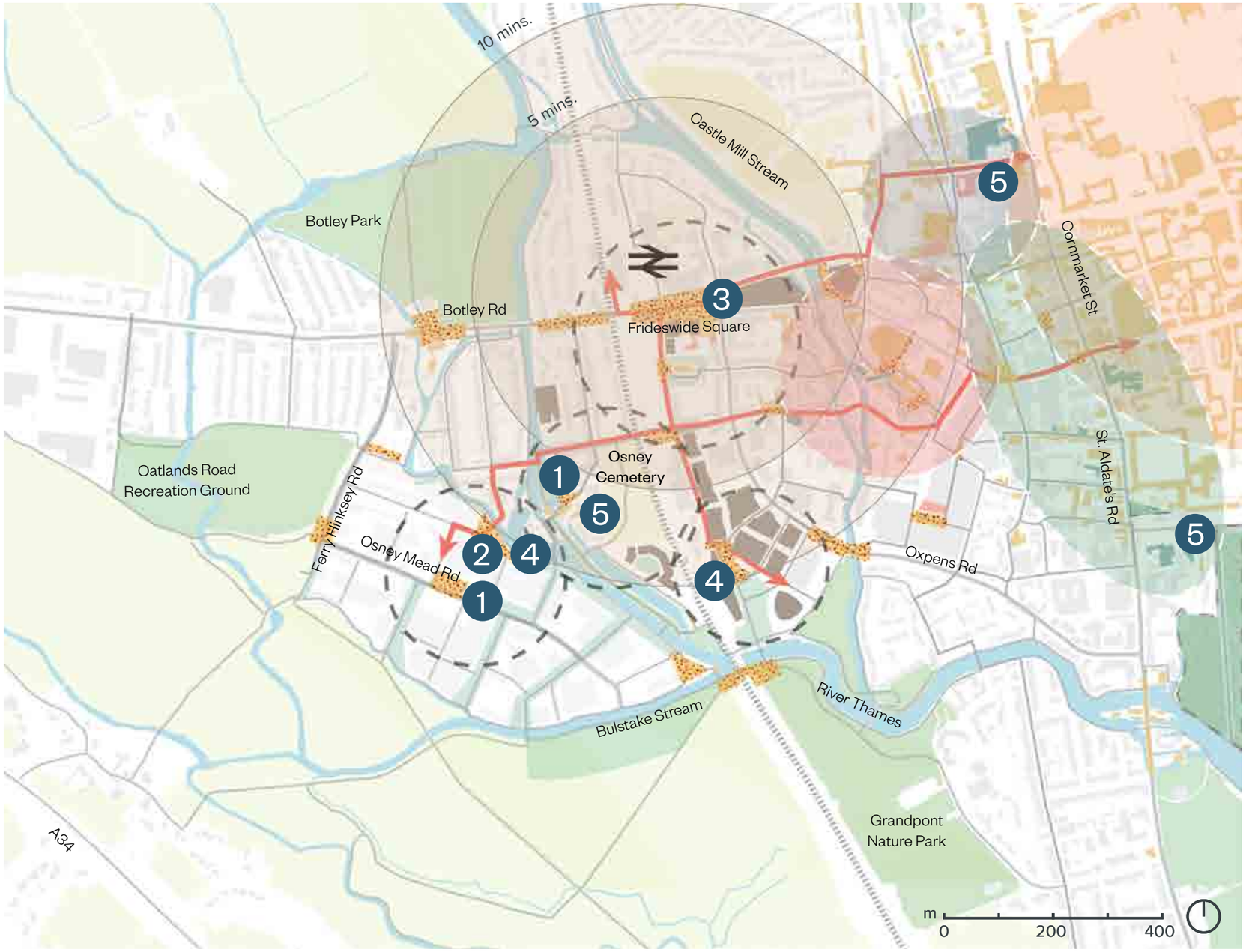
A CULTURE OF SHARING AND INNOVATION

A culture of sharing allows for innovation, learning and chance encounters

- Café culture
- Public spaces
- Libraries and archives
- Museums and galleries
- Community spaces
- Active lifestyles
- Intergenerational activities



1. Allowing for space within the West End where culture can be produced and can thrive
2. Creation of a destination(s) in the West End where people can experience and share culture.
3. Promotion of cultural and arts activities in mixed use neighbourhoods
4. Utilising the public realm as a key space for culture with a programme of events
5. Celebrating the cultural heritage of the West End



- Christ Church Meadows and centre
- Museums and Galleries
- Theatres and Performance Spaces
- Castle and College Hub
- Museum and Heritage Hub
- University and Education
- Osney Mead Opportunity Area
- Listed Buildings
- Proposed Developments
- Proposed Hard Public Space
- Arts and Performance Hub
- Opportunities for new cultural hubs - Destination for the consumption and production of culture

ARTS AND CULTURE

Spatial Framework Strategies

1 Allowing for space within the West End where culture can be produced and can thrive

Creation of affordable space within the West End where cultural stakeholders can work together to innovate, create and produce. Through co-creation and collaboration, existing and new stakeholders provide an exciting opportunity for different disciplines to come together, including science, fine art, conservation, performance arts, education, technology etc.

This could be within new mixed use buildings or within existing buildings which are repurposed for other mixed functions. The latter could include under-utilised spaces within Osney Mead's Industrial Estate and within vacant shop units within the city centre. Cultural uses could include:

- Creative workspaces
- Rehearsal studios
- Recording studios
- Production studios
- Artist and maker spaces.



Artist spaces such as a ceramics studio which encourage making and knowledge sharing could be accommodated within an existing industrial shed

2 Creation of a destination(s) in the West End where people can experience and share culture

The redevelopment of Osney Mead and Oxpens with comprehensive masterplans provide the opportunity to strategically make a destination for culture within the West End. Easily accessible uses - by walking, cycling or public transport - which add to and enhance the social and cultural scene of the city are encouraged (*Policy V6, Local Plan 2036*). This includes providing spaces such as:

- Cinemas
- Sports and leisure venues
- Galleries and museums
- Heritage buildings
- Performance venues
- Libraries
- Community spaces.

Exploration of different funding opportunities will need to be explored in the creation of new cultural hubs (OCAAP, 2021).



A mix of cultural and leisure uses coming together with high quality public realm creates a vibrant place



Reusing historic buildings and re-purposing for creative uses



Floating performance spaces activate the water's edge



Opportunity for library spaces and places to share knowledge

3 Promotion of cultural and arts activities in mixed use neighbourhoods

Promotion of cultural uses as part of mixed use buildings will be essential in the creation of a vibrant West End. Mixing cultural and arts uses with residential and workspace will be particularly important in realising the vision of a place to live, work and play. (OCCAP, 2021, p.72-73).



Opportunity to mix uses of co-working space and leisure uses of a rock-climbing gym

4 Utilising the public realm as a key space for culture with a programme of events

Existing and proposed public spaces provide a real opportunity to share, produce and experience culture. As set out within the Public Realm Strategy, a series of existing and new public spaces can be utilised for cultural purposes.

Important epicentres of culture are to include the waterfront square in Osney Mead and the area surrounding Oxpens Meadow. Linking this activity with the local stakeholders of education, innovation, creative industries and community will be essential.

Both permanent and temporary public realm interventions could help to activate the space with culture. Permanent interventions such as outside amphitheatres, artwork and locally curated community led projects. A programme of events is also essential - this could include temporary exhibition spaces, local performances and pop-up cinemas.



Pop-up events, such as outdoor cinemas, can utilise public realm

5 Celebrating the cultural heritage of the West End

As dealt with in the Heritage Strategy, there is lots of heritage to celebrate within the West End, especially around Osney Lock. By re-opening the riverside up and the heritage buildings around Osney Lock - there is an opportunity to celebrate this heritage as part of the cultural strategy. To be a place where the community can share and learn about the cultural heritage of the site.



Derelict and underutilised space under an elevated freeway is now an activated space with a film studio



Temporary exhibition space could feature art exhibitions outside



Providing heritage buildings with the appropriate setting celebrates it and lets locals and visitors learn about the cultural heritage of the place

MEANWHILE USES

Spatial Framework Strategies

The West End of Oxford has plenty of vacant and under-utilised land and buildings which could be re-purposed as meanwhile spaces/uses to help stimulate activity and change perceptions of some neighbourhoods. The Spatial Framework identifies some key opportunities to help unlock sites, create better footfall through and to areas and attract investment in strategic locations.

Ultimately the strategy seeks to generate social value, resilience and create a long legacy for the area.



Opportunity to put the community at the heart of decision making of purpose, design and delivery of meanwhile uses

- Training and skills opportunities
- Collaboration with local stakeholders
- Co-creation opportunities

COMMUNITY LED

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE



Opportunity for meanwhile uses to tackle contextual problems within the West End

- Lack of connectivity
- Flooding
- Climate change
- Pandemic
- Lack of social cohesion
- Food insecurity
- Poor housing affordability and quality

GENERATING ACTIVATION



Activation of space with the aim of changing perceptions, bringing new users to the area and making derelict or unloved spaces better used and safe for the communities

- Subsidise local artists/ community groups to enable occupation and stimulus
- Improve linkages and frontages along key streets to enable footfall
- Put an area/ place on the map

CHANGING PERCEPTIONS



Opportunity to use meanwhile uses as a tool to change perceptions of an area

- Perception of priority (turning a congested street into a pedestrian priority one
- Perception of safety
- Perception of activation (bringing internal activity outdoors)
- Perception of innovation (highlighting the benefits of businesses locating in the West End

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS



A collaborative approach is required between public and private partners which allows for a holistic vision to be implemented. Timing of interventions will be essential

KEY PRINCIPLES

MEANWHILE USES

Makespace Oxford provides Co-working Space in an unoccupied buildings

Community designed landscaping at Broad Meadows

The Covered Market hosts Pop-up food and drink stalls

Dis-occupied or underutilised buildings

LEO Project providing community organised green energy

Opportunity to re-use vacant shops along High Street with Meanwhile Uses

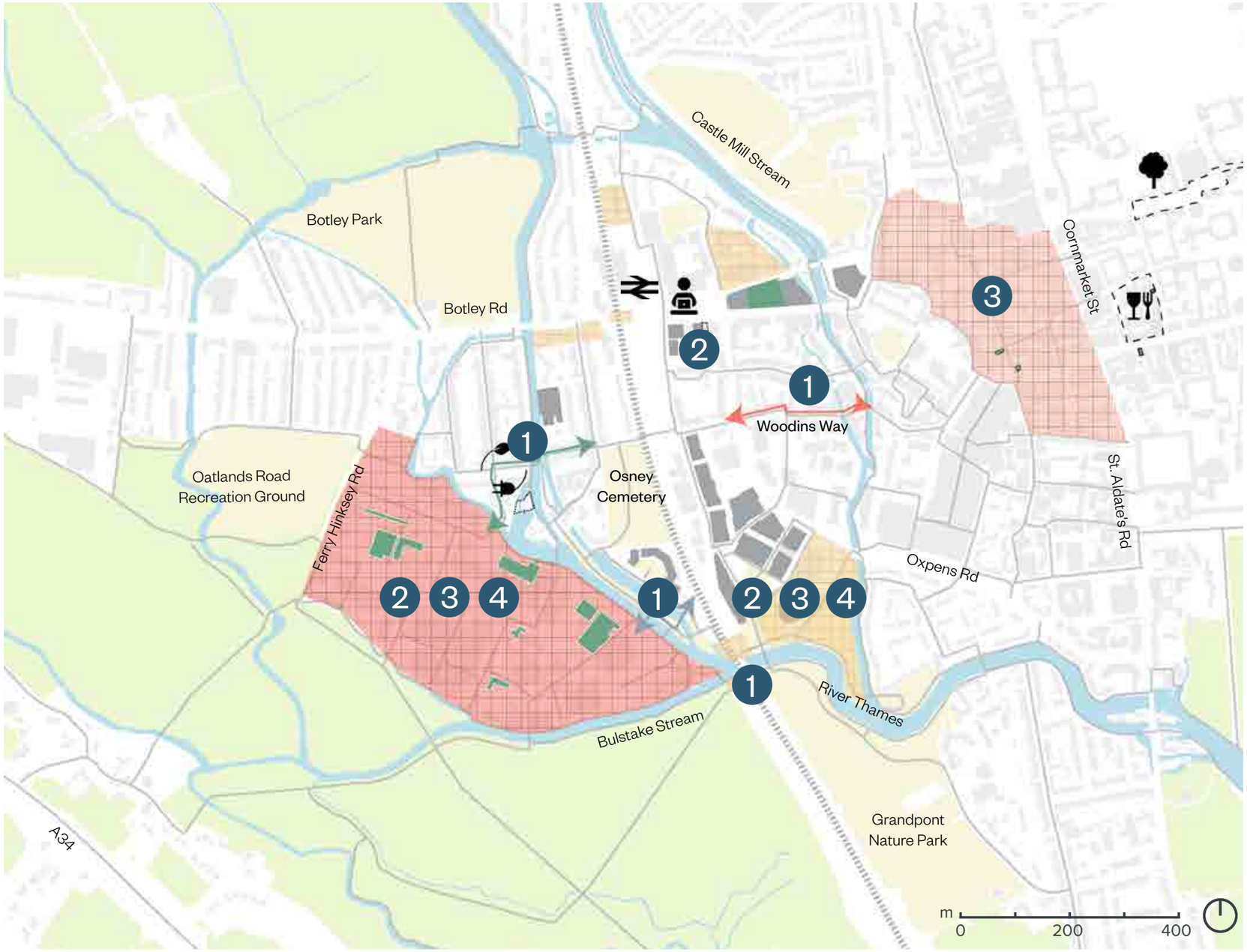
Potential for temporary bridge connections

Osney Mead Regeneration Site provides major opportunity for meanwhile uses

Opportunity for interventions on Woodins Way

Areas for potential future meanwhile uses

New developments



1 Improving existing and creating new connections and promoting active travel

2 Creating new hubs of activity

3 Meanwhile uses which seek to aid developing and fostering a new community

4 Re-using and re-purposing existing urban form

MEANWHILE USES

Spatial Framework Strategies

1 Improving existing and creating new connections and promoting active travel

As stated within the Movement Strategy, there is great opportunity to improve connections and active travel within the West End and to surrounding areas. Meanwhile uses are to play a key role in this.

There is opportunity for a temporary bridge(s) which could cross the area's watercourses at a number of points, as described within the Movement Strategy.

Meanwhile art could also be used to improve the attractiveness, legibility and perception of safety of many existing routes within the West End. Coordinating with local art and community groups to facilitate this would further generate social value. This could include the east-west route of Woodins Way; key crossings at Oxpens and Botley Road; including the Botley Road underpass.

Along with improved routes, cycle parking, benches and park-lets can also be placed to encourage people to walk and cycle through the city.







Low cost artwork can promote safety, encourage walking and cycling and bring joy to visitors and locals

2 Creating new hubs of activity

With many under-utilised sites and development sites coming forward at different stages, there is a huge opportunity to generate hubs of activity across the West End and provide businesses and local creatives with subsidised, low cost space. This could include providing:

- Local artists - studio and performance spaces
- Local groups - community spaces
- Local homeless charities - temporary housing
- Local business owners - food and drink outlets
- Local historians and cultural users - exhibition space
- Local sports and leisure groups - space.

These could be accommodated in particular on locations within Osney Mead Industrial Estate; Oxpens; under the underpass of the railway line; or within any of the Sites of Opportunity whilst new development comes forward.





Temporary bridges which cross the key severances within the site can be a destination and a means to move of movement



A place to park a bike or sit will be really important in encouraging active travel within the West End



Opportunity for a piece of underused hard standing to be transformed with affordable studio spaces for local artists



Opportunity for a piece of underused hard standing to be transformed into a food and drink destination



Opportunity for local sports and community groups to utilise the river offering activation





Opportunity for community led food growing in under-utilised spaces



Canal and barges used as performance space or commercial units can activate previously underused space

3 Meanwhile uses which seek to aid developing and fostering a new community

Meanwhile uses can have a very important role in fostering a sense of community whilst early housing and employment space is being established. Key events and spaces can bring together existing and new residents, workers and visitors together.

It is essential that the community is involved and takes ownership of the process and development of these meanwhile uses. Co - creation and collaborative methods for design and management should be established in early stages to make these initiatives truly successful.

This could be accommodated in particular on locations within Osney Mead Industrial Estate; Oxpens; under the underpass of the railway line; or within any of the Sites of Opportunity whilst new development comes forward.





Playful art installations can activate the space and be used as a form of community engagement for regeneration

MEANWHILE USES

Spatial Framework Strategies



Utilising an empty piece of hardstanding as a skateboard park

4 Re-using and re-purposing existing urban form

With lots of existing buildings within Sites of Opportunity and Development Sites, there is a real opportunity to re-use and re-purpose some of these buildings in the short and medium term.

This is essential in realising the sustainability agenda and fostering a sense of activity and community within the West End. This could include transforming industrial sheds into incubator space; or utilising rooftops for food growing, bee keeping or other uses.

There is a plethora of existing opportunity within Osney Mead Industrial Estate - with many buildings already sitting unoccupied. Other Sites of Opportunity also provide opportunity to enhance local skills and training for the local communities.


Rooftops of existing buildings could be utilised for food growing


Utilising a closed street for community classes such as yoga



Existing industrial sheds could be transformed at low cost into co-working spaces for small businesses


Existing industrial sheds could be used for food markets and music events

MEANWHILE USES: CASE STUDIES

Spatial Framework Strategies

Luchtsingel





Location: Rotterdam, Netherlands

Year Completed: 2015

Who: ZUS Architects

The Luchstingel pedestrian bridge is a crowd-funded piece of public infrastructure which connects historically disjointed parts of the city. The scheme is one of the first of its kind that uses public funding and ambition to deliver an infrastructure led regeneration scheme. The Luchtsingel combines a new key pedestrian link with a playful community oriented space. The bridge was first developed on the concept of 'permanent temporality' which uses the character of the city as the starting point for design before transitioning into permanent space.

Brentford Project





Location: Brentford, UK

Year Completed: 2019

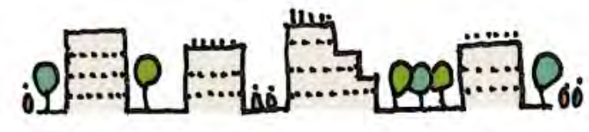
Who: Huw Morgan and Ballymore Developers

The Brentford Project in West London exemplifies public realm regeneration through temporary artistic spaces and installation. In 2019 an artist was commissioned to transform a formerly disused industrial road into a dynamic and vibrant linear public space. The road, painted completely in blue, takes inspiration from the Brentford flood of 1841 and aims to connect the high street to the waterside. The road has also been designated as a space for meanwhile uses, from food trucks to car shows. The simple art installation at the Brentford Project in effect creates a dynamic and vibrant space in which users are drawn and can enjoy changing activities.

BUILDING HEIGHTS

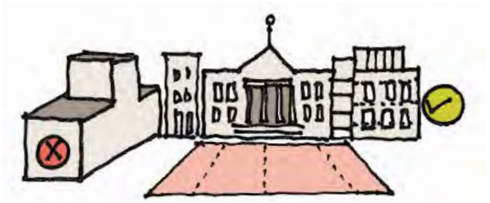
Spatial Framework Strategies

Building heights within Oxford's West End need to be strategically and sensitively designed to: i) respond to viewing cones and heritage assets (Policy DH1, Local Plan 2036) and; ii) allow for moments of heights which provide a quantum of development space and are key marker buildings enhancing legibility and enabling wayfinding through the neighbourhoods in the West End.



New proposals and masterplans in the West End to be developed as medium rise mixed use neighbourhoods which are limited in height

MEDIUM HEIGHT NEIGHBOURHOODS



SENSITIVITY TO HERITAGE ASSETS

Sensitivity required in how new development responds to existing heritage assets - height, mass, proportions and urban form.

STRATEGIC PLACES OF HEIGHT



Achieving the quantity of floorspace needed by strategically increasing height in less sensitive areas

KEY PRINCIPLES

BUILDING HEIGHTS

SENSITIVITY OF VIEWING CORRIDORS



Opportunity to improve long distance views with improved roof-scape, urban greening approach in key areas of conflict and sensitive massing

HEIGHT AS MARKER BUILDINGS



Moments of heights should occur at strategic points to aid legibility, way-finding and create areas of focus to achieve a sense of place

1. Celebrating the West End's existing points of height, and strategically adding more

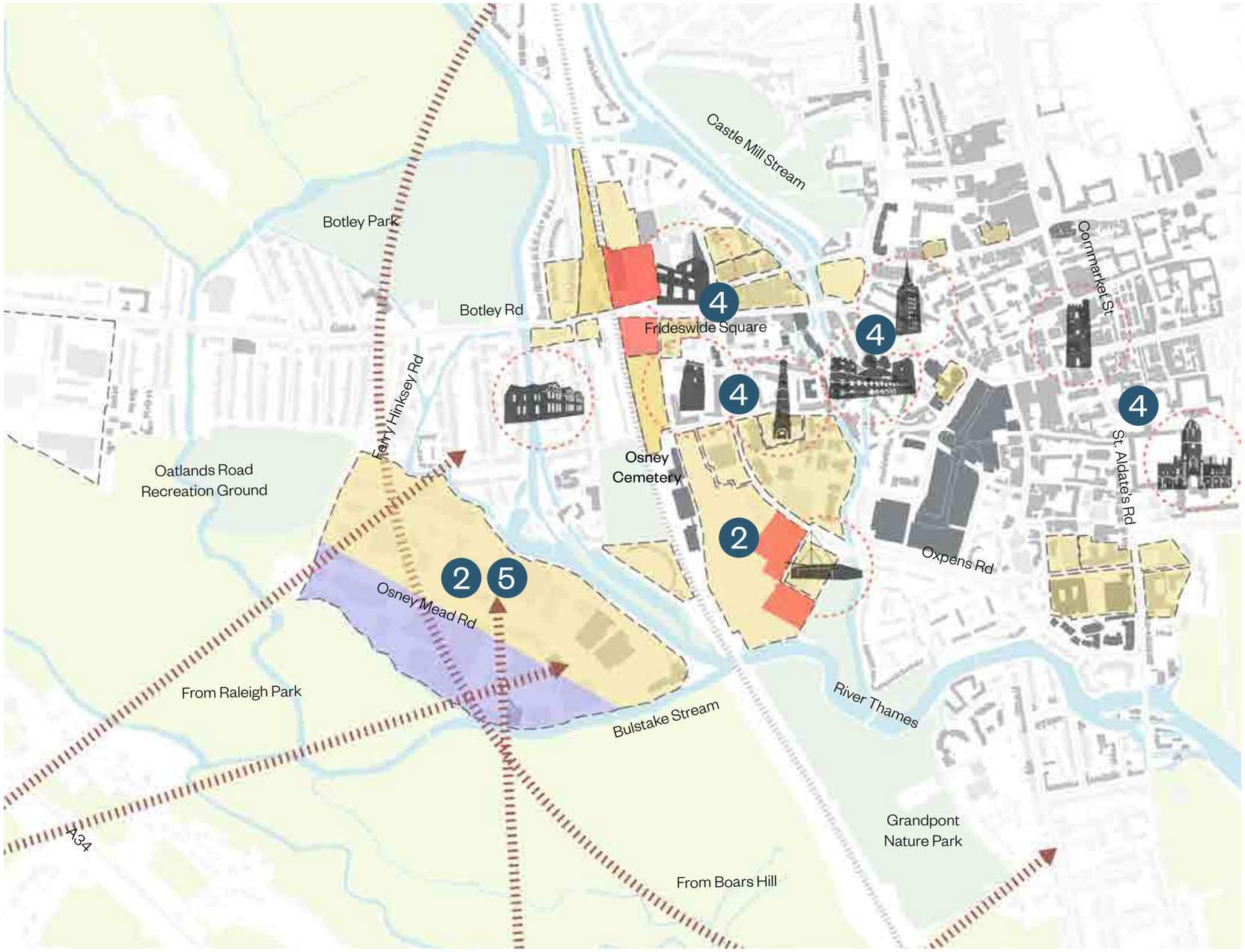
2. Enhancing the long distance views by improving the roofscape and form of the West End

3. Ensuring height of new development is informed by immediate surroundings

4. Building heights and massing must respond to existing heritage assets

5. Balance of new development with spaces in-between buildings

- 1-2 storeys (existing)
- 3-4 storeys (existing)
- 5+ storeys (existing)
- Key sensitive views to heritage buildings
- Historic Core Area and long Distance Views
- Maximum density
- High density
- Medium density



BUILDING HEIGHTS

Spatial Framework Strategies

1 Celebrating the West End's existing points of height, and strategically adding more

The West End of Oxford has multiple towers and spires which when moving through the city are key wayfinding markers to navigate by and anchor a sense of place for people. These can be seen at Nuffield College, Saïd Business School, Christ Church College and Carfax Tower.

New development within the West End must ensure street-views to these moments of heights are protected and enhanced. Additional moments of height could be created within the neighbourhoods, these should be located in strategic areas within the new masterplans - in the form of mixed use buildings, a piece of public art/sculpture, a pavilion or a viewing tower. Ideal locations for these would be:

- **Key gateways** - Eastern and western gateway of Osney Mead; framing Frideswide Square; Railway station
- **Key hubs of activity** within Osney Mead, Oxpens and other sizeable development sites.





Existing points of heights such as Nuffield College, the Castle mound and chimney of the former Morrell's Brewing Company



A tall piece of public art which is at a key intersection of views aids wayfinding and establishes a sense of place

2 Enhancing the long distance views by improving the roofscape and form of the West End

At present, the sites of Osney Mead Industrial Estate; Oxpens and the station all provide roofscapes that could be improved - currently the sites have large amounts of hard standing; large flat roofs and little landscaping.

This Strategy seeks to improve the articulation of the roofscape, provide green roofs, enhance visual diversity and create a green and varied roofscape. This would also provide the opportunity to activate roofs by creating usable amenity space and taking advantage of great views across the green belt.



Green roofs, mature trees and varied built form provide an interesting and attractive roofscape

3 Ensuring height of new development is informed by immediate surroundings

Height of proposed development must respond to its immediate context. Within the West End and the adjacent areas, there is a significant amount of open space in the form of the green belt, parks, the marina and watercourses. Also streets such as Oxpens Road and Botley Road are wide.

Development facing onto these open spaces and wide streets, provide an opportunity to have points of height which maximise views; provide more floorspace and create a good sense of enclosure.

The stipulated maximum heights and parameters recommended for new development within the West End sits at 15 -18m (*Oxford High Buildings, TAN 2018*). However, high

buildings that help articulate the silhouette of the city and add interest and diversity are encouraged provided they do not conflict with the surrounding context or appear incoherent. (*Oxford High Buildings, TAN 2018*)



Development facing onto a river and open space has the opportunity of taking advantage of good views and provides a strong urban edge

4 Building heights and massing must respond to existing heritage assets

As set out within the heritage strategy, there are many Listed Buildings; Conservation Areas and Scheduled Monuments within the West End. Development proposals must respond sensitively to these. These must be considered in terms of sight lines; character; attractiveness, desire lines and changes in footfall.

Of particular importance within the West End, key design consideration must be given to:

- The relationship between St Thomas the Martyr Church and Vicarage and development on Beckett Street car park and on the eastern side of Beckett Street
- The relationship between the Nuffield College Sites and Nuffield College, Oxford Castle, Cooper's Marmalade Factory and Oxford Central Conservation Area.
- The relationship between Osney Mead regeneration site and Osney Town Conservation Area The relationship between development at Speedwell House/Court buildings Oxford Central Conservation Area.

5 Balance of new development with spaces in-between buildings

To create vibrant mixed use places for living, working and playing the spaces in between the buildings. Public open space should be provided in the form of a diverse range of typologies - parks, plazas, sports and recreation, play, food growing opportunities, wild flower gardens; and private or semi-private space in internal courtyards, balconies and private gardens.

These spaces need to be provided in balance with built form. The sense of enclosure created by buildings and spaces will aid creating a comfortable and legible environment. Daylight, overshadowing, microclimate, and wind levels should be key considerations in the design process.



Adding moments of height at key junctions, with large street widths, creates enclosure and enhances legibility for the user



Being sensitive with building heights on development proposals in close proximity to heritage assets is essential



In a medium rise neighbourhood, this courtyard provides a good sense of scale for the user - providing a comfortable space

DEVELOPMENTS AND LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

Spatial Framework Strategies

With so many sites up for development, the make-up of the West End is subject to change within the coming years. This includes new buildings, increase in population in the area, new land uses, activities, routes, public realm elements and green spaces.

The Local Plan 2036 sets this out and under different site allocations provides minimum housing requirements which respond to the existing and future needs of the area in the context of each site. Within the scope of the West End a number of sites are relevant:

- **Osney Mead Innovation Quarter (SP2):** Mixed use development (to include employment; academic; student accommodation; employer-linked affordable housing; market housing (expected to deliver around 247 homes)
- **Old Power Station (SP48):** No housing requirement from Local Plan. Employer linked affordable housing can be integrated into site.
- **Oxpens (SP1):** Minimum 450 homes
- **Oxford Station and Becket Street Car Park (SP1)**: Minimum 20 homes
- **Student Castle, Osney Lane (SP1):** Minimum 206 homes - already built
- **Island site (SP1):** Minimum 40 homes
- **Worcester Street Car Park (SP1)**: Minimum 18 homes
- **Faculty of Music (SP36):** Minimum 40 homes

In practice, and subject to viability, many of these sites may be able to take more housing which will bring vibrancy to the areas. Ultimately, Oxford's West End is looking at a significant influx of homes in the coming decades and those need to be designed carefully with other uses.

The housing requirements set by the Local Plan 2036 is a direct response to Oxford's urgent need for more homes as a response to the city's housing supply crisis. The details of Oxford's housing need, in which the Local Plan's housing requirements are set from, can be found in the **Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).**

Housing delivery holds far reaching implications having impacts to the city's economic, environmental, and social health. Economically, housing provision attracts and retains people to support the economy. Socially, it prevents the disconnection of social networks caused by housing unaffordability and environmentally lessens the impact of commuting.

Proposals will need to be cognisant of viability, land acquisition, market demand and public sector ability to manage spaces.

The Oxford Economic Draft Strategy (2022) aims to create more commercial spaces which enable innovation and creativity; generate vibrancy within the city centre; and enhance Oxford's already significant visitor economy.

The West End Investment Prospectus Draft (2022) echoes this and envisions the West End as a location where workspaces of different sizes, scale and price-points are homed. This will create new well paid jobs, more effective supply chain opportunities and better access to workspaces for local communities on their doorstep.

This provides an excellent opportunity to shape the activities of the West End going forward. Looking holistically at this strategy allows each development site to provide uses which complement each-other and seeks to foster a culture of collaboration, innovation and connect existing and future residents to local opportunities of work and play. This is echoed within *Oxford's Economic Draft Strategy (2022)* which seeks to create an inclusive city which supports local businesses and organisations with improved connectivity, funding and delivery of suitable workspace and homes.

Sites must also comply with the guidance set in the West End Design Guide. The guide specifies several relevant pieces of guidance which emerging developments should follow.



Creation of vibrant activity hubs which have an intensity of uses and are served by good connections. Creating 24-hour economies will be important



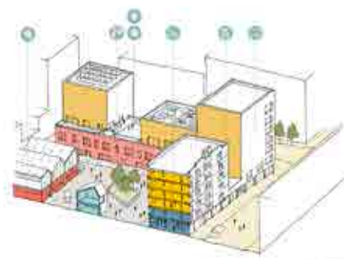
Where possible, ensuring buildings are part of the circular economy - construction methods which reuse and recycle materials; and share energy and other resources



Land use distribution which ensures places have everything within a short walking distance from one's home; like the 15-minute city model. A balanced mix of housing and other non-residential functions is critical



Buildings and spaces should be designed with flexibility and adaptability in mind - to accommodate multiple functions and users in the short, medium and long term



Using typologies which combine a multitude of uses and are cleverly designed to activate the public realm. The internal world of the urban block must also serve the workers or residents effectively

ACTIVITY HUBS - INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS

MIXED USE NEIGHBOURHOODS

INNOVATIVE URBAN TYPOLOGIES

FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTABILITY

LIFECYCLE OF BUILDINGS

KEY PRINCIPLES

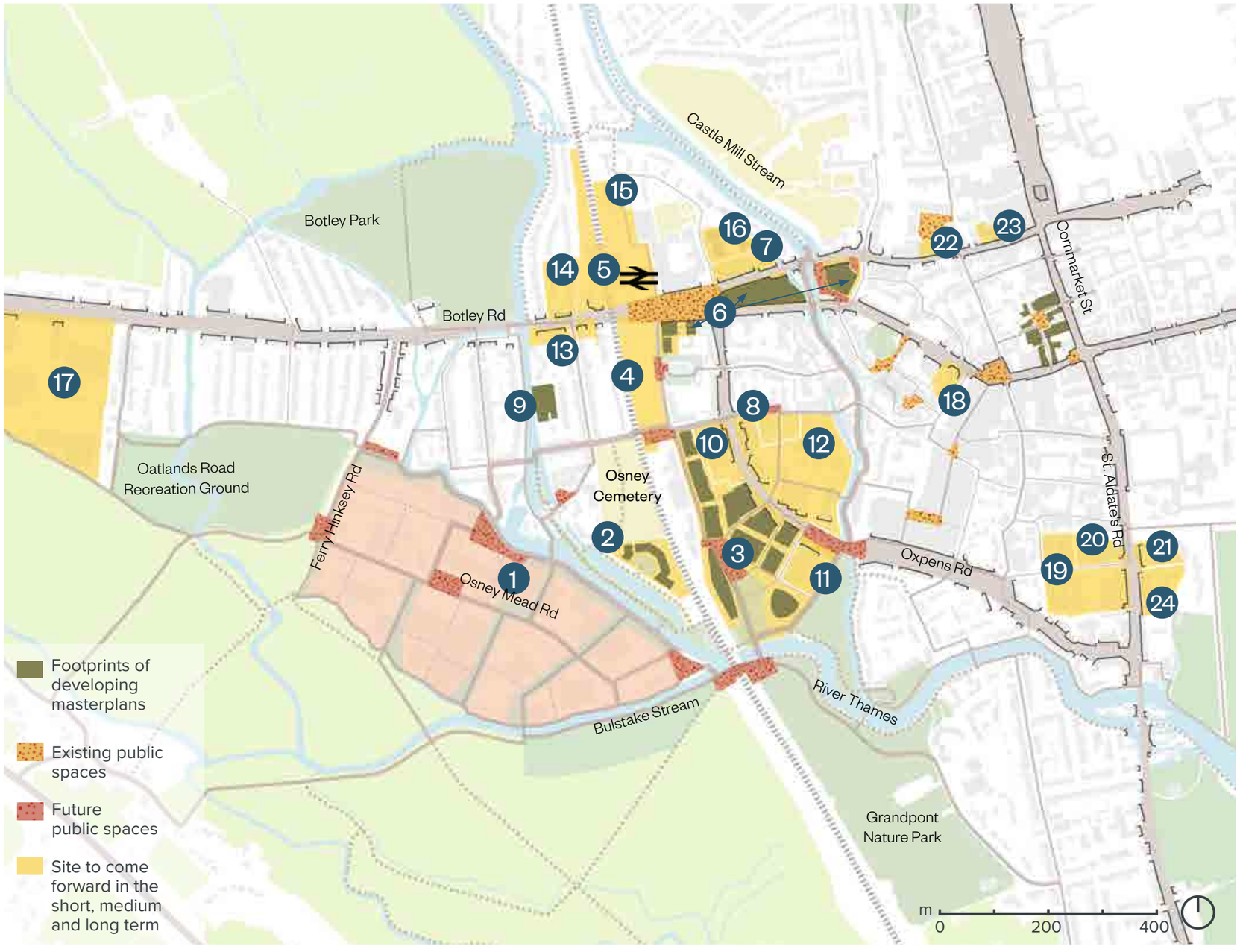
EMERGING DEVELOPMENTS AND LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

EMERGING DEVELOPMENTS

Spatial Framework Strategies

With lots of sites coming up for development in the short, medium and long term - there lies a real opportunity here to enhance existing neighbourhoods, their activity hubs and create complementary new hubs and destinations that connect well within the existing setting, both spatially and in terms of the mix of opportunities they offer.

1. Osney Mead regeneration Site
2. Gibbs Crescent
3. Oxpens
4. Becket Street Car Park
5. Oxford Station
6. Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream Quarter (Nuffield College Sites)
7. Beaver House
8. Osney Lane
9. SAID Business School
10. Richard Gray Court and Royal Mail Delivery Office
11. Ice Rink
12. City of Oxford College, Employment and Homes
13. 1-17 Botley Road
14. Abbey Road and Cripley Place
15. Oxford Railway Station Depot
16. Rewley Road Fire Station
17. Botley Road Retail Park
18. Oxfordshire County Hall
19. Magistrates' Court, County Court and Telephone Exchange
20. Speedwell House
21. Faculty of Music
22. Odeon Cinema
23. New Theatre
24. Police Station



EMERGING DEVELOPMENTS

Spatial Framework Strategies

1 Osney Mead regeneration site

Osney Mead regeneration site is outlined in the Local Plan 2036 for mixed use development under Policy SP2. A holistic approach needs to be undertaken to ensure within the process of long term comprehensive development that collaboration of different land-owners and existing businesses on the Industrial Estate. This is ever more important due to its challenging constraints which include: flooding; utilities infrastructure; lack of existing connections; and a fragmented land ownership.

As the Local Plan states, the site should have a range of uses on: employment, academic, student accommodation, employer-linked affordable housing and market housing. To create a vibrant community, a diverse mix of uses are needed - securing it as a destination to work, live and play in Oxford's West End.

Further in this document, a set of overarching principles for development on Osney Mead have been set out through a Spatial Strategy. The strategy will need to be assessed against thorough site analysis, technical surveys and viability testing at future masterplanning stages.

2 Gibbs Crescent

This is a residential scheme providing 140 homes in a mix of 1-3 bedroom flats. Currently an isolated site, the new proposed connections will knit it into the West End and create a better synergy with neighbouring Osney Mead and Oxpens.

Indicative Land Use Quantum

- Residential - 140 homes
- A new green space

3 Oxpens

Oxpens is a joint venture between Oxford City Council and Nuffield College. It is a strategic site which sits where the city meets the green and it aims to be a place in the city where people can live, work and play. A new central square and bridge within the masterplan ensures a strong connection from Oxpens to Osney Mead regeneration site and the wider green network. The emerging masterplan will need to ensure it deals with flood risk and the potential impact on the skyline.

Flexibility in land use types within the masterplan is very important with an evolving market. However, EIA testing has suggested the following uses for the site.

Indicative Land Use Quantum

- Residential (C2, C3)- up to 28,000m^2
- Student Accommodation (sui generis) - up to 8,000m^2
- Co-living/purpose built shared accommodation (sui generis) - up to 8,000m^2
- Hotel (C1) - Up to 24,000m^2/ 400 keys
- Commercial, business, and service (E) - 58,000m^2
- Community use class (F1, F2) - 1,200m^2

4 Becket Street car park

Becket Street car park will play a critical role in creating a strong sense of arrival into Oxford. Proposals on here will need to shape the station gateway. Facing the station entrance could be an ideal location for an active use, such as cafés, restaurant, retail or services. Land uses, the movement strategy and built form will need to sensitively frame the Grade II listed St Thomas Church.

The street offers a direct link to the Oxpens site further south, the route should feel animated and pleasant for pedestrians and cyclists to make way towards Oxpens and areas further south (Ice Rink and Westgate Shopping Centre).

5 Oxford Station

The redevelopment of the station needs to ensure a strong sense of arrival to the city with good quality public realm, restructuring of how buses, taxis and cars move to and from the site; and the promotion of better pedestrian and cycle links. A mixed use station which could include offices and workshop spaces above, as well as a food and drink offering at ground floor should be encouraged. The station precinct needs to designed as a true world-class destination/ gateway into Oxford city centre and its extended West End neighbourhoods.

The station will also be adding two additional lines and associated platforms - expanding its reach and regularity of service. The additional Cowley Line will be particularly important and provide a direct rail connection from Oxford Business and Science park; and 3,000-5,000 planned homes into the West End - providing a sustainable connection between big employment hubs (*West End Investment Prospectus Draft, 2022*).

EMERGING DEVELOPMENTS

Spatial Framework Strategies

Dealing with last mile connectivity is particularly important and high quality public realm which encourage walking and cycling when arriving at the station to places of work and living is important. The provision of bus parking needs to be dealt with sensitively and a technical study needs to be looked at to understand where best to accommodate this. The Oxford station masterplan will provide a small allowance of parking for short stay, pickup and drop off.

At present there are a number of scenarios being proposed for how the station and its land uses and distribution/location of these would help to influence change in and around this gateway destination. A masterplan report (studies and options) will come forward for consultation in 2023. Further in the document we have set out key guiding principles for how the station and its development could establish itself as a world-class gateway and connect people to the various places within Oxford.

6 Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream Quarter (Nuffield College Sites)

The Nuffield College Sites will need to work hard at creative active ground floors as all of the site perimeters are on key pedestrian routes into the city centre and Oxpens - most significantly Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street. The emerging masterplan puts commercial, business and service (Class E) at the ground floor of most of the buildings, with predominantly office spaces above, with 58 homes. Nuffield College Sites is leading the development on these sites and a planning application is expected in 2022.

Indicative Land Use Quantum

- 58 residential units
- 30,000 sqm office led commercial floorspace
- Supporting active ground floor uses

7 Beaver House

Currently accommodating offices, options from refurbishment to redevelopment are being looked at for this building. Importantly, the future of this building will need to provide a positive frontage onto Hythe Bridge Street with effective ground floor uses to help animate and activate the street frontage. Consideration for the functioning of Rewley Road Fire Station is also needed.

Although a separate site and under different ownerships, the two sites need to be considered jointly to ensure access and movement issues are resolved through comprehensive masterplanning and joint-up thinking.

8 Osney Lane

The old St Thomas School and OVADA are being looked at for redevelopment. This site sits on a strategic east-west connection which the Spatial Framework hopes to improve. There is an opportunity for a local public space which becomes a pivotal point between Osney Lane and Woodins Way and encourages pedestrians to walk from Osney Mead into the city centre.

The attractive and heritage assets of the Old Christchurch buildings, the chimney of the former Morrell's Brewing Company and the façade of St Thomas School provide the opportunity for a piece of public realm activated by community and cultural uses.

9 Osney Lane

Planning consent has been given in January 2020 for the conversion, redevelopment and extension of Osney Power Station to become the Centre of Executive Education run by Said Business School.

10 Richard Gray Court and Royal Mail Delivery Office

Consisting of an office and housing with associated car park, there is opportunity to redevelop this site with higher quality built form and public realm. It sits at a key point between a major east-west connection and Oxpens Road and an active land use at ground floor is desirable in this location.

11 Ice Rink

The location of the ice rink is an important part of the city's identity and function. It has a close synergy with the adjacent colleges and the city centre uses. Any refurbishment or redevelopment should be designed alongside the wider placemaking aspirations of Oxpens

12 City of Oxford College, Employment and Homes

This site provides a range of different functions but its configuration doesn't provide a good frontage onto Oxpens Road, doesn't utilise space efficiently and doesn't provide pedestrian permeability through the site. There is opportunity for this site to be redeveloped and many of the uses retained.

If this were the case, connectivity through the site is particularly important. This is about creating a stronger connection from Oxpens and Osney Mead to the city centre. Linking in with existing routes (Woodins Way and Castle Mill Stream) will be essential.

13 1-17 Botley Road

This site, which currently contains two hotels, a retail unit and homes provides an opportunity for improvements in built form quality and public realm. Its location is a key part of the station's gateway and non-residential uses at ground floor are to be encouraged.

EMERGING DEVELOPMENTS

Spatial Framework Strategies

14 Abbey Road and Cripley Place

There are opportunities here to improve the south-eastern end of this site which sits on the junction between Botley Road and Cripley Road. This is a pivotal point in the western exit of the station but currently is an open car park with poor quality public realm. Improvements in built form and public realm are necessary here.

15 Oxford Railway Station Depot

To the rear of the railway station, currently this site provides a raised car park and station buildings. There is an opportunity to utilise this site better. It could perhaps provide space for bus parking and limited car parking, allowing more public sites such as Becket Street car park to be utilised for active uses and public domain.

There is also opportunity to link the rear of the site to Rewley Road to improve circulation and access within the wider setting of the site.

16 Rewley Road Fire Station

In such close proximity to the railway station and tucked off the main vehicular network - this site provides an opportunity for housing. Currently used by a working fire station, consideration of how this function remains in the city centre will be essential.

17 Botley Road Retail Park

Like many retail parks around the country, Botley Road Retail Park is suffering to retain occupancy for many of its units. With Seacourt Tower Retail Park close by, there is perhaps an opportunity to consolidate retail units at Seacourt Tower Retail Park which sits at a major junction in the road network (A34-A420). This would then provide the opportunity to redevelop Botley Road Retail Park into a mixed use development which would be a gateway to Oxford city centre from the West.

Establishing strong connections from this site to Osney Mead Regeneration site via both the northern and southern edge of Oatlands Road Recreation Ground is important.

18 Oxfordshire County Hall

The Old County Hall has been identified as a site with long term opportunity. Work needs to be undertaken to understand it's future need and how the space can be improved.

19 Magistrates' Court, County Court and Telephone Exchange

The Old County Hall has been identified as a site with long term opportunity. Work needs to be undertaken to understand the site's future need and how the space can be improved.

20 Speedwell House

Sites around Speedwell Street provide an opportunity to create an active node and gateway at the south-east of Oxford city centre. A better synergy with the Christ Church Meadows could also be created. With some of Speedwell House currently occupied by County Council offices, work needs to be undertaken to understand the site's future need and how the space can be improved.

21 Faculty of Music

The Faculty of Music, St Aldates is outlined in the Local Plan under Policy SP36 and is allocated to provide at least 40 employer linked affordable homes or student accommodation.

22 Odeon Cinema

Outlined as a site in the Area Action plan (2008), the Odeon is a long term site of opportunity and to be looked at alongside aspirations for Gloucester Green.

23 New Theatre

The New Theatre is a site allocated in the Area Action plan (2008). Work needs to be undertaken to understand the site's future need and how the space can be improved.

24 Police Station

The Police Station, identified in the Area Action plan (2008) is also a Site of Opportunity for the long term. Redevelopment of this site will need to be considered in conjunction with surrounding sites. Work needs to be undertaken to understand the site's future need and how the space can be improved.

BUILDING OUT THE SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

Spatial Framework Strategies

Technical work will need to be undertaken to understand the building out of the Spatial Framework. The Key Priorities on pages 102-103 set out the ingredients needed to fulfil the various Spatial Framework strategies. However, the West End Draft Investment Prospectus (2022) outlines the key infrastructure projects which have had some technical analysis put into them. Alongside this, some development sites have permission and are currently being built out. These include the following:

Public Realm Improvements

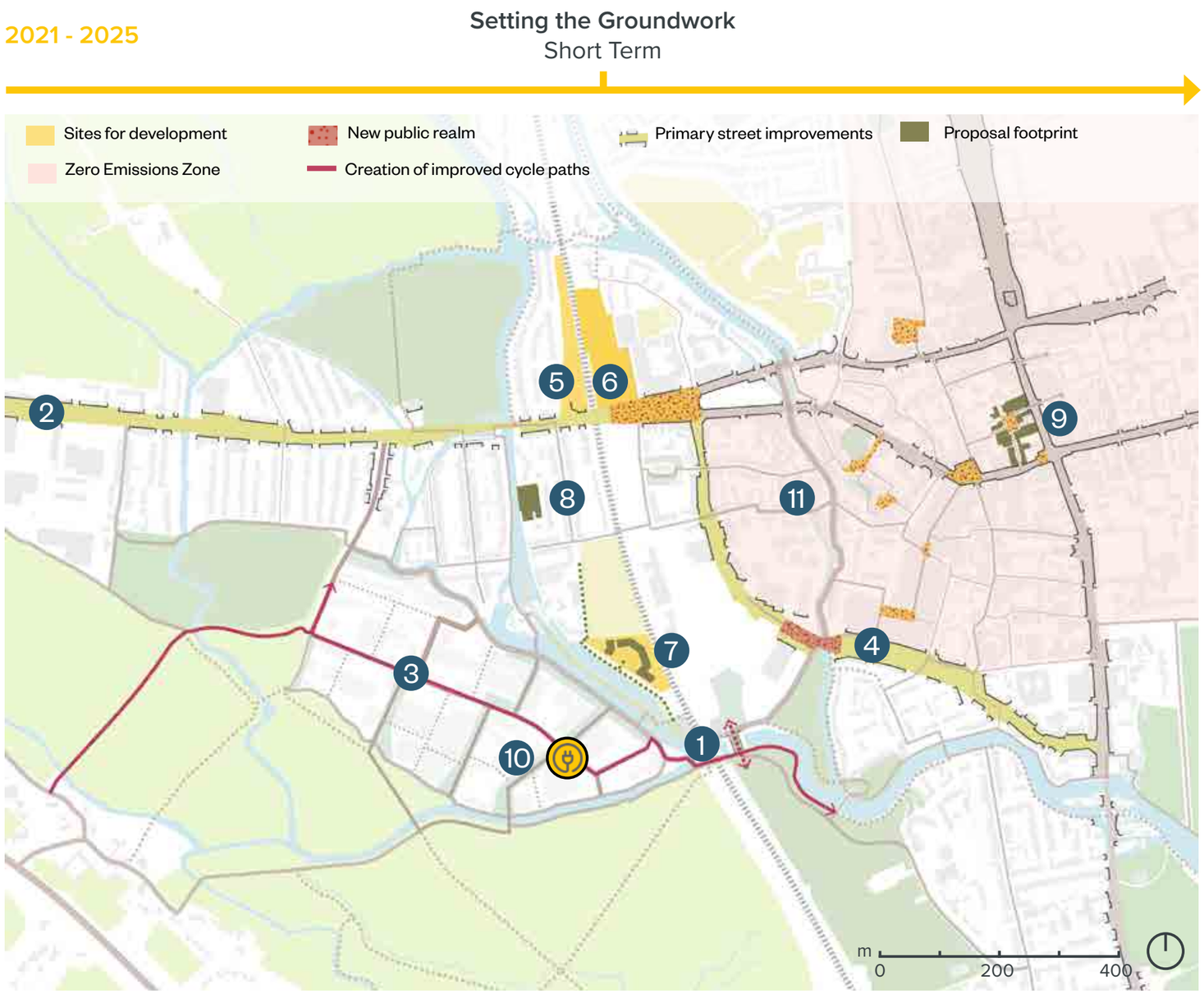
1. Oxpens Bridge and towpath improvements
2. Botley Road bus and cycle enhancements
3. Osney Mead and Thames improved cycle paths
4. Connecting Oxford - new and improved bus service and associated bus and cycle infrastructure

Development Proposals

5. Oxford station west improvements
6. Oxford Station East - development of proposals
7. Gibbs Crescent and associated green
8. Saïd Business School development
9. Clarendon Centre development

Other

10. Energy Systems Accelerator start-up and spin-out hub in Osney Mead - Phase 1
11. Zero Emission Zone



BUILDING OUT THE SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

Spatial Framework Strategies

Public Realm Improvements

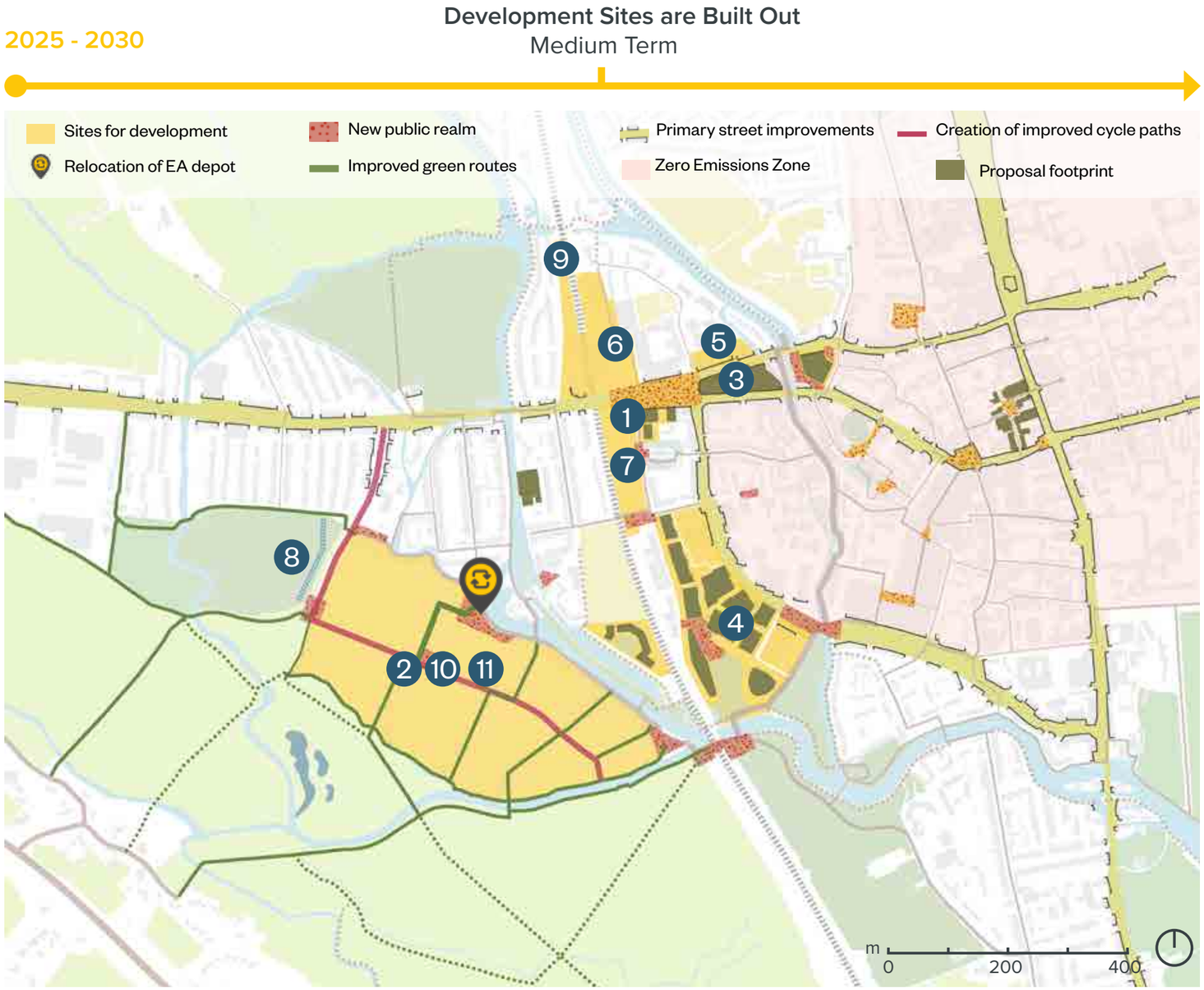
1. Becket Street to station bridge across Botley Road pedestrian/cycle bridge

Development Proposals

2. Phase 1 of Osney Mead regeneration site
3. Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream Quarter (Nuffield College Sites)
4. Oxpens
5. Beaver House
6. Oxford Station East
7. Becket Street/Oxford railway station development sites

Other

8. Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme
9. Cowley Branch re-opening
10. Energy Systems Accelerator start up and spin-out hub in Osney Mead - Phase 2
11. Undergrounding power lines at Osney Mead



Culture and climate differs all over the world, but people are the same. They'll gather in public, if you give them a good place to do it.

- Jan Gehl

4

EMERGING MASTERPLANS

136

INTRODUCTION

The West End contains several key development sites, each with their own ambitious and impactful emerging masterplans. While each of these sites are being designed and developed individually, their close proximity to each other and their overlapping interests in good design and public realm improvement make these the current key emerging sites with evolving masterplans within the West End.

The creation of an effective world class urban quarter in the West End is dependent on the success and the relationship between these sites and their emerging masterplans. Overarching design principles and aspirations, as well as key delivery ingredients are listed for each of these in the following pages. These set out the high level objectives for successful place-making within each of the sites, explaining how these align with the various Spatial Framework Strategies.

Of the four sites identified in this chapter, Osney Mead will be expanded upon in greater detail. This is because the Osney Mead development is in very early stages and its size, location and connection to other sites makes it critical in the shaping of the West End. Osney Mead presents one of the West End's most significant opportunities for a comprehensive mixed use innovation district development.

1. Osney Mead Industrial Estate
2. Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream Quarter
3. Oxpens
4. Station Gateway



Key emerging sites within West End

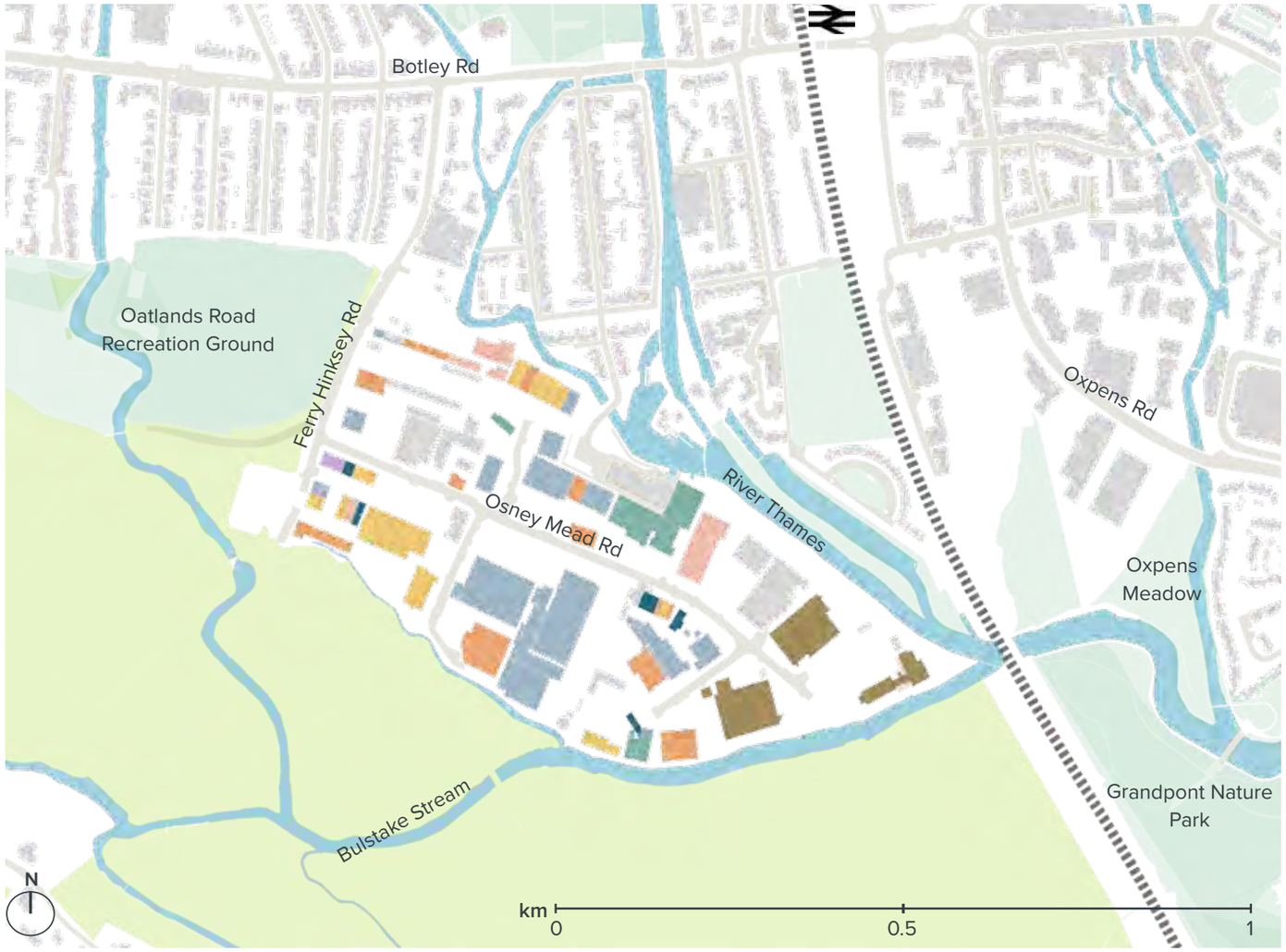
OSNEY MEAD TODAY

Existing Land Uses and Buildings

The current business fabric of Osney Mead predominantly comprises of small-scale industries, professional services and wholesale retail businesses.

An emergence of tech start-ups and creative businesses in this area can also be observed, presenting an opportunity for Osney Mead to establish itself as an emerging hub of start-ups and innovation. Co-working spaces will also become increasingly important in the post-pandemic world and by expanding this existing network of local businesses, emerging new types of start-ups and Oxford University uses, Osney Mead will find a unique address on the map as a dynamic quarter stimulating the innovation potential of the West End.

Overall, there is a need to provide suitable spaces to facilitate a wide variety of business types within Osney Mead. This ranges from catering to the existing industrial & wholesale sectors, to the creation of more flexible office spaces for start-ups to establish themselves in.



Map of Osney Mead showing the spread of existing uses

- Retail/ Commercial
- Small-scale Industrial
- Professional Services
- Creative Businesses
- Tech Start-ups
- Community Facilities
- University Services
- Co-Working Spaces
- Unknown

BREAKDOWN OF BUSINESS TYPES

Current Occupants

Retail/Commercial (18)

- Thrifty Car and Van Rental
- Europcar
- Mac Simple: Apple Repairs
- Hertz
- Jericho Coffee Traders Roastery
- Spring Greens Café
- Terry's Stone Cottage
- Rogers Auto Factors

Wholesale

- Aldens Meatmaster
- Shirtworks
- Haymans Fisheries Limited
- Lung Wah Chong
- Omnima Electronics
- Edmunson Electrical
- Magnet: Kitchen Showroom
- WeGot Ticket Event Ticket
- Active Washrooms
- Ocean Waves

Small scale Industrial (14)

- Refeyn Ltd
- Dynamique Ltd
- Oxford Calor Centre
- SIG Roofing
- Isis Publishing
- F M B Oxford
- Dracorn Group
- Symm Group
- Newsquest Oxfordshire
- Booker Wholesale
- Lambdatek
- Nicholas Hunter Limited
- Witney Gazette
- Oxford Mail & Oxford Times

Professional Services (11)

- R.R.Aiden & Son
- Anakata: Wind Power Resources
- Oxford Whole Foods Ltd
- Adestra Limited
- Seca Sports Europe
- Oxford Archaeology
- Oxford Production Kitchen
- Kabir Family Law Oxford
- Evergreen Capital Investment Ltd
- ATB Taxis Oxford
- Reeds Solicitors

Creative Businesses (5)

- Startech Productions
- Lancelyn Theatre Supplies
- Rebellion Developments
- What a Voice
- Evolution Studios

Tech Start-ups (5)

- Corefiling
- Oxford Flow
- StreetDrone Ltd
- Elements Software
- Fruto UX Design Studio

Community Facilities (3)

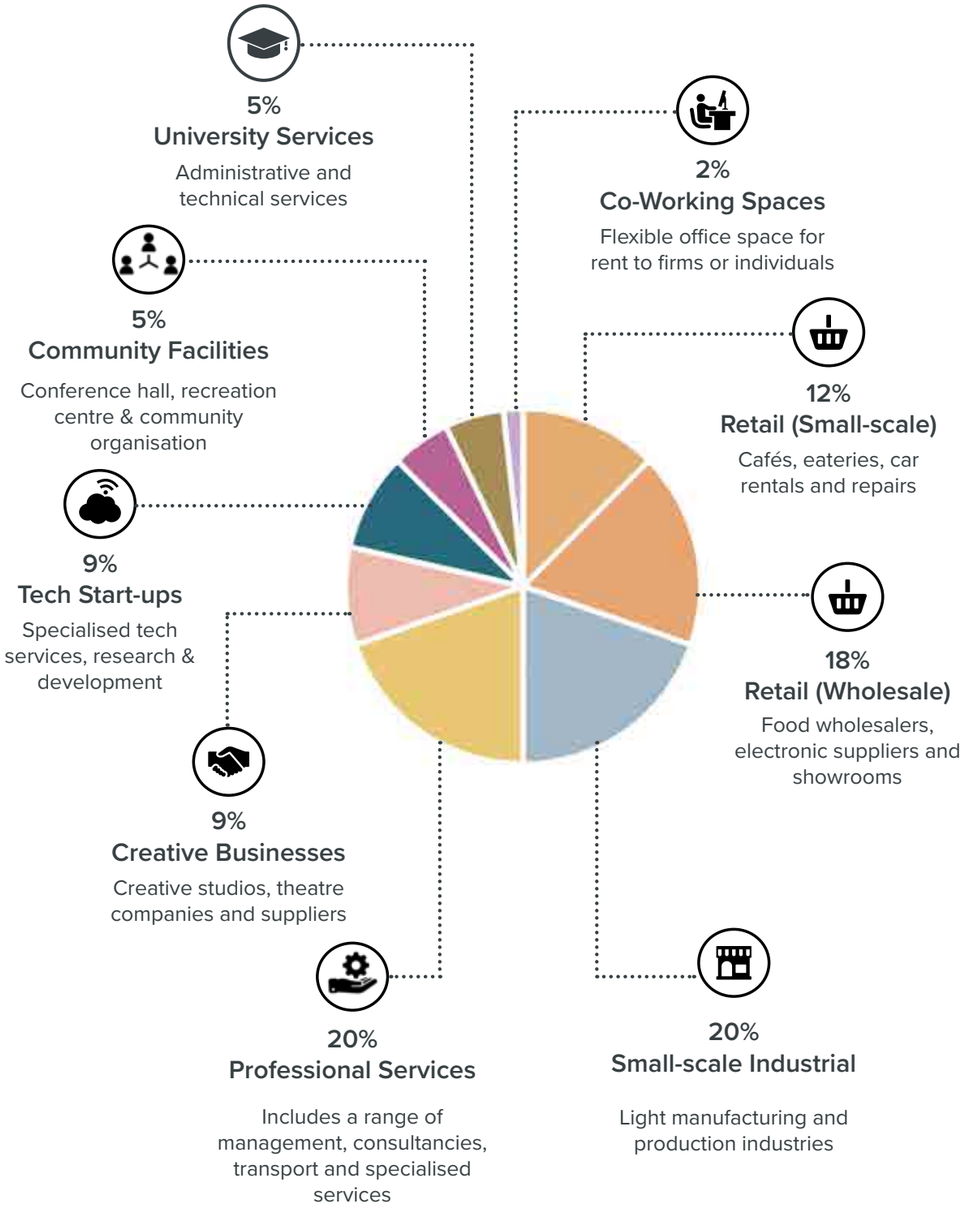
- INTRAC
- The King's Centre
- The Athlete Centre

University Services (3)

- Oxford University Library Services
- Bodleian Libraries Admin Office
- Southwell Building, Oxford University

Co-working Spaces (1)

- Urbanold Workspace Oxford





Large amount of hardstanding sits in front of businesses



The former Alden Press building now sits empty



Interfaces along roads are often impermeable and unfriendly



Jericho Coffee is a cafe which activates the street frontage



The Oxford Mail & Times hold a large plot on the site



The King's Centre is a multi-purpose conference venue



Businesses such as APS Masonry spill out onto the forecourt of the unit



Multiple small scale businesses are scattered around the south side of the site



Urbanoid Workspace Oxford is a co-working space for new and small businesses

LAND OWNERSHIP

Land in Osney Mead Industrial Estate is currently owned by various groups, requiring greater consideration in developing a masterplan and planning for phasing of new development. A joint undertaking of detail assessment by all stakeholders is key in determining the scale and type of development to be undertaken.

While the University owns a significant amount of Osney Mead, a large amount of it falls outside of the University's ownership (approximately 43%).

Of great strategic importance are the plots owned by the **Environmental Agency (EA)**. The EA owns a great majority of Osney Mead's northern edge and several key access points in from Osney Lock and Osney Island. Cooperation and early collaboration with the Environmental Agency around these access points and the riverfront edge is key to any conclusive proposals.

SSE is another key stakeholder throughout Osney Mead. SSE's stations and accompanying electrical pylons are an important part of Oxford's infrastructure yet they prove to be a challenge due to their scale and large built footprint. Undergrounding the electrical pylons will be critical to unlock the site for comprehensive redevelopment, something which is echoed in the Oxford West End's Investment Prospectus Draft (2022), though further work is needed to better understand the costs and feasibilities of undergounding.

- Environmental Agency
- Non-University Owners/Unknown
- The King's Centre
- Rebellion Developments
- Inaccessible
- Electrical Pylons
- Oxford City Council
- University of Oxford
- Decommissioned SSE Site
- SSE

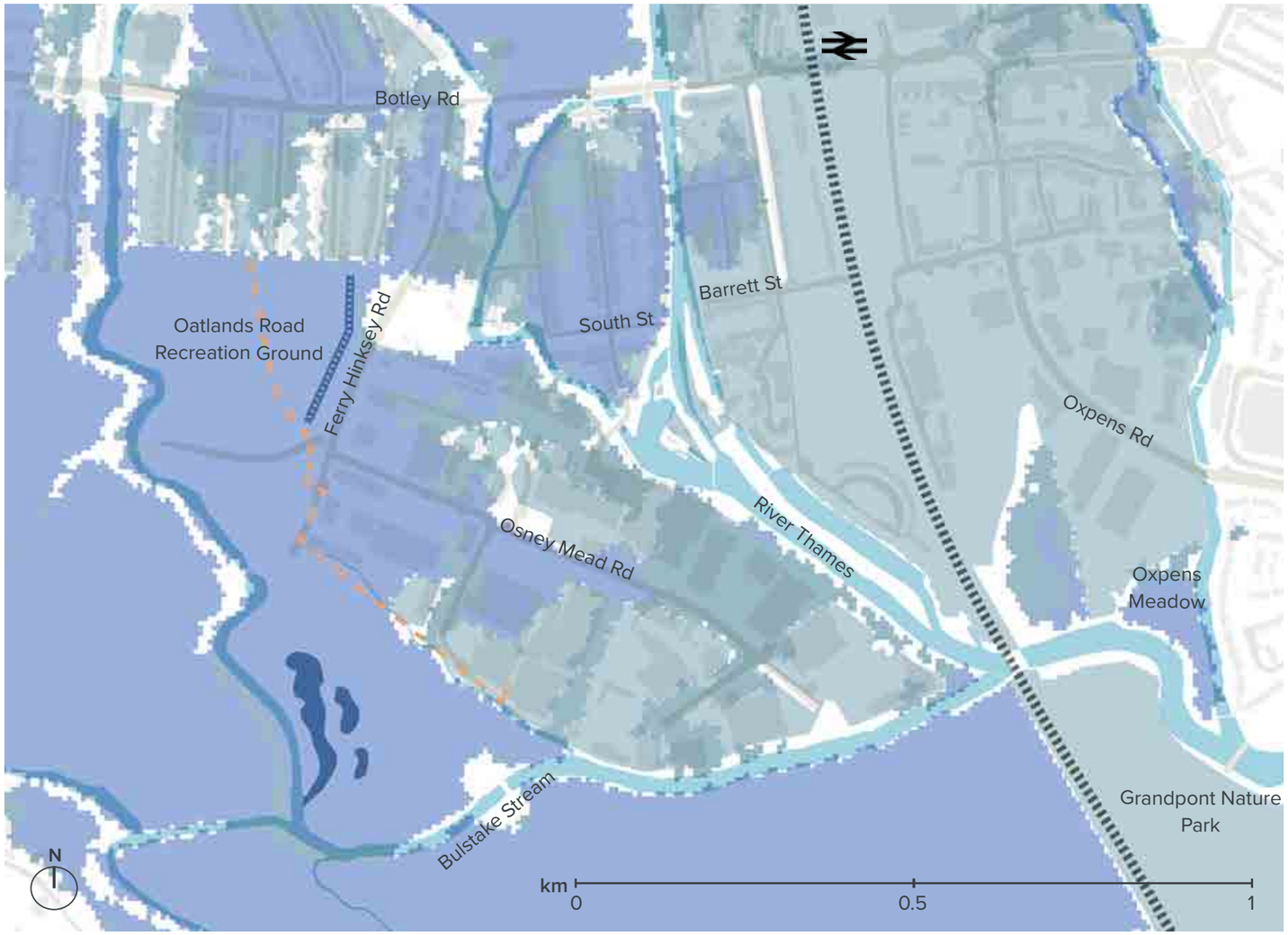


FLOOD RISK

The majority of Osney Mead Industrial Estate sits on **flood zones 3a** and **3b**, where there is significant risk of flooding on the site. Flood zone 3b is particularly serious as land will be compromised if a flood were to occur, limiting development opportunities. Ferry Hinksey road, the key gateway into the site is particularly prone to flooding. Hence, there is a need to offset the flood risk through mitigation strategies with an 'infrastructure first' approach to integrating the blue-green network for any new development proposed for this site.

Existing terraced houses in Osney Mead would inevitably be affected by the new development and its accompanying flood risk mitigation strategies. Therefore, any proposed developments should address the impact of flooding on both existing and new development.

The Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, due for completion in 2025, has been set up independently from flood mitigation measures required for unlocking Osney Mead. Thus, there is a need for greater flood mitigation efforts as the site cannot rely on the existing scheme to reduce flood risk. While present flood defences leave little land suitable for comprehensive development, an expansion of flood mitigation strategies will enable a greater amount of land on Osney Mead to sustain development. Further technical work and detailed surveys to understand and propose mitigation measures will need to will need to be undertaken pre-planning.



Flood zone 2
High probability of flooding: land has 1 in 1000 or greater annual probability of river flooding

Flood zone 3a
High probability of flooding: land has 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding

Flood zone 3b
Functional floodplain: zone compromises land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flooding

Existing flood alleviation scheme (OFAS) - TBC 2025

Proposed flood defence as part of OFAS

KEY CONSTRAINTS

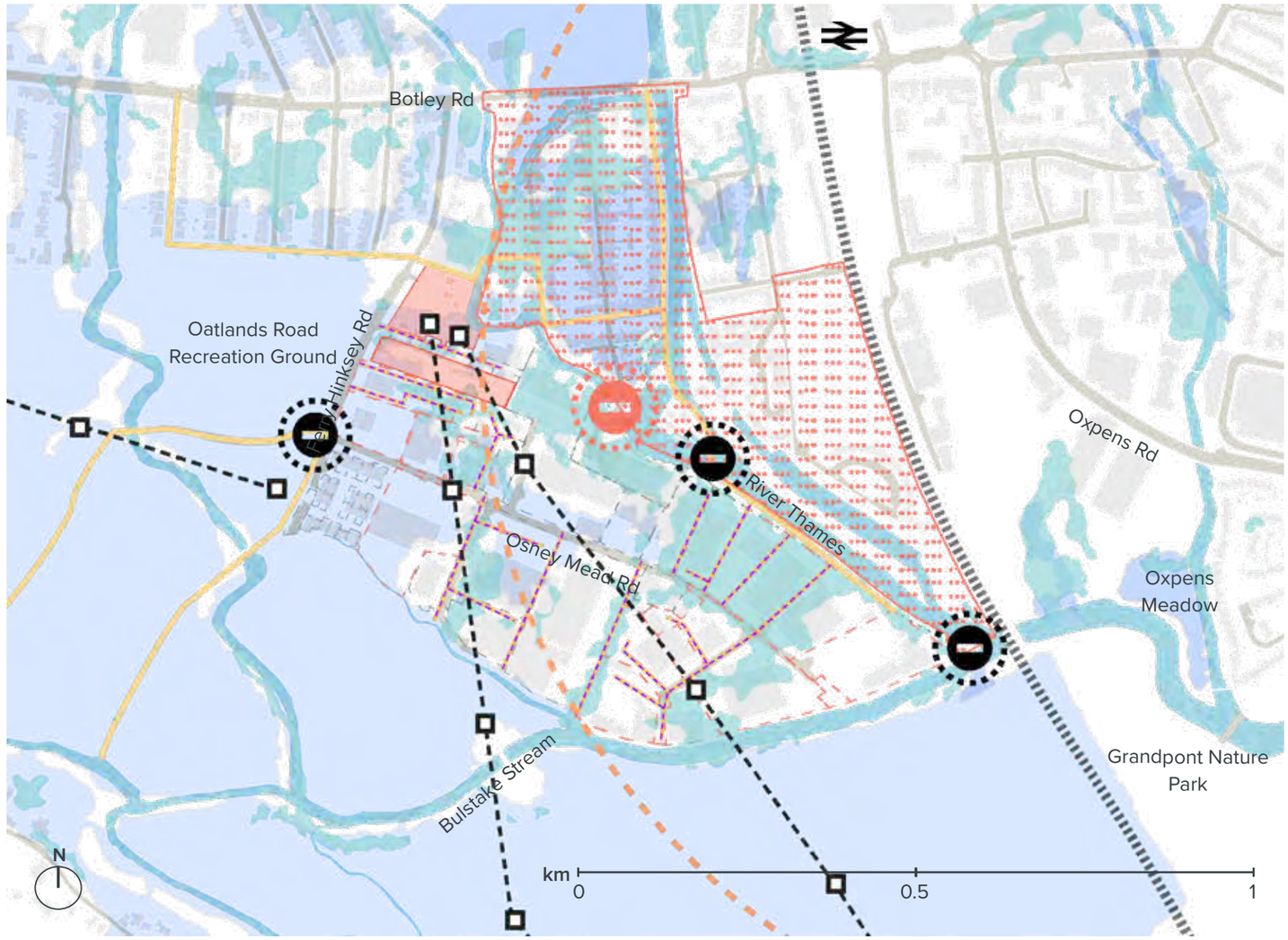
The site comes with multiple key constraints, which require careful consideration especially across the different land owners and stakeholders involved.

Flood risk remains one of the major constraints for the site, where majority of the site is under **Flood Risk classification 3A**. Much discussion surrounding flood risk also relates to the problem of limited access points to and from the site, which becomes a greater challenge when Osney Mead would need to serve a greater capacity of people when comprehensive development happens, especially with residential uses.

River connections also remain a challenge, especially when considering both cyclists and pedestrians as users of these crossings. This is most evident in the crossings around the Environmental Agency site, which limit permeability into Osney Mead Industrial Estate from the surrounding areas. This limits access into Osney Mead Industrial Estate to one point for vehicles (Ferry Hinksey Road) and two poor quality pedestrian only access points via the Thames towpath.

Much of the site is comprised in the Oxford Historic Core Area which places **limitations** on **height of buildings.** The Osney Town Conservation area to the north of the site calls for additional sensitivity in designing new connections into the site

Electrical pylons also pose as a challenge to the delivery of development on Osney Mead. Further feasibility work is needed to better understand the costs and planning implications of removing or burying the pylons which may be essential to enable a commercially viable proposal. The SSE substation site will also need to be looked at in a similar way.



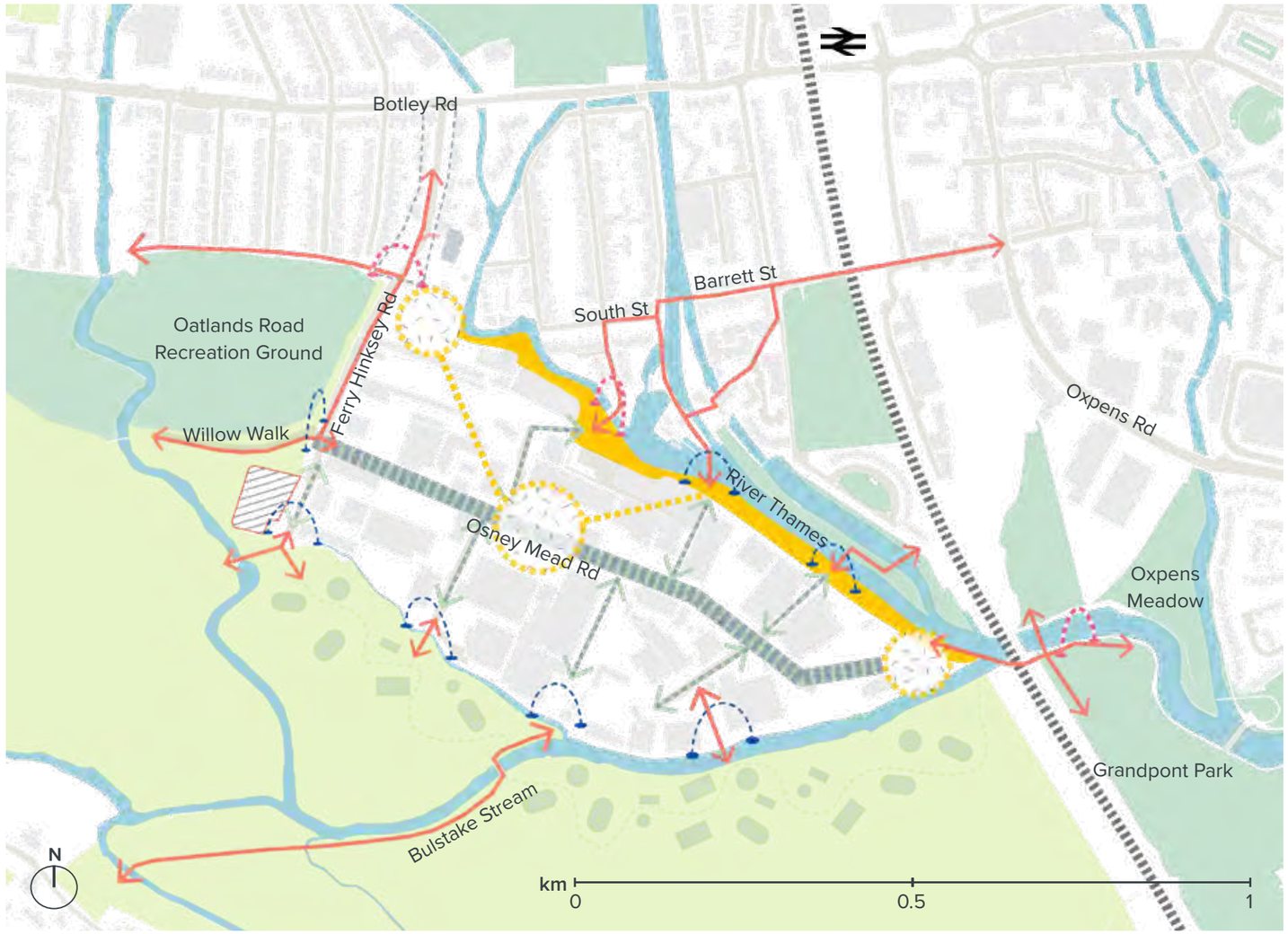
- Fragmented Land Ownership Boundaries
- Flood Zone 3a
- Flood Zone 3b
- Osney Town Conservation Area
- Poor quality access points
- No public Access through EA Site
- Electrical Pylons
- SSE Substation
- Limited Pedestrian or Cyclist accessibility
- Disconnected, dead-end streets
- Oxford Historic Core Area

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Key opportunities to unlock Osney Mead Industrial Estate revolve around **access, place-making** and **sustainable infrastructure.**

Improving connections and the capacity of these connections is vital, creating pleasant and seamless routes within, to and from the site. This includes the improvement of existing routes and the opening of a new route through the EA Depot. Opening up the riverside for greater leisure and recreational activities would also serve both development and communities well.

Furthermore, opportunities can arise when assessing the constraints of the site. For example, the opportunity to implement a major flood mitigation scheme arises to tackle the flood risk issues. This can be done through comprehensive green and blue infrastructure like Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs). An infrastructural approach to sustainability can further support a business case for development and open up the full development potential of Osney Mead.



- Opportunities for new social hubs
- Thames Riverside Opportunity
- Opportunity to activate and connect the nearby green belt edge with recreation grounds and Grandpont, Oxpens Meadows
- Decommissioned SSE Site
- External connections
- Green Spine
- Blue Infrastructure - SuDs
- Secondary Green and Blue connections
- Secondary Gateway
- Primary Gateway

PLACE-MAKING STRATEGY



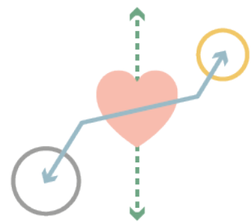
Site Specific Analysis

- Great opportunity of the site in terms of scale and the close proximity to the City Centre/railway station, as well as the natural assets of open countryside and water
- Relatively limited land ownerships over a large site area
- Significant flood risk posed by the surrounding River Thames
- Disjointed land ownership among many different stakeholders
- Poor quality and limited capacity in key access points into the site
- Great opportunity to establish new connections across the River to Osney Island
- Already present cycle infrastructure down Osney Mead



Placemaking Approach

- The opportunity for green and blue infrastructure to address not only environmental challenges but be adapted into a friendly and comfortable public realm network
- Building upon existing urban structure and existing access routes to create a practical urban armature of movement, connections and infrastructure
- Allowing intimate and lively public spaces to emerge from the processional design of streets and flexible urban block typologies



Spatial Strategy

- Early and consistent collaboration between stakeholders and various land owners
- Establishment of clear though flexible guiding design principles to help a robust masterplan framework emerge in future design stages
- Noting of and aligning to broader planning policy which will influence and connect into development on Osney Mead and the intentions of nearby developments
- Allowing for the retention of key buildings or businesses throughout the life of the evolving phases as the area develops through a comprehensive development plan and phased approach, over a long term period

VISION AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Osney Mead's location and opportunity for change is instrumental in realising the wider vision for the West End of Oxford, also aligning with other key documents - most significantly the Local Plan 2036 and Investment Prospectus Draft (2022). It's a site which provides significant opportunity for more innovation, a new working and residential community and a place for culture, arts and leisure. Allocated in the Local Plan 2036 (Policy SP2), Osney Mead is earmarked as a place for a mixed use development which accommodates employment uses, academic uses, student accommodation, employer linked affordable housing and market housing.

The vision of the University aims to create a campus experience like no other which integrates academic staff and students with businesses and enterprise in an ecosystem which sees the academic world and public world benefiting each other.

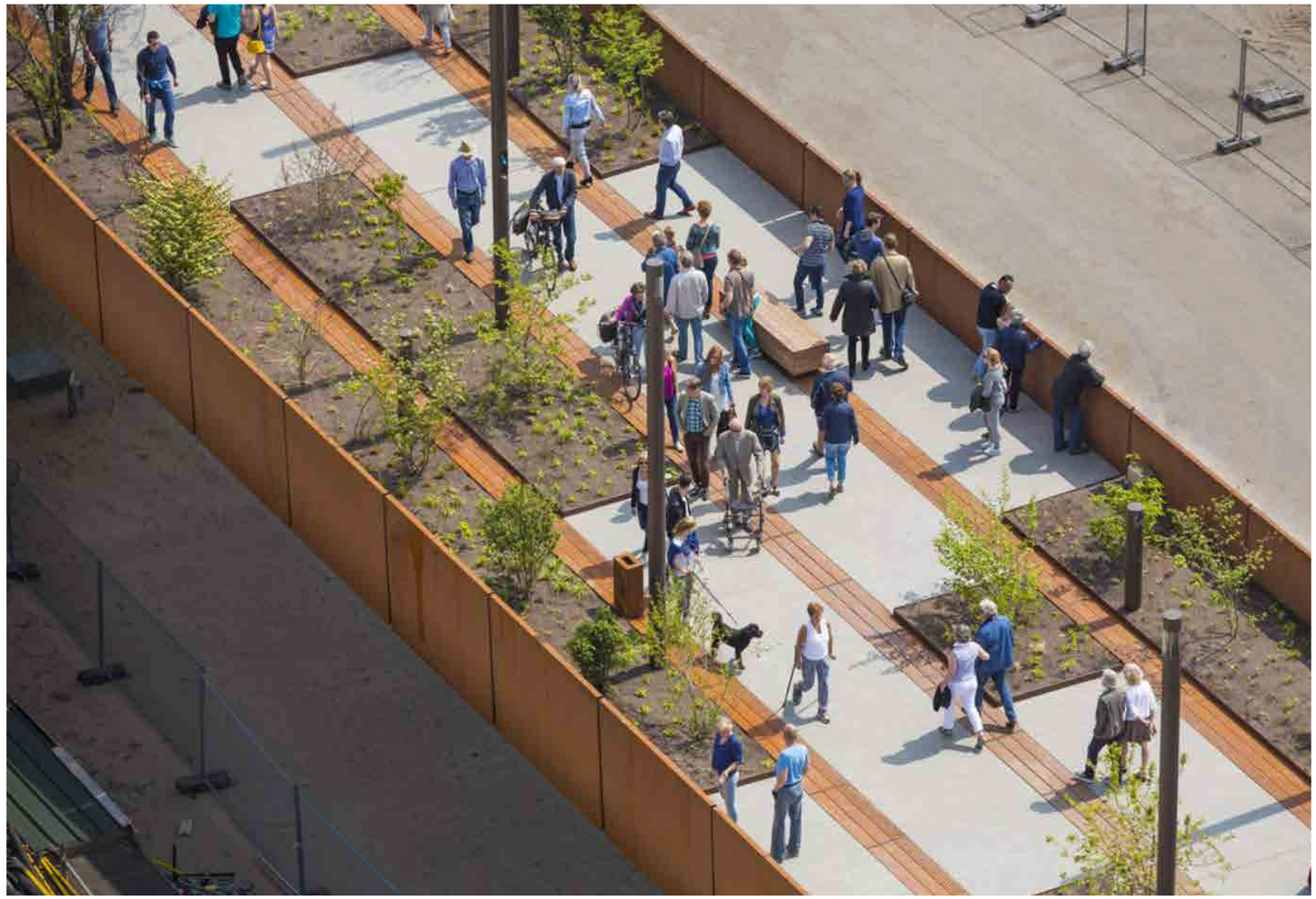
The site already has a number of existing assets - a frontage to a number of watercourses; a rich mix of existing businesses; proximity and views to the green belt; and is close to the City Centre. The vision for Osney Mead builds on these assets whilst also looking holistically at the role Osney Mead can play within the West End's future.

Due to both Osney Mead's challenges and its natural assets, a vision for the site should first and foremost be led by sustainability. An overarching strategy towards carbon neutrality and the creation of a sustainable circular economy on Osney Mead is the only way to properly insulate it from climate emergency and to allow for the creation of a vibrant place to live and work.

An infrastructural approach will be adopted in delivery of development on Osney Mead to ensure key aspects such as **flood mitigation,** solutions for **pylon undergrounding,** and expanding **transport** and **connectivity** infrastructure.

These measures make the most efficient use of land to fully achieve development goals and to unlock the full potential of Osney Mead as a world leading innovation and sustainable urban quarter.

If executed properly, Osney Mead could build upon the strengths of its strategic location alongside the economic strengths of the city to become a world leading innovation quarter, balancing high level research, global headquarters, and the growing need for high quality housing.



Four design principles have been outlined to illustrate potential development in Osney Mead. These principles are the **key considerations** that go into developing a spatial approach for the wider site.

The **Blue and Green infrastructure** principle discusses spatial approaches to sustainability and the ability of flood mitigation strategies to become an enabler for development.

The **Movement** principle aims to improve connections between Osney Mead, Oxford, and beyond. This principle builds upon existing infrastructure to create transport networks that are pedestrian and cyclist friendly and open up new routes throughout the city.

Urban armature examines various types of public and open spaces. This discusses the variance in types of public space and the uses and activities they foster.

Urban grain proposes innovative built typologies and urban block types to make the most efficient use of land and to create a mix of compatible uses supporting a vibrant public realm.

The development of these principles stems from the baseline analysis undertaken in the preceding pages and represent the most pressing challenges and opportunities identified in Osney Mead. These principles are layered together to create an **overarching spatial strategy** which, while conceptual, sets out a spatial approach to place shaping on Osney Mead.



Blue and Green Infrastructure



Movement



Urban Armature



Urban Grain

BLUE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Design principles



The environmental context of Osney Mead alongside the global context of the climate crisis requires us to look at developing and implementing an essential ‘blue- green’ framework to unlock the site. A thorough technical and environmental analysis of the site should be a pre-requisite to determine the quantity of development (including housing) that may come up for development.

Trees, swales, and planting along central green spine and green fingers to introduce biodiverse landscapes and improve urban greening

Promotion of active sports and recreation to encourage healthy living and relationship with natural environment

Creating a wide range of new spaces for play

Allowing for community food growing to encourage sustainable lifestyles

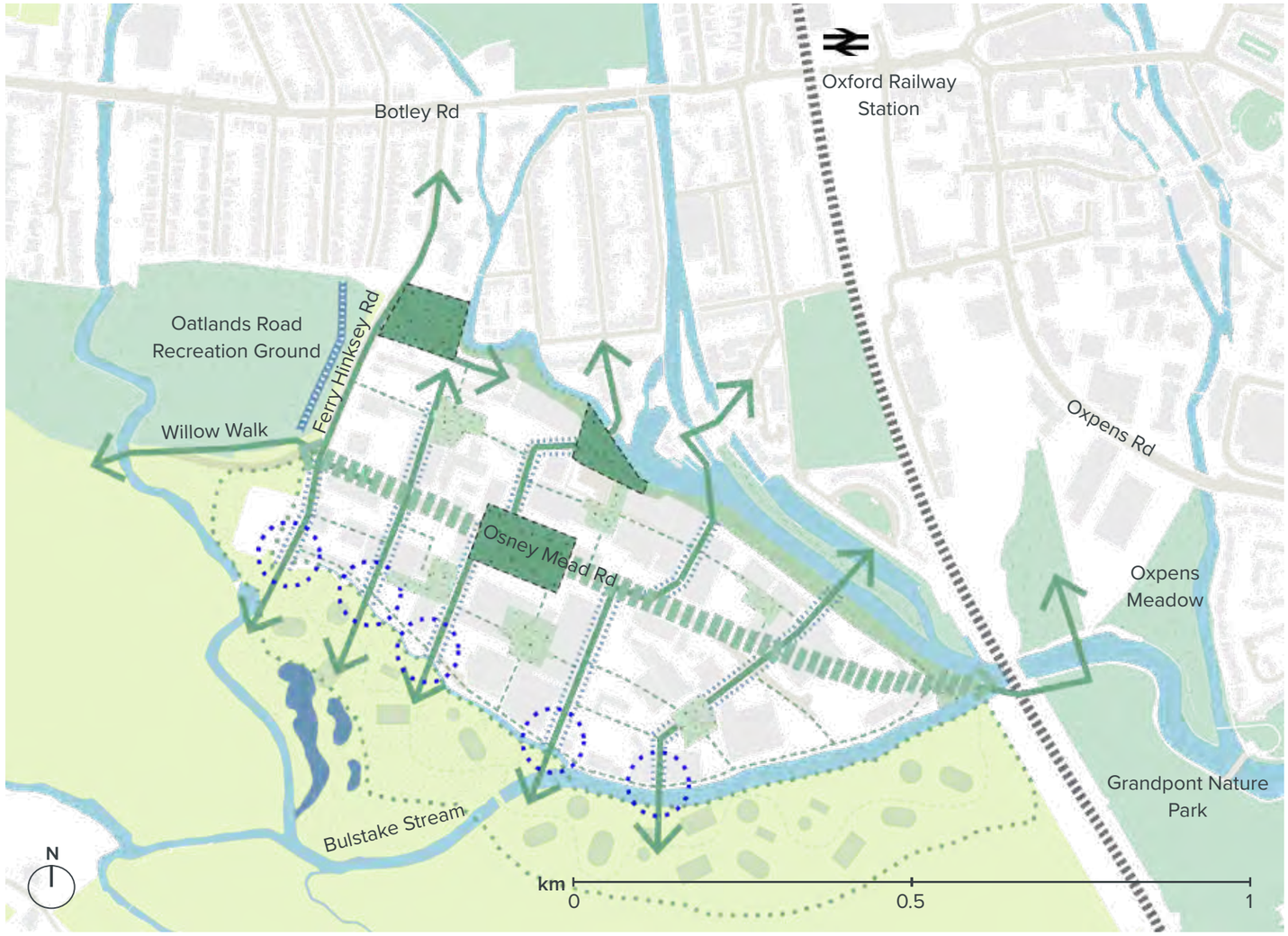
Nature trails making more accessible and improving interaction between the natural and human environment including the green belt areas and the Thames bank

Distributing a SuDS network throughout the site and most heavily in areas with the highest flood risk to enable comprehensive development

Activating the largely inaccessible and inactive Thames riverfront for public enjoyment

Minimising carbon emissions from transport by encouraging healthy lifestyles and active transport through high quality cycle infrastructure

Safeguarding and expanding biodiversity for long term ecological health



BLUE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Case studies

Hammarby Sjöstad





Location: Stockholm, Sweden

Year Completed: 1990s



Hammarby Sjostad is a former industrial area on the outskirts of Stockholm which in the early 1990s underwent complete regeneration through a well-established collaborative process between planners, designers and all stakeholders and around the principles of sustainability. The design combines density with walkability and incorporates green and blue infrastructure into everyday routes and spaces. Canals run through the site provide waterfront walkways and biodiverse reed ponds bringing natural flood prevention alongside the aesthetic benefits of green space. Rain water harvesting and recycling has also been integrated into the design of spaces and buildings right from the outset.

Cheonggyecheon River Restoration





Location: Seoul, South Korea

Year Completed: 2005



The Cheonggyecheon River Restoration project in Seoul was a major green infrastructure project which redefined an entire urban quarter through green riverside restoration and the returning of biodiversity to formerly built sites. Cheonggyecheon Stream had been covered for decades by a highway overpass. The elevated freeway was demolished to rediscover and revitalise the river as a primary green- blue asset for the centre of Seoul. The River, which cuts through the city was once a polluted eyesore but today has been transformed into an 11 kilometre long linear public space. The new friendly green interface with the river has allowed the space to become key to the city's social life. The revitalisation project also brings many other benefits to the citizens of Seoul - it reduces the urban heat island effect, air pollution, increases overall biodiversity and provides flood protection for up to a 200-year flood event.

MOVEMENT

Design principles



Establishing robust principles of movement can better integrate Osney Mead within its context and unlock its potential to be a thriving destination for local businesses and communities. A permeable and well integrated network of streets and spaces which prioritise pedestrian and cyclist activity is critical to attract and draw people to this destination.

Improved connections to and from Oxford Railway Station

Expanding bus infrastructure into Osney Mead to better connect it to the West End and the City as a whole

Expanding existing bicycle highways throughout Osney Mead and providing well placed and designed bicycle storage, mobility hubs, and maintenance points.

Ensuring walkability through pedestrian friendly paving strategies, traffic calming measures, and inclusive street space design

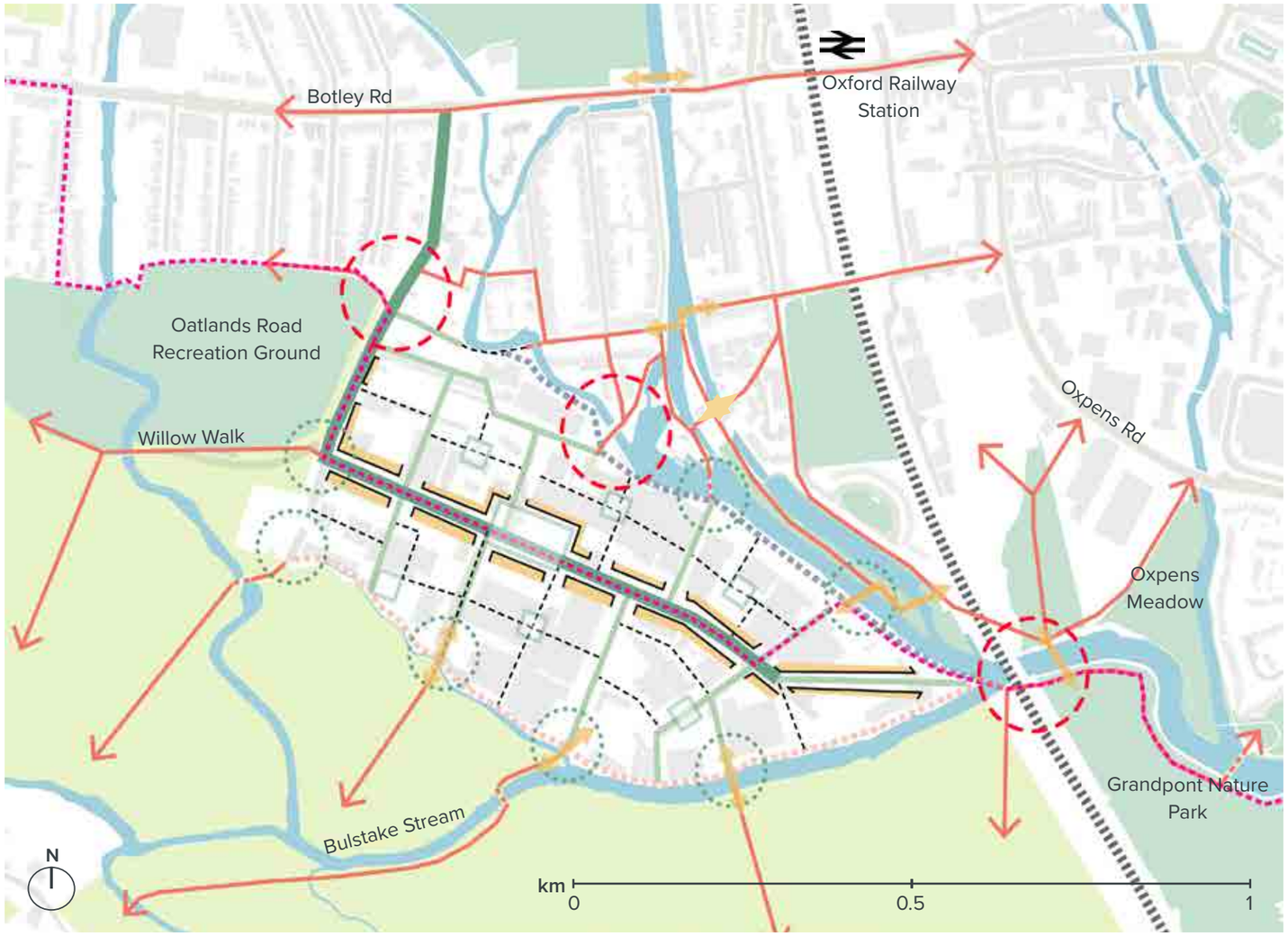
Providing services for emerging forms of transportation such as scooters and e-mobility

Creating a clear hierarchy of streets which are flexible in nature to assist transport planning and easy navigation

Utilising new and existing landmarks with effective and clear signage to guide movement through the site

Establishing key transport gateways and creating new connections at previously inaccessible points into the site such as through the EA Depot

Providing reliable and easily accessible digital infrastructure and integration into the Internet of Things part of the Better Connectivity for Oxfordshire programme



MOVEMENT

Case studies

Chicago Riverwalk







Location: Chicago, USA

Year Completed: 2016

The riverwalk in Chicago combines the creation of a new urban route with pleasant and environmentally conscious public realm design. The site integrates public amenities such as performance spaces and dynamic street furniture along the span of river as it meanders through the city. While the space encourages a steady flow of pedestrians, it also invites people to spend time within the space as they move along. For example, the floating wetlands (pictured above) allow passers-by to passively interact with their natural environment. The architecture is always background, modest and not over-designed. In some ways it remains almost unnoticed as the eye is diverted by the skyscrapers that frame it, by the boats passing along the river and the bars and cafés that now line the Riverwalk — the rents from which are rapidly repaying the loans the city took to build this public space.

Bicycle Snake







Location: Copenhagen, Denmark

Year Completed: 2014

The Bicycle Snake in Copenhagen creates a new urban linkage providing a crucial part of the city's cycling infrastructure. The project creates an elevated bicycle super-highway allowing protected access for cyclists along previously unfriendly routes. The scheme is successful in opening up new routes across canals and through city blocks. An urban realm that is truly committed to diverse forms of active transit should consider such an intervention shows, when provided the proper infrastructure bicycle transit can be very efficient.

URBAN ARMATURE

Design principles



Urban armature is the framework that shapes the form of urban spaces. It represents the spaces between buildings and their importance as interstitial spaces varying in scale and hierarchy to create places for socialisation, recreation, play and enjoyment at all times of day. Osney Mead's public realm must deliver diverse spaces and experiences to help support a night time economy.

Comfortable, multi-use street furniture to allow comfortable seating and interaction

Active frontages along public squares creating an animated, lively, and safe public space

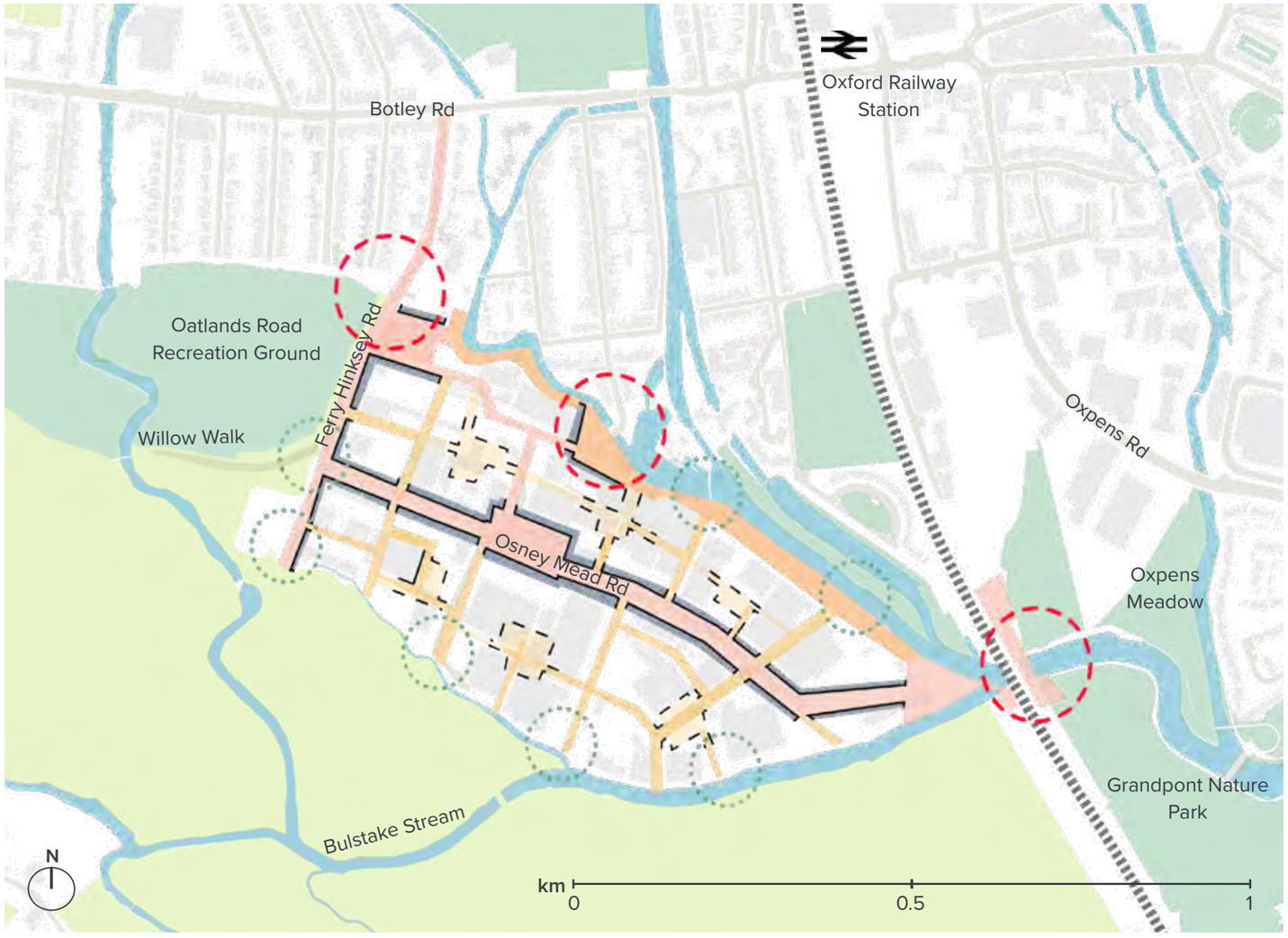
Flexible market spaces allowing for dynamic meanwhile uses and activities

Creating visual and physical permeability through Osney Mead to improve legibility

Spaces for public art in key public space which inspire and enlighten also promoting way finding and legibility

Aligning public space along key gateways to channel activity and create a welcoming entry into the site

Encouraging lively street activity in principal public spaces bringing senses of comfort and animation and support the creation of a 24-hour economy



Primary Gateway

Secondary Gateway

Primary public space - Vibrant and active public life

Secondary Public Space - Internal spaces, working yards, and spill out areas for local businesses

Thames Roverfront improvement and spaces to create special destinations along the river

URBAN ARMATURE

Case studies

Banyoles Old Town Refurbishment





Location: Banyoles, Spain

Year Completed: 2008



The regeneration of the public spaces in the historic town of Banyoles reflect important principles in how public space is approached. The regeneration, undertaken by MIAS Architects in 2008, emphasises and works to the strengths of the varying hierarchies of public space. In this way it recognises that different spaces have different functions, feelings, and looks. These range from the wide central plazas suited to market activity or meanwhile uses to more intimate minor spaces with comfortable street furniture.

This scheme integrates a semi-open canal which runs through the town acting as a natural drainage system and a playful element used for recreation. Complete separation of water systems has been carried out to create clean rainwater canals and sewage systems which were previously mixed. New pedestrian and low traffic use of streets enables and fluid and more organic use of the public realm and spaces.

Immac^2 Mixed Use Project





Location: Tienen, Belgium

Year Completed: 2019



The Immac^2 Mixed Use Project by Urban Platform architects takes up an abandoned school site, housing several historic buildings. The scheme injects modern infill buildings and a fresh public realm design into the historic fabric to create a dynamic and visually and functionally interesting composition. The layout of the space is guided by the existing urban fabric provided by the standing buildings with new streets and squares being carved out from the spaces in between buildings. Co-working and community spaces are designed in complimentary styles and material palettes clustering around public spaces.

URBAN GRAIN

Design principles



The current coarse urban grain of Osney Mead reflects the less intense demands on movement and agglomeration. However new development should be designed to imitate tighter street patterns. A strong main street should connect up a series of secondary streets with interconnected spaces. Large urban footprints accommodating uses, such as university labs, could be mixed with smaller footprints, such as start-up businesses and housing to create a rich variety of uses and mix of urban block typologies.

Creating a comfortable sense of enclosure by facing buildings onto public space

Mixing uses in blocks to ensure access to diverse services and uses and to ensure inactive pockets do not emerge

Establishing a vibrant 24-hour economy through the promotion of strong arts and culture

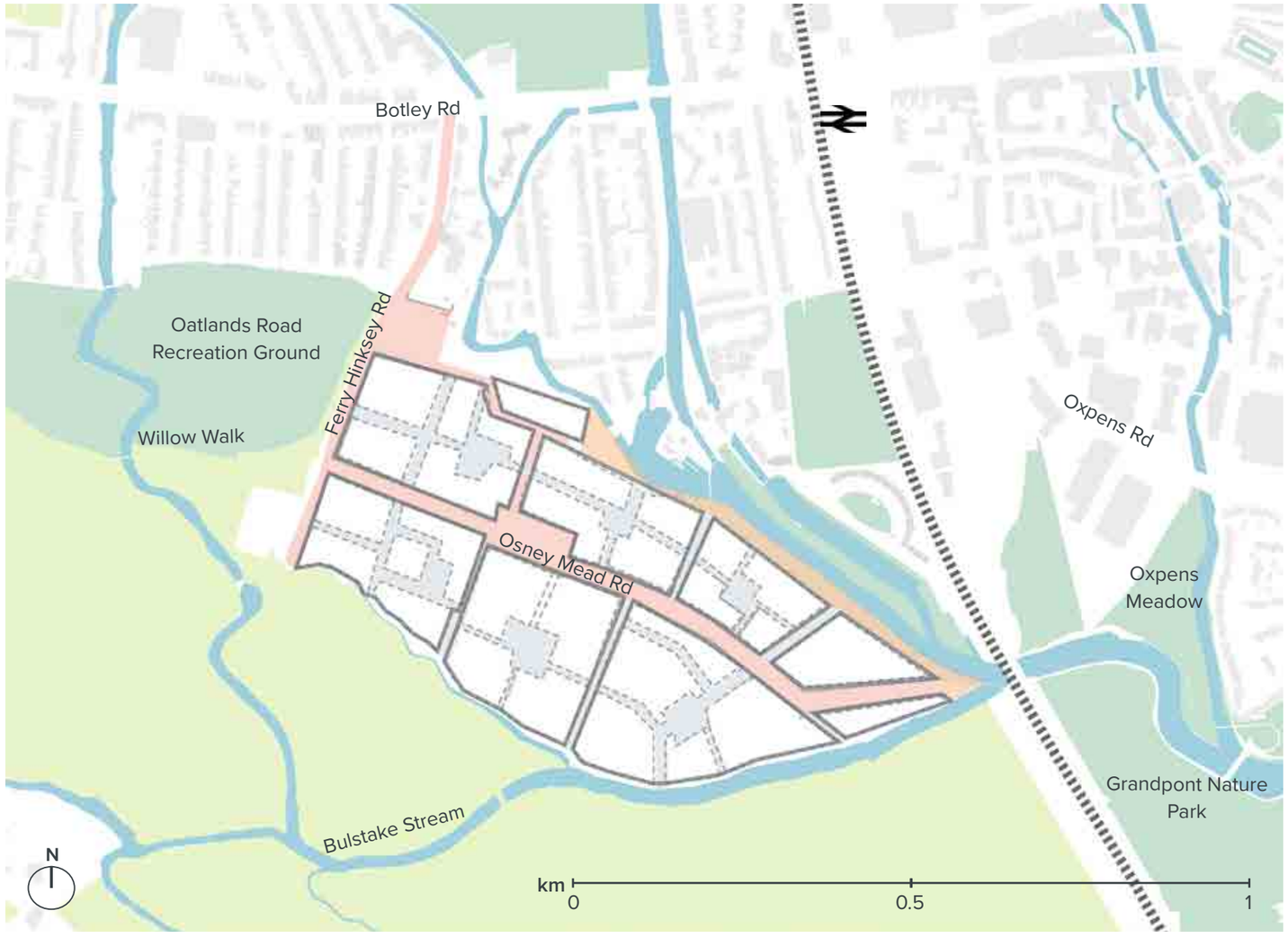
Café and retail opportunities along public space with the ability to spill out into the public realm

Flexible design guidance allowing for the creation of landmark blocks adding to Oxford's characteristic skyline and improving wayfinding

Encouraging diverse and interesting building typologies

Providing creative spaces for innovation through maker spaces and co-working spaces and yards

Fostering multigenerational activities and providing diverse housing types



Possible urban block parameters

Primary public movement route

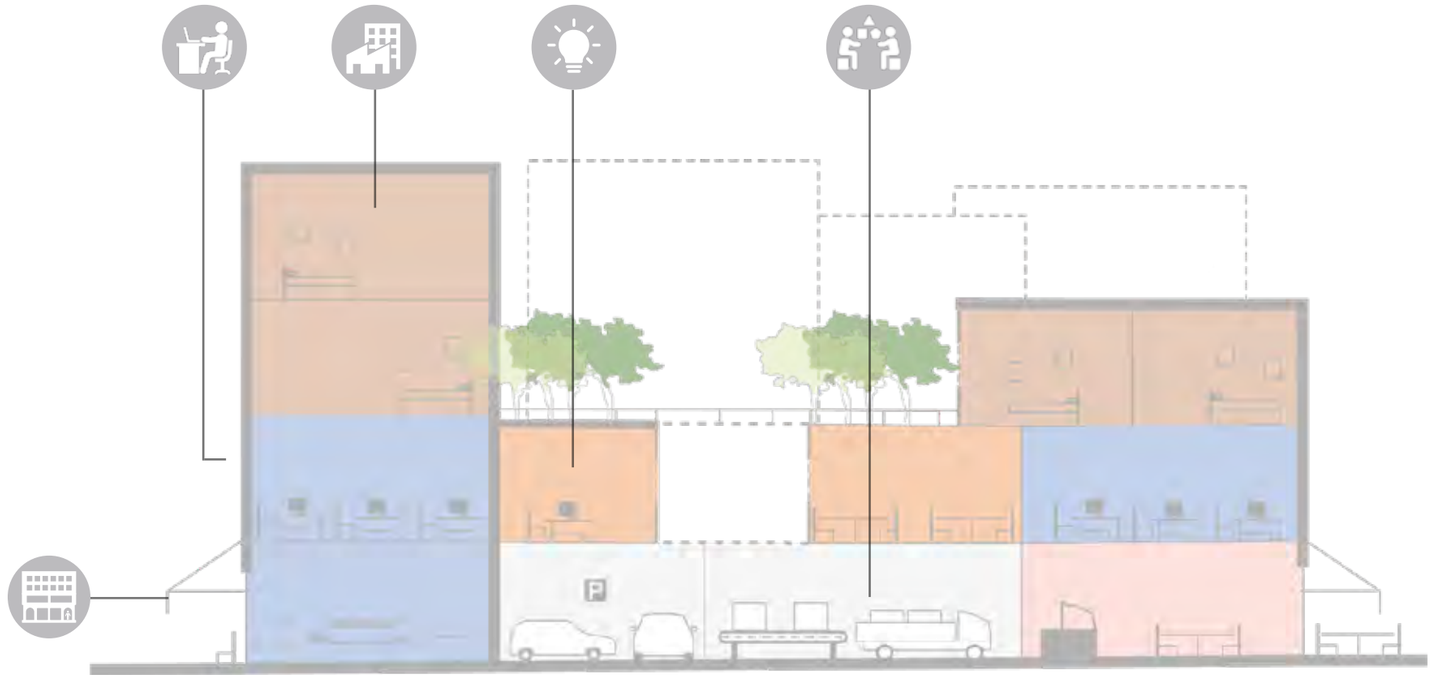
Secondary and tertiary routes

Riverfront movement route

URBAN GRAIN

Vertical Stacking of Mixed Uses

- Encouraging more efficient land usage instead of single use- single plot concepts
- Limiting on street parking to protect pedestrian and cyclist priority spaces
- Mixed use and flexible building and urban block typologies to allow for vertical stacking of compatible uses (eg: retail with labs or offices above, or business uses with housing above)
- Dressing light/semi-industrial uses with active frontages and positive street interfaces
- Flexible building typologies presents various options for building use to support changing objectives
- Sustaining complementary building uses to ensure efficient use and commercial viability.



P10 Mixed-use building

Split, Croatia

2009

The P10 mixed-use building in Split, Croatia by Studio UP engages in a dynamic use of height and vertical stacking of uses to make the most of a limited and underutilised site. The building combines housing with diverse uses from retail, office space, and parking to an archaeological museum. A comprehensive system of internal pedestrian routes connects residents to the amenities and uses throughout the building. Less active uses such as parking are nested towards the centre of the building. The building also makes use of inventive layouts to maximise the amount of natural light coming in and to preserve historic views through building gaps to maintain heights.

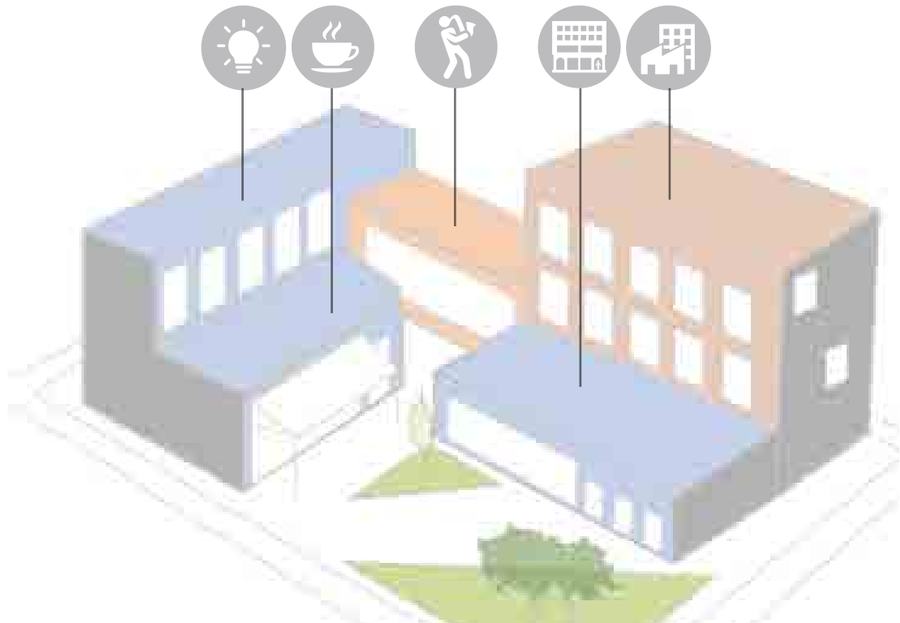




URBAN GRAIN

Shared Building and Public Space Usage

- Providing a diverse and easily accessible selection of activities and functions for all users within the buildings
- Encouraging active ground floor uses such as shops, cafés, restaurants, maker spaces/SMEs to spill out and create active and vibrant public spaces
- Public space that is multi-functional and complements the needs of the surrounding community
- A range of uses sharing common facilities such as entrances, foyers and other communal spaces such as shared canteens, toilets etc
- Provision of sufficient housing of various types in appropriate locations to sustain a vibrant mixed use place which supports a 24-hr economy.



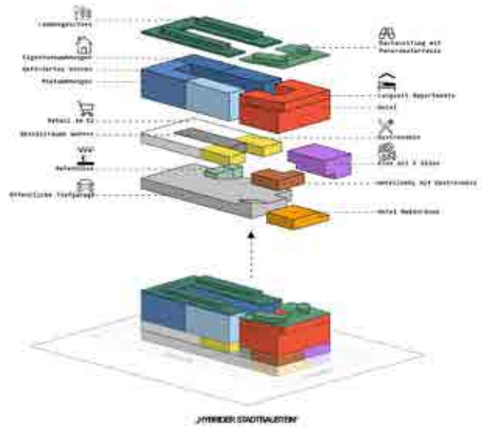
KPTN Warehouse Inspired Design

Hamburg, Germany

2020

The KPTN building by Blauraum architects is part of the HafenCity regeneration area in the Port of Hamburg and takes cues from the area's industrial heritage to create a multi-functional urban node. Taking stylistic inspiration from a warehouse, the building is deceptive as within its walls it houses a wide range of uses including housing, retail, restaurants, a cinema, and more. Building uses are determined semi-hierarchically with more private uses such as hotel rooms and residential apartments on the highest floors and restaurants and retail along the ground floor and below. Units in the building are modular, being able to be configured in variable sizes and with the opportunity to redefine housing patterns within the building.





URBAN GRAIN

Interstitial Spaces

- Allowing spatially interesting and varied public spaces
- Public spaces that emerge from and work with the surrounding urban grain
- Integration of green and blue infrastructure into public spaces of all sizes
- Making use of all leftover space between buildings for public uses
- Allowing for organic growth of spaces through incremental initiatives and meanwhile uses
- Interstitial spaces that are flexible in use and can be used by multiple groups and functions.



University of Los Andes Public Space

Bogotá, Colombia

2014

The public space designed around the Integrated Care Centre of the University of Los Andes shows how higher education and research buildings may positively contribute to creating a successful and cohesive public realm. This design provides a space for users of the University building to spill out into for socialisation and meanwhile uses. Providing a public interface between research facilities and the wider city ensures that such uses are well integrated. Such an approach would be relevant in Osney Mead, as the provision of such spaces would well link together both the goals of producing a world leading centre for research as well as a vibrant and effective public space.

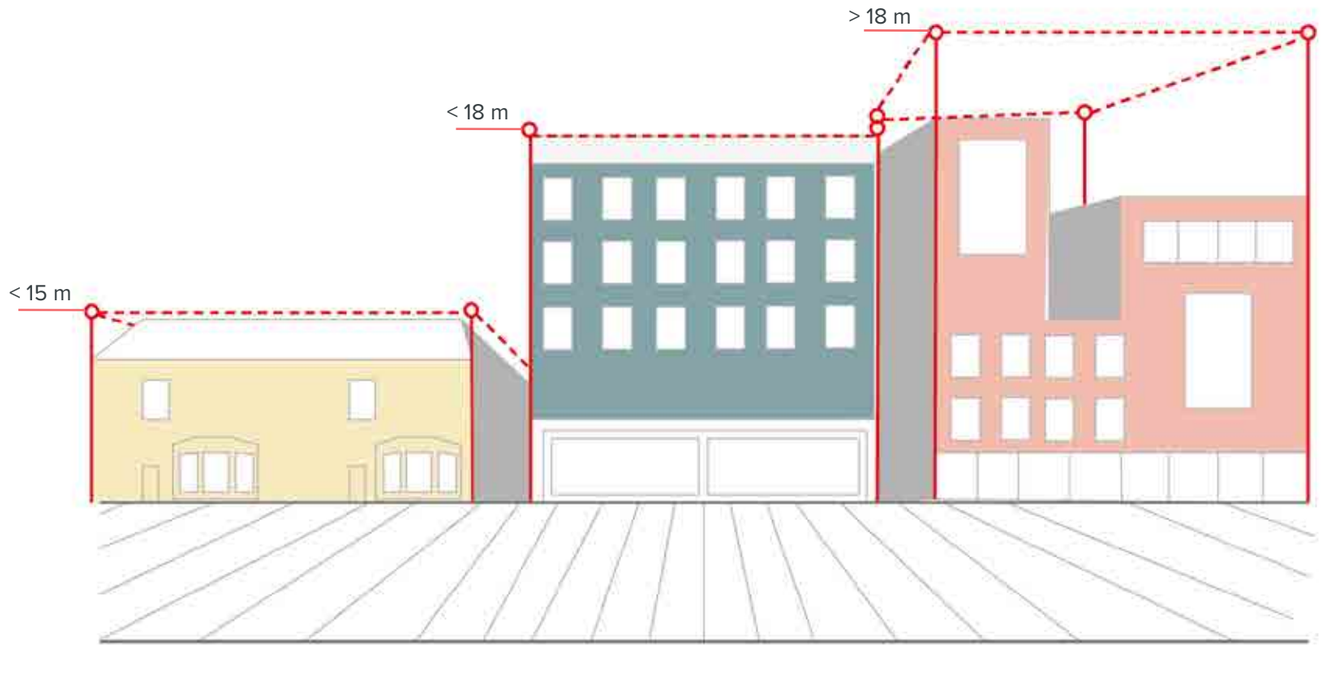




URBAN GRAIN

Design Coding and Flexibility

- Flexibility to produce diverse, interesting, and effective building typologies with opportunity to introduce height at strategic locations
- Design coding that does not impede the creation of good spaces, but includes basic protections such as the protection of strategic views
- Setting high standards for design and materiality to help achieve high quality buildings and public realm
- Multi-disciplinary approach to design and delivery which takes into consideration broader stakeholder interests, needs and standards
- Open and accessible buildings to allow seamless flow of activity and movement allowing for a smooth transition from building to public realm.



Primary interfaces and active frontages along key routes flexibly apply height thresholds. While the Oxford Local Plan says heights should generally not exceed 18.2m within the Historic Core Area (Policy DH2, Local Plan 2036), part of Osney Mead being outside of the Historic Core Area provides an opportunity for increased heights of key buildings

Fish Island Village, Hackney Wick

London, UK

2020

The ongoing Fish Island Village in Hackney Wick addresses a former industrial site to create a mixed use waterfront community. The development is notable in its flexible approach to urban block and architectural typologies. This creates a diverse and visually interesting townscape. Buildings within the envelop of the parameter block work well together in a composition but are simultaneously treated individually, bringing about a built language of heights, materials, and styles.





198

SPATIAL STRATEGY

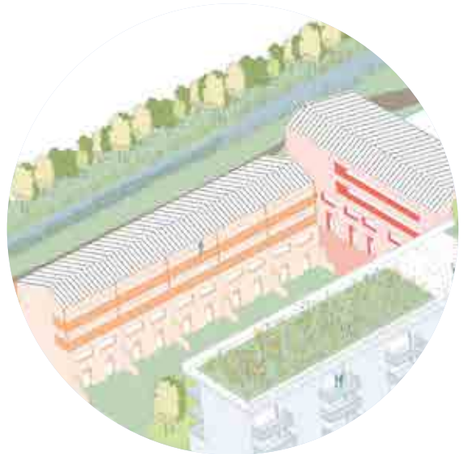
The overall spatial strategy for Osney Mead builds on the four design principles outlined in this chapter to create a single holistic vision which considers the strengths and opportunities of the site. For example, the green and blue infrastructure forms an integral part of the movement and street network to create opportunities for SuDS, rain gardens and floodable landscapes along the green-blue fingers running through the site. The diagram shows an indicative layout to achieve the spatial strategy. The diagram shows an indicative layout to achieve the spatial strategy.

The public spaces will all have varying character and form part of the urban blocks to create interesting break out spaces for a range of activities. Spaces in-between the buildings all have varying character - some being very public whilst others being for the businesses and residents that use them. This will create a series of interconnected public spaces with different purposes and uses. The Spatial Strategy seeks to provide broad design parameters for a masterplan to come forward in the next stages. Further technical work and stakeholder engagement should inform future work.

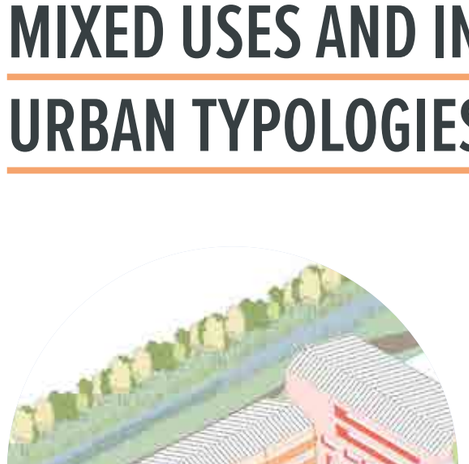


- Tree planting along streets
- Secondary routes / network
- Landmark Buildings
- Green/ blue infrastructure - along key routes (Floodable landscapes, SuDs, raingardens)
- Working Heart
- Social Heart
- Ferry Hinksey Road Gateway Plaza
- Central Spine
- Interstitial public spaces
- Primary interfaces and active frontages along key routes/ spaces
- Gateway Public Spaces linking to the city centre

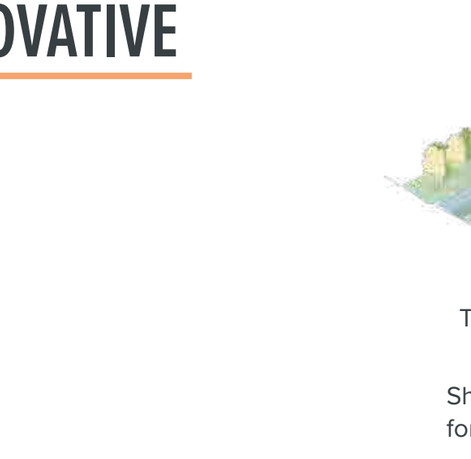
MIXED USES AND INNOVATIVE URBAN TYPOLOGIES



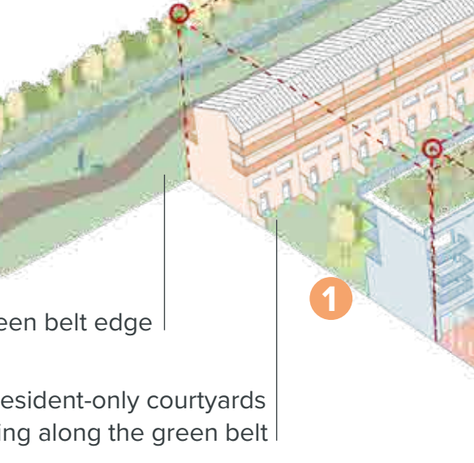
1 **Worker housing** with a range of suitable homes and typologies to activate the green belt edge



2 **Multi-generational public space** for families and community use spillout with a range of active ground floor uses (Workshops, Maker spaces, Research Labs, small scale industries etc.) To animate the space



3 **Flexible Streets** - encouraging sustainable transport modes such as cycling, walking and use of buses with integrated green/ blue infrastructure



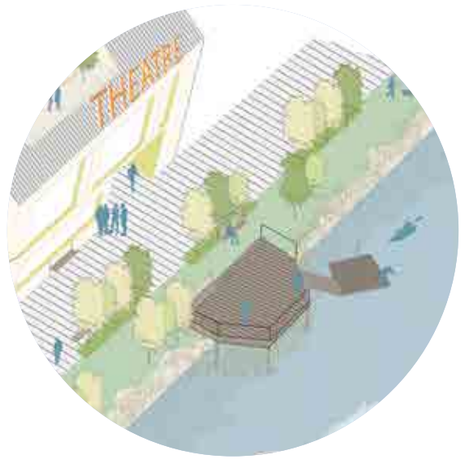
4 **Rooftop spaces for communities** - food growing, entertainment, social spaces and opportunities for rainwater harvesting, enhancing local ecology and biodiversity

Urban block height parameters which allow flexibility and respond to the principles set by the Historic Core Area

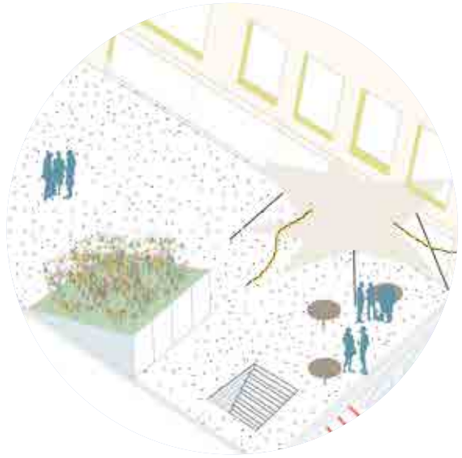




5 **Adaptable market sheds -** for meanwhile uses able to house temporary pop ups, modular structures and other curated events



6 **Reactivating the interface with the River Thames** through the creation of a lively and sociable river walk animated with a range of uses and activities along the river edge

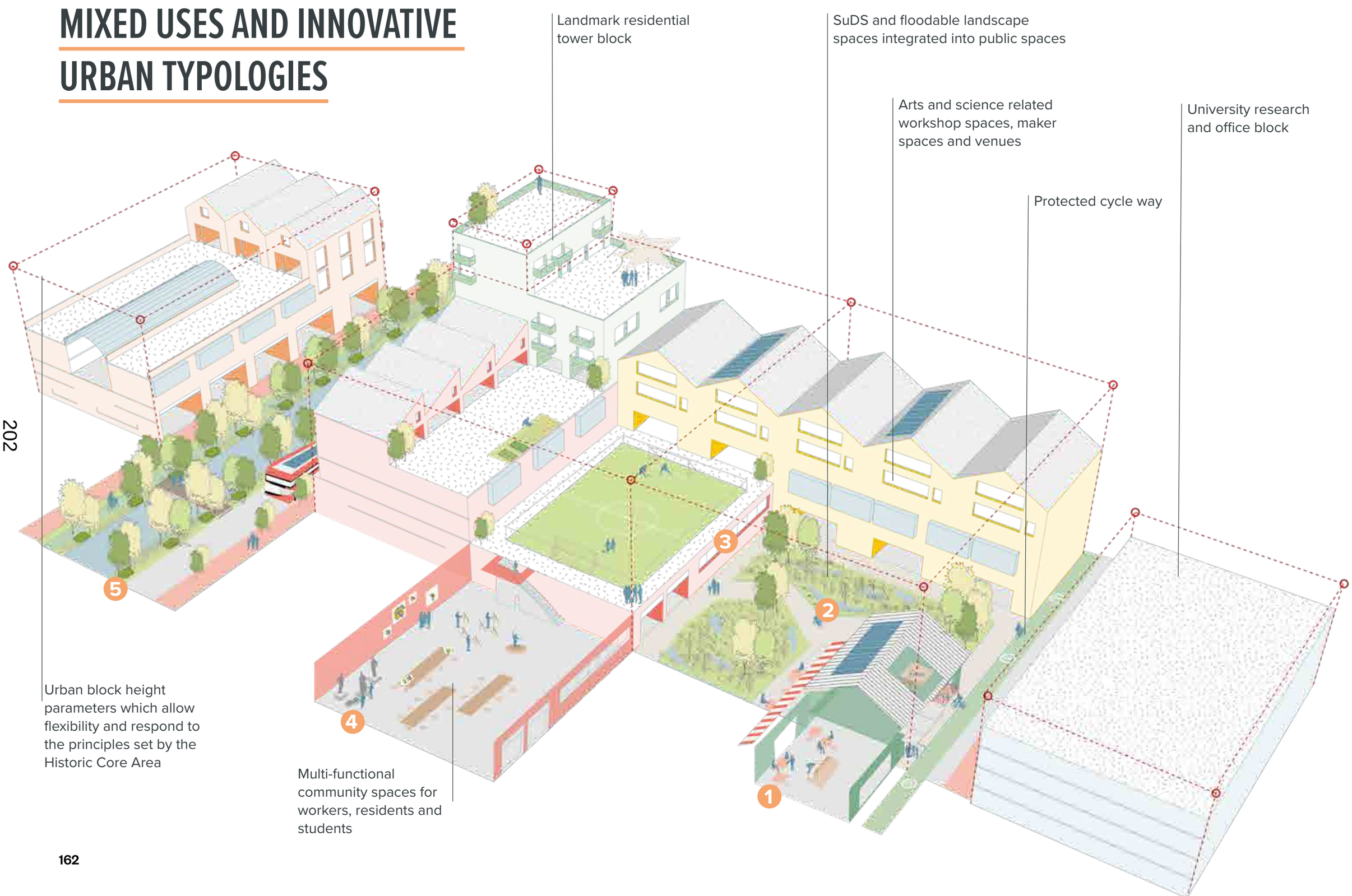


7 **Lightwells** to provide natural light for interior spaces within wide building footprints and create rooftop access as additional amenity space



8 **Street front animation** - restaurants, cafés, bars and other entertainment/ leisure related uses spill out onto the public realm and help to animate key street frontages

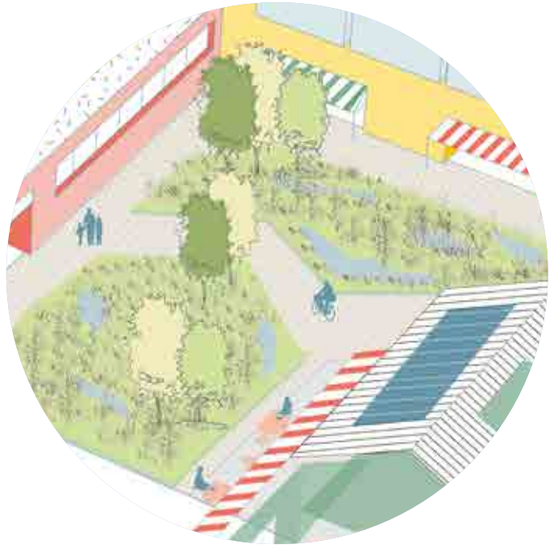
MIXED USES AND INNOVATIVE URBAN TYPOLOGIES



202



1 **Mobility hub** providing cycle repair, parking, and café space and animation in public square



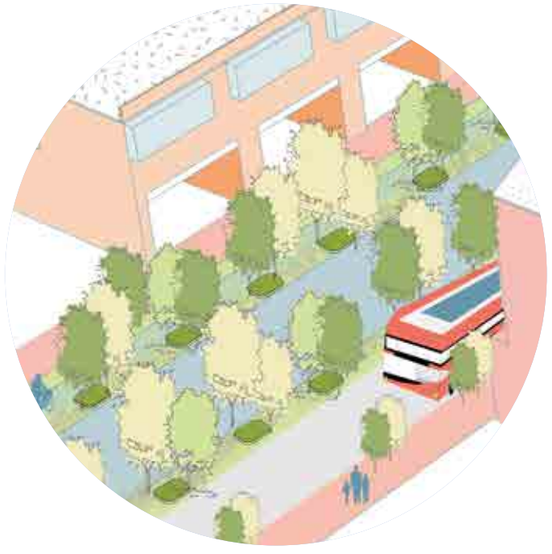
2 **Floodable landscapes**, SuDs and raingardens integrated into square - these could also be play spaces and meeting/ seating areas when dry



3 **Rooftop sports** and **activity space** attached to research and creative spaces attached to research labs, arts and creative focused workshop spaces and community uses - to encourage active and healthy lifestyles



4 **Community uses** integrated into mix with shared amenities and spaces between various users within the buildings



5 **Green-Blue routes** - offering significant urban greening, swales/SuDs/ rain gardens as integral part of pedestrian - cyclist friendly routes with good access to public transport

LAND USES

Conceptual Section One

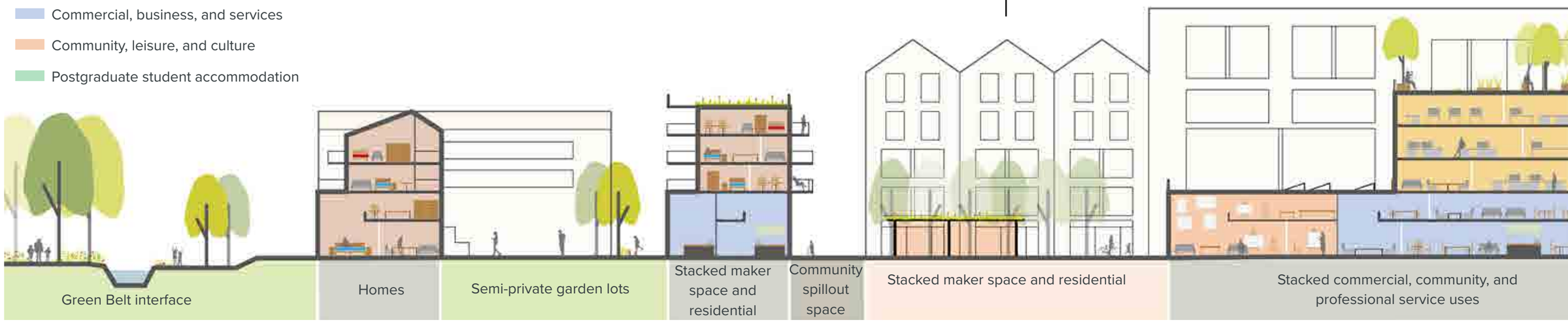
A broad mix of uses are essential to create a vibrant public realm; and a stable and self-reliant economy. Osney Mead will need to encourage night time economy and be a 15-minute neighbourhood - all of which requires a careful mix of uses. Complementary functions and uses will need to be co-located to create a viable and cohesive environment. Vertical and horizontal stacking of uses can be challenging and should be carefully designed to consider noise levels, vibrations and structural spans of wider building footprints which can allow for such stacking.

Mixing housing, community and commercial uses alongside world leading research facilities and global HQs aims to create a welcoming and characterful yet productive and innovative urban community. The conceptual section indicates how various uses could be mixed and vertical-horizontal stacking could occur to create opportunities for a series of vibrant destinations and places within the framework.

- Research, Lab, and University
- Residential
- Commercial, business, and services
- Community, leisure, and culture
- Postgraduate student accommodation

Encouraging smaller businesses and SMEs to thrive





Essential blue-green networks
as part of movement routes



Adaptable sheds/market
spaces for multifunctional
meanwhile use opportunities



Effective animation and
improvement of riverside edge





LAND USES

Conceptual Section Two

This section shows a different yet equally rich mix of uses along one of the blue-green fingers through the site. Many of the same principles are retained showing spatial continuity in design. A community driven mobility hub in the working public space provides key services for cyclists, doubling as a café which spills out onto the square. Creative arts, cultural activities and research, science based university functions are stacked vertically and horizontally, with shared access to amenity spaces which can be used by various users through various hours of the day.

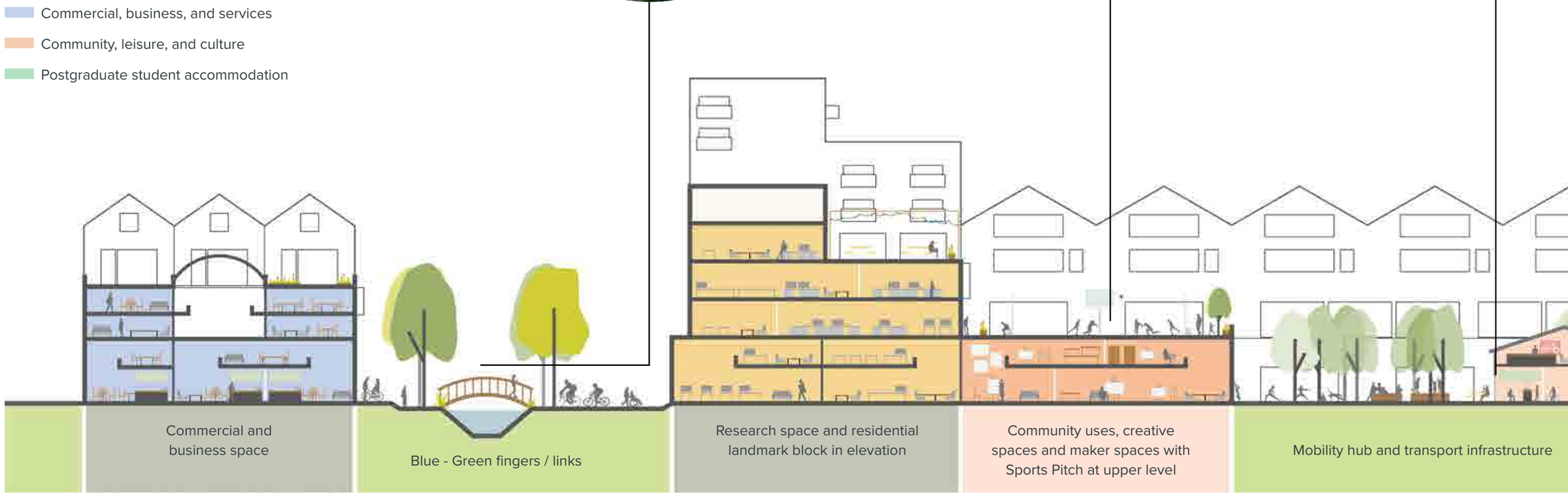
- Research, Lab, and University
- Residential
- Commercial, business, and services
- Community, leisure, and culture
- Postgraduate student accommodation

Encouraging smaller businesses and SMEs to thrive



Usable rooftop spaces for sports and community uses





Effective use of interstitial spaces - active frontages, animation of spaces and seasonal activities





KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES

In order to deliver a comprehensive development on Osney Mead, flexible yet well-defined delivery objectives must be set out at the start of the process. These delivery priorities will need to be sequenced correctly for the unlocking of any development on the site. These priorities are deliverable through different time scales leading up to the delivery process, from pieces of major infrastructure, to less intensive meanwhile interventions.

Flexibility is important to ensure developments are able to respond to changing needs or contexts throughout the delivery process.

Further feasibility work and an in depth technical and viability analysis will be required as a part of each priority identified.



208

KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES

1 Links and connections:



To unlock the site, new east to west routes in and out of Osney Mead are critical. They may be provided through a multitude of connections - Oxpens Bridge; Osney Lock, making the Environment Agency depot publicly accessible for pedestrians; and South Street to Barrett Street. Existing connections along the Thames pathway and at Osney Lock will need to be strengthened.

3 Securing all the land and property required for the project



Currently, with a complicated and fragmented land ownership, proposals at Osney Mead will need to engage effectively with many stakeholders. A holistic vision which enables the site to come forward in strategic phases should be agreed early on. This includes resolving existing land titles and may make use of compulsory purchase powers.

5 Green and Blue infrastructure:



Establishing the green and blue network on Osney Mead is a key infrastructural priority which will introduce significant green and blue elements to Osney Mead's existing routes. This will need to precede comprehensive redevelopment and offer both immediate environmental and flood defence benefits, as well as long-term benefits in opening the site up for redevelopment. Green and blue infrastructure must be highly effective in flood mitigation, promote and protect ecology and providing amenity space for communities. Designs must consider work on the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme and ongoing works to surrounding watercourses

Delivery drivers and steps to unlock Osney Mead's potential

Meanwhile interventions should precede more substantial development and aid holistic delivery strategies. The focus of these meanwhile interventions should be at Osney Mead's riverside square and along the existing towpath.



2 Meanwhile interventions along Thames riverside

The under-grounding of power lines will enable the comprehensive development of Osney Mead. Without burying or removing these, the site is heavily constrained in terms of new development, also due to flood risk and appearance. This includes the SSI substation which sits at the gateway to the site, coming in from Ferry Hinksey Road. Feasibility work is needed to better understand the costs, a funding strategy and planning implications of removing or burying the pylons which may be essential to enable a commercially viable proposal.



4 Under-grounding of power lines:

The treatment for existing businesses in Osney Mead must be accounted for as an infrastructure priority.



6 Strategy for businesses and relocations:

FUNDING ESTIMATIONS FOR KEY DELIVERY PRIORITIES

Strat	Key Priority	Detail of Priority	Known Infrastructure Cost
Osney Mead	**1. Links and connections**	• New east-west routes in and out of Osney Mead is critical. This may be provided through a multitude of connections - Osney Bridge; Osney Lock, making the EA depot publicly accessible for pedestrians; and South Street to Barrett Street. • Existing connections along the Thames pathway and at Osney Lock will need to be strengthened.	• West end public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals
	2. Meanwhile interventions along Thames riverside	• Meanwhile interventions should precede more substantial development and aid holistic delivery strategies. • Focus of these meanwhile interventions should be at Osney Mead's riverside square and along the existing towpath.	• West end public realm and movement interventions - £500k – to design and development of project proposals
	3. Securing all the land and property required for the project	• Currently with a complicated and fragmented land ownership, proposals at Osney Mead will need to engage effectively with many stakeholders. • A holistic vision which enables the site to come forward in strategic phases should be agreed early on. This includes resolving existing land titles and may make use of compulsory purchase powers.	
	4. Under-grounding of power lines	• The under-grounding of power-lines will enable the comprehensive development of Osney Mead. Without them being put underground or removed, the site is heavily constrained in terms of new development, green and blue infrastructure and appearance. • This includes the SSI substation which sits at the gateway to the site, coming in from Ferry Hinksey Road. A funding strategy for this works will need to be agreed with all stakeholders.	• Underground power lines at Osney Mead - £20m – delivery TBC • The Energy Systems Accelerator start-up and spin-out hub - £800k (phase 1) – delivery in 2022; and £96m (phase 2) – delivery TBC
	5. Green and Blue infrastructure	• Establishing the green and blue network on Osney Mead will need to precede comprehensive redevelopment and offer both immediate environmental and flood defence benefits and long term benefits in opening the site up for potential redevelopment. • Green and blue infrastructure must consider being highly effective in flood mitigation, promoting and protecting ecology and providing amenity space for communities using the site. Designs must consider work on the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) and ongoing works to surrounding watercourses.	• Oxford flood alleviation scheme - £150m – delivery by 2030
	6. Strategy for businesses and relocations	• The treatment for existing businesses in Osney Mead must be accounted for as an infrastructure priority with the goal of protecting businesses and providing relocations of equal value.	

211

FRIDESWIDE SQUARE AND CASTLE MILL STREAM QUARTER

Key Design Aspirations

Transforming the Nuffield West End sites into a vibrant mixed-use quarter which is a place to work, live, study, socialise, play and visit is a critical piece of the Spatial Framework.

Proposals on the three sites which form 'Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream Quarter' will contribute to the vision of becoming a vibrant mixed use quarter which supports an eco-system of workspace and innovation through a mix of uses knitted together with high quality public realm, activated waterside space and a new residential community.

Proposals will need to adhere to strategies set out within the Spatial Framework, including the following site specific principles. A design brief is being developed for the sites but a masterplan goes beyond the timeframe of this Spatial Framework.



MOVEMENT
ENHANCING PEDESTRIAN & CYCLE EXPERIENCE

Enhancing the pedestrian and cycle experience so as to encourage more sustainable travel, promote health and well-being and provide a better setting for new development.

- Creation of a western gateway at Friedeswide Square
- Better north-south connectivity through the area, connecting Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street
- A clear wayfinding strategy for people coming from the railway station to city centre
- Improvements to the pedestrian and cyclist experience of Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street



URBAN ARMATURE
PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS AND ACTIVATION

Public realm which promotes legibility, feels safe, creates joy and celebrates existing assets. This transformation needs to respond to the importance of this as a gateway to Oxford.

- Celebration and sensitivity towards existing heritage walls
- Greening of streets and public realm
- Wayfinding interventions which improve legibility and navigation.
- Ground floor activation



GREEN AND BLUE
STRONGER CONNECTION TO GREEN AND BLUE ASSETS

Connecting activity to the asset of Castle Mill Stream and surrounding trees; promoting biodiversity and ecology and connecting people with nature.

- Creating a public space adjacent to the Castle Mill Stream which is active and celebrates the site's history
- Greening Frideswide Square
- Retaining existing trees and consider opportunities for planting new trees, especially on Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street
- Promoting ecology on rooftops



URBAN GRAIN
MIXED USES AND SYNERGIES WITH PUBLIC SPACES

A rich mix of uses which creates a vibrancy which fosters innovation and joy. An eco-system of workspace and innovation for a variety of business types and active ground floor uses alongside residential. An innovative roofscape with key moments of height - enhancing legibility.

- Diverse built typologies and flexible floor-plates
- Design to be sensitive to surrounding heritage assets
- Moments of height to aid legibility
- Strong relationship with built form of Nuffield College

FRIDESWIDE SQUARE AND CASTLE MILL STREAM QUARTER

Key Design Aspirations

Design principles for this quarter include:

1. Creation of high quality waterside public realm on the car park site allowing north-south permeability between Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street
2. Reactivate the Island and Frideswide Square sites with active frontages and a mix of office and residential
3. Introduction of a new commercial building on the car park site with an active ground floor enhancing new waterside public realm
4. Potential for meanwhile use of vacant space and units while longer term development plans come forward
5. Opportunity for height on the island and car park sites to be sensitively incorporated
6. Opportunity to accommodate a range of types and sizes of businesses
7. Opportunity to enhance the evening economy via the mix of uses
8. Complement opportunities for enhancement to the public realm and streets around the Nuffield West End sites
9. Opportunity for the South Frideswide Square and island sites to assist with legibility and wayfinding
10. Opportunity to provide enhancements to the public realm on Becket Street to improve the setting of the heritage assets of St Thomas Martyr Church and Abbey, and to respond to proposals coming forward on the Becket Street Car Park



Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream Quarter

Early Indicative Land Use Quantum proposed by developer*

(Nuffield West End sites only and subject to site masterplanning and design development)

- **58 residential units**
- **30,000 sqm commercial business space**
- **Supporting active ground floor uses**

*Subject to further discussion and consultation

FRIDESWIDE SQUARE AND CASTLE MILL STREAM QUARTER

Key Delivery Ingredients

To ensure a comprehensive development which will be successful over a long period of time, several key delivery ingredients should be brought together. These ingredients have some flexibility around the timing of their staging, though as a whole they are important to the success of the development.

Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream Quarter's location on a key transport axis in close proximity to the station makes the site immediately within a site of activity. For this reason, its key delivery ingredients aim to maximise the efficiency of development and its integration into this area which is subject to significant change.



Meanwhile uses in vacant units: There are already several vacant or under-utilised units in the island site. Housing meanwhile uses in these units may support delivery strategies and create early interest and activity. Similar meanwhile solutions are found on the nearby Frideswide Square.



Creation of a new public space adjacent to Castle Mill Stream: Creation of a vibrant public space which connects with the Castle Mill Stream is an important contribution of this development. Opportunities also exist for enhancement to existing public realm, for example Middle Fisher Row.



Public realm improvements along Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street: Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street, which bound the island site on both sides, are in great need of public realm improvements. A holistic strategy needs to be considered which should prioritise pedestrians and cyclists.



Improvements to station gateway and Frideswide Square: The station gateway aims to deliver a new and improved arrival into Oxford and signifies the West End. A holistic vision will be needed for the station which include public realm improvements to all surrounding streets and spaces, including Frideswide Square.



Land ownership challenges: A few key elements on the development site are not owned by the developers, including the Oxford Retreat, Middle Fisher Row Gardens, the eastern bank of the Castle Mill Stream and the Lighthouse pub. Resolving these land ownership challenges could help to facilitate development coming forward strategically. This in particularly important in the opening up of the Castle Mill Stream.

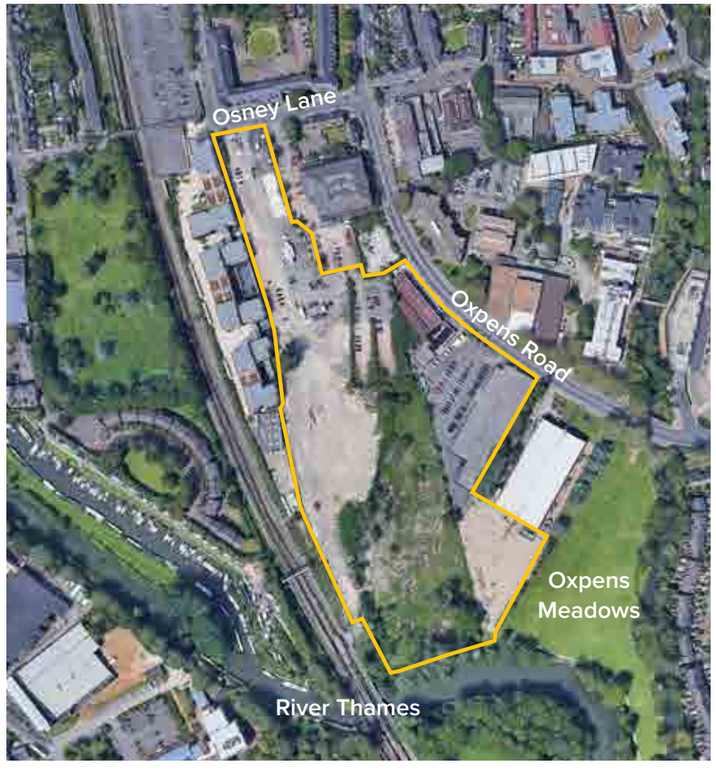
OXPENS

Oxpens has the opportunity to provide a mixed use neighbourhood that opens up the riverside to provide a new public space for Oxford. There is significant opportunity to provide new homes and jobs at scale through residential, commercial and community uses as part of the Area of Change established within the Oxford Local Plan.

It's strategic location where city meets nature provides a unique opportunity for a landscape led masterplan which is driven by the character of the River Thames, Oxpens Meadow, the green belt and the heritage of the West End as a seat of industry and productivity for Oxford. It's relationship with Osney Mead, the station and the city centre's core is particularly important.

Oxpens will be a key development within the West End of Oxford with a significant impact as one of the first development projects to come forward. The development of Oxpens will be a first mover within the West End and needs to be considered as the Oxpens road improvements are established alongside strategic transport and bus provision in the West End.

Oxford West End Developments (OxWED), a joint venture between Oxford City Council and Nuffield College will be submitting a planning application in 2022. The majority of land ownership is with the OxWED LLP (Oxford City Council and Nuffield College). Adjoining land ownerships, as they come forward, are expected to deliver against the policy objectives of Policy SP1.



Site location (OxWED)


CGI of proposed new public space

OXPENS

Key Design Aspirations



MOVEMENT

ENHANCING PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE EXPERIENCE

Creating pedestrian and cycle links through this site are essential to link it up with Osney Mead, the railway station, the College site and the city centre core.

- Establishing a legible hierarchy of streets
- The proposed Oxpens Bridge will provide enhanced connectivity between Osney Mead and the green belt south of the Thames, and the station and city centre north of the Thames
- Significant improvements to the pedestrian and cyclist quality of Oxpens Road
- Improved access to Oxpens Meadows, Grandpont Nature Park and green belt
- A clear wayfinding strategy for people coming from the railway station, from Osney Mead and city centre.



URBAN ARMATURE

PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS AND ACTIVATION

A new piece of public realm which promotes activity and creates points of interest along key routes

- A new destination public space
- Improvement of the quality to Oxpens Road
- Different characters of public realm - harder civic spaces to softer green interfaces throughout the development



GREEN AND BLUE

STRONGER CONNECTION TO GREEN AND BLUE ASSETS

Celebrating that this site sits at an urban edge and ecological features of the river, Oxpens meadows, Grandpont Nature Park and the green belt need to drive a landscape led masterplan

- Expanding the meadows into the Oxpens masterplan
- Contributing to the greening of Oxpens Road
- Promoting ecology on rooftops
- Retaining and planting trees
- Maximising views of the river development frontages



URBAN GRAIN

MIXED USES AND SYNERGIES WITH PUBLIC SPACES

A rich mix of uses which creates a vibrancy which fosters innovation and joy. The masterplan must provide a diversity of architectural forms and expressions - with innovative roofscapes, materiality and key moments of height. Buildings must celebrate and enhance the public realm in-between.

- A strong frontage onto destination public space (new public square and Oxpens Meadows) and streets
- Flexible commercial floor-plates meeting needs of headquarters to lab space to start-ups
- Mix of housing tenures and types
- Moments of height/architectural treatment to enhance legibility

OXPENS

Key Design Aspirations

Emerging masterplan for the site have been produced by the design team and have the following design principles:

1. Across the whole of the Oxpens site the provision of homes to respond to housing need within the city and provide the 450 (minimum) homes the Local Plan states
2. Commercial development to provide flexible floorplates appropriate for a variety of enterprises from big offices and laboratories for world leading research institutions to smaller floorplates for start-ups and SMEs
3. Hotel use to address need established within local plan. Opportunity to activate the new public realm with hospitality, cultural and ancilliary uses associated with visitors to the hotel
4. A new amphitheatre providing a new public outdoor gathering space which can host events and provide a place to dwell
5. A strong biodiverse blue and green infrastructure which narrates the journey of water from river to city
6. A new river plaza on the river's edge opening up the Thames to the city and west end
7. A meadow front promenade - a continuous and active terrace along the edge of the floodplain meadows together with a riverfront plaza
8. Ladder of laneways - narrow pedestrian dominated spaces linking places of attraction
9. Cycleway and Oxpens bridge - direct route linking station and communities south of the Thames
10. Expanded meadows - an extension of the meadows into the heart of the development area and articulated with themed gardens and a river front plaza
11. A dynamic roof landscape - a picturesque contribution to Oxford's skyline with industrial inspired and three dimensional greenery
12. Improvement of public realm on Oxpens Road - tree planting, active frontages, better crossings, cycle lane provision
13. Strengthening the link to the Castle Mill Stream north of Oxpens Road and Westgate Shopping Centre
14. Consideration for the existing Student Castle proposal and the strengthened east-west connection over the railway line

Early Indicative Land Use Quantum proposed by developer*

- Residential (C2, C3)- up to 30,000 sqm
- Student Accommodation (sui generis) - up to 8,000 sqm
- Co-living/purpose built shared accommodation (sui generis) - up to 8,000 sqm
- Hotel (C1) - Up to 24,000 sqm/ 400 keys
- Commercial, business, and service (E) - 80,000 sqm
- Community use class (F1, F2) - 1,200 sqm

*Subject to further discussion and consultation



How the design brief for the OxWED site sits within the wider Oxpens allocation and Spatial Framework

OXPENS BRIDGE

Oxpens bridge is an important element alongside the Oxpens masterplan and will be key in providing greater east-west connectivity and establishing Oxpens as a destination. It will also connect key destinations including Osney Mead, Grandpont Nature Park, Oxpens, the station and the city centre.

Pedestrian and cyclist experience will need to be a key driver for the design of the bridge. Importantly, providing well-designed landing points on both sides of the river which are safe and active will be essential in enhancing this connectivity, as well as providing an entry point into the new Oxpens development. There are a number of major constraints including a challenging topography, flood risk, constrained existing towpaths and ecological factors.

The City Council in partnership with OxWED are currently discussing design options for Oxpens bridge and associated towpath works.

OXPENS

Key Delivery Ingredients

To ensure a successful, comprehensive development which will be successful over a long period of time, several key delivery ingredients must be brought together. These ingredients have some flexibility around the timing of their staging, though as a whole they are critical to the success of the development.

The Oxpens development faces several major infrastructural projects through its delivery. This includes new linkages and blue and green infrastructure. How these ingredients are led into the delivery process will be key to Oxpens' success.



Green and blue infrastructure: Integrating Oxpens Meadows and the River Thames will be essential in unlocking Oxpens as a development site, and it forms a key part of the amenity space for the new development.



Oxpens Bridge: The placement and quality of Oxpens Bridge will help define the relationship between Oxpens, Osney Mead and further afield. Considerations around where this bridge will land must be carefully considered as it will be crucial for both on the south to pick up movement routes, and the north as an entry point into the Oxpens development and the wider city centre.



Oxpens Road improvements: Public realm improvements on Oxpens Road will benefit the character of the development itself as well as movement links into the wider West End and the city as a whole. Urban greening; prioritisation of pedestrians and cyclists; better crossings; and positive frontages will all be needed.



Richard Gray Court and Royal Mail Delivery Office and the Ice Rink: A strategic vision which includes all land ownerships of Oxpens will allow the whole site to come forward comprehensively.



Becket Street and link from Oxpens to Station: Public realm improvements on Becket street will be important in providing a better link between Oxpens and the station.

OXFORD STATION: A WORLD CLASS TRANSPORT HUB

Key Design Aspirations

Establishing Oxford Station as a world class multi-modal transport hub will form the gateway into the city. It needs to accommodate the anticipated growth in people using and passing through the station area. This need for additional capacity will meet the forecast demand set out within the Oxfordshire Rail Connectivity Study.

This mixed-use precinct should include features like a high quality public realm, rich connectivity and jostling of activities in order to create a strong sense of arrival into the city.

Strong sense of arrival

A high quality public realm provides a legible landing point for those emerging from the station. Elements of local character and activity enables the station to become a gateway for both locals and visitors. There is an opportunity to further connect Oxford station to Frideswide Square, and link southwards to Becket Street, creating a comprehensive public realm network and establishing as a gateway and also link westwards to the forthcoming innovation district and existing communities.

A mixed use precinct

Accommodating a rich mix of uses around the station promotes activity across time as well as the spaces around. This feeds into having a strong sense of arrival too, establishing it as a world class destination for all who arrive. Active frontages from, for example, cafés, restaurants, studios, commercial uses, retail, and community uses spill out onto the street as well as pleasant streetscaping which all feed into the bustle of activity to establish a lively station quarter.

A multi-modal hub

Accessible pedestrian, cycle and public transportation connections are key in connecting the station to various destinations around the city and county. This multi-modal hub should include supporting infrastructure like bicycle parking and hire, accessible and attractive bus stops, good quality public realm, active ground floor uses and legible wayfinding elements as well.



King's Cross, London, UK



Utrecht Centraal, The Netherlands



Berlin Hauptbahnhof, Germany

STATION AND SURROUNDING SITES

Key Design Aspirations

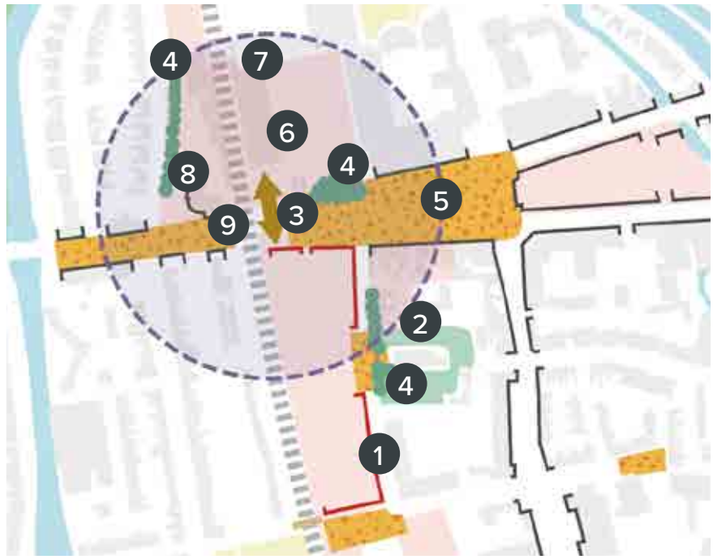
Across the proposed scenarios, common key uses have been identified for the site. Land uses of commercial and residential development are key in introducing activity and greater functionality around the station. These jostling of uses also enable the creation of a world class hub, promoting innovative environments for commerce, mobility and sociability.

Options for the Oxford Station masterplan, which includes the station site (east and west of the station) and Becket Street car park, are being developed and tested. The proposed scenarios will differ in how they deal with interchange to public and active transport, parking, development plots and movement around the site.

Commercial development opportunities will help unlock potential value. It is expected that investment and improvement in the station area will need to be implemented on a phased basis, as business cases are approved and in this may help improve overall viability, underpin inward investment and deliver earlier change. Becket Street car park is one of the most significant development opportunities to be opened up, as is over-station development.

This is echoed in the Oxford City Centre Action Plan, which states that the station, in becoming a new national rail hub, may act as a catalyst for the greater development of the West End (OCCAP, 2021, p. 58-59). Ground floor activation with cafés and shops would also lead to a spillover of activity, livening up the streetscape and surrounding public spaces.

The diagram flags different factors to consider when masterplanning the station's sites.



1. Enhancement of Becket Street as a key sustainable movement link which retains existing mature tree line
2. Sensitivity and celebration of the setting of St Thomas Martyr Church and Abbey
3. Creation of a new pedestrian bridge crossing Botley Road. Concept visualisations have been produced.
4. Retention of existing trees
   - Trees in the station's forecourt (east side) - Tree Preservation Order 2012
   - Trees east of station - between Cripley Rd and Roger Dudman Way - Tree Preservation Order 2017
   - St Thomas Martyr Church and Becket Street
5. Activation and enhancement of Frideswide Square with new built form
6. Enhance last mile solutions with an integral approach to the provision of bus stands, cycle storage and taxi pull-ups. No Public parking to be at a level agreed by the Rail Regulator that will focus on key needs, which is is necessary except for a small allowance for disabled, short stay, pick up and drop off
7. Opportunity for depot site to be used for transport solutions e.g. bus parking
8. Importance of the western station entrance and its facilitation of connectivity to the west, especially towards Osney Mead
9. The Western entrance and Botley Road underpass is at advanced stages in design/planning and are coming forward ahead of the wider masterplan



Visualisation from the east (Network Rail, 2021)



Visualisation from the west (Network Rail, 2021)



Visualisation of the Western Entrance of the Railway Station (Network Rail, 2021)

STATION AND SURROUNDING SITES

Key Design Aspirations



MOVEMENT

CREATING A GATEWAY WHICH IS DRIVEN BY PEDESTRIANS

Creating a movement strategy which has a strong sense of arrival and prioritises walking and cycling will be key to establishing this as a major gateway to the city. The railway station and multi-modal interchange play an important role in movement around the city and county which needs careful consideration.

- Creating good quality access points from the eastern and western station entrances
- Improved pedestrian and cyclist experience
- Efficient interchange and stronger bus connections
- Taxi ranks well connected and visible, with integrated EV charging
- A vision which provides flexibility for change and future-proofs movement
- Ensuring accessibility standards are met
- Interventions on Becket Street to establish is as a sustainable travel link



GREEN AND BLUE

RETAINING AND ENHANCING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Greening Frideswide Square and the new station gateway to improve biodiversity and ecology; enhance health and well-being.

- Retaining and planting trees
- Retaining green character of Becket Street and setting of St Thomas the Martyr Church
- Promoting ecology on rooftops
- Greening Frideswide Square and the new station gateway to improve biodiversity and ecology; enhance health and well-being and establish this space as a gateway.



URBAN ARMATURE

ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC REALM WHICH ENHANCES IT AS A KEY GATEWAY

Enhancing the public realm to establish it as a real gateway for Oxford which provides legible walking and cycling routes to a variety of key locations in the West End and beyond.

- Greening Frideswide Square and the new station gateway to improve biodiversity and ecology; enhance health and well-being and establish this space as a gateway.
- A strong wayfinding strategy
- Enhancement of frontage of new station building on both the eastern and western sides
- Public realm to be flexible in use with meanwhile events



URBAN GRAIN

HIGH QUALITY BUILT FORM WHICH CELEBRATE S THIS AS A GATEWAY SPACE

A rich mix of uses at the station which brings vibrancy and activity will be required to create a strong sense of arrival. New buildings to be of architectural excellence and celebrate and enhance the public realm.

- A station building which is a landmark building of architectural excellence
- Activation with commercial uses
- Moments of height to aid legibility
- A built form which improves the frontage and public realm quality on Becket Street and enhances the setting of St Thomas the Martyr Church
- Investment in rail infrastructure, rail stations and multi modal transport hubs as a fundamental component and driver for economic growth and the success of places.

STATION AND SURROUNDING SITES

Key Delivery Ingredients

To ensure a comprehensive development which will be successful over a long period of time, several key delivery ingredients must be brought together. These ingredients have some flexibility around the timing of their staging, though as a whole they are critical to the success of the development.

The station development involves several adjacent streams of development, from improvements to local and city-wide transport networks, to public realm improvements around the station gateway.









Improvements to public realm and sense of arrival both to the east and the west: Changing how people arrive and depart Oxford is a major infrastructural undertaking. Public realm improvements around the station will need to create a sense of arrival from both the east and the west. A holistic vision will be needed for the station which include public realm improvements to all surrounding streets and spaces, including Frideswide Square.

Improving east-west connections around Botley Road and Botley Road underpass: East-west connections around the station will be key in how the site is linked to other surrounding developments such as Osney Mead and Nuffield. Improvements to the congested Botley Road, the railway underpass and Frideswide Square will be essential in realising the vision of the Spatial Framework.

Consideration of bus movement in Oxford: Resolving how we should move around Oxford will be a key factor in how the railway station and its surrounding public realm will work.

Last mile solutions to show how a fully integrated approach to sustainable travel can be achieved. Opportunities for improved accessibility & bus layovers should be fully explored.

Consideration of car parking: A great deal of space around the station is currently taken up by car parking. How much of this space is to be retained as parking and the role of cars in general in the scheme must be evaluated through in depth audits from both a transport and a sustainability agenda. As stated above last mile solutions which use sustainable travel should be explored.

5

Growth is inevitable and desirable, but destruction of community and local character is not.

- Edward T. McMahon

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

INTRODUCTION

'The West End will become a piece of city for everyone. It will be a place where the world's best ideas and Oxford's extraordinary breadth of talent converge. It will take Oxford's success to the next level.'

Oxford West End Investment Prospectus

This section focuses on the Implementation and Delivery of the Spatial Framework and reflects and supports the ambitions set out in Oxford City Council's Oxford West End Investment Prospectus, Oxford's Economic Strategy Delivery Plan and the Volterra Oxford West End Strategic and Economic Case Report.

Oxford's West End has the potential to deliver change at a significant scale to address demand for new homes, start-ups, spin-offs and headquarter facilities for major businesses, through the implementation of projects across a number of key development sites.

A coordinated approach to delivery is required in order to set up the optimum conditions for change. In particular to:

- Securing additional funding
- Co-ordinating and delivering investment and improvements wider than project area
- Capture benefit of new station investment
- Ensure projects fit within the historic fabric of the city
- Optimise connections between significant and diverse project areas.

Blending, coordinating and delivering these ambitions will be the key to future success.

Oxford's history and its attraction as a location for business, linked with world-class higher education, provides both a resilient context for change and a responsibility to ensure that such change benefits the wider city context and blends the ambition for modern facilities with the history and context that Oxford possesses.



OXFORD'S ECONOMIC STRATEGY



The city has experienced a number of issues that now need to be addressed. These challenges can be addressed through the successful and coordinated development and regeneration of a variety of sites and opportunities in Oxford's West End. Among these challenges, Oxford's employment growth has stagnated in the past five years with low business survival rates and a rate of business start ups substantially below the national average. Furthermore, Oxford lacks a central business district (CBD) comprising of competitive, high quality commercial space and an appropriate mix of supporting uses.

While Oxford produces a high amount of highly-skilled graduates, only 18% are retained in the city following graduation. In Oxford there is a brain drain of highly-skilled graduates to other global innovation clusters.

There has been a shift in thinking about Oxford's economy and a step-change in the Council and its partners' approach to economic development. It is more holistic than previous strategies, responding to significant local, national and societal challenges in terms of inclusion and climate emergency. The key principles are:

- **Commitment and Focus** - a shared and long-term commitment to responding to challenges and opportunities
- **Collaboration** - making the most of available capacity and resource that exists across the city by building on the work of partners, brokering new relationships and working across new areas
- **Participation** - embedding participatory principles within delivery to ensure that Oxford's residents are actively involved in idea development, decision-making and delivery
- **Innovation** - using the city as a 'living lab' to try innovative projects, alongside taking innovative approaches to leverage funding and realising ambitions
- **Agility** - continuously reviewing delivery mechanisms, project principles and ways of working to ensure the city remains agile in responding to changing needs
- **Pace** - working rapidly to deliver projects that deliver positive economic, social and environmental impacts.

Economic	Social	Environmental
Number of jobs Source: ONS BRES	Inequality Source: Centre for Cities	Carbon emissions Source: City Council
Number of businesses Source: ONS UK Business Count	Proportion of highly deprived neighbourhoods Source: Indices of Multiple Deprivation	NOx emissions Source: City Council
GVA per worker Source: ONS Regional Gross Domestic Product	Social mobility ranking Source: UK Government Social Mobility Index	Green space created/ safeguarded Source: City Council
Patent applications Source: Intellectual Property Office – Patent Applications	Average income Source: ONS Small Area Income Estimates	Investment in environmental projects Source: Partner Data
Business starts and survival rates Source: UK Business Count	Proportion of people receiving the Oxford Living Wage Source: ONS Small Area Income Estimates	Proportion of trips by transport mode Source: ONS Census or County Council
Inward investment Source: DIT	Proportion of people with no qualifications Source: ONS Annual Population Data	Proportion of trips by foot or bicycle Source: ONS Census or County Council
Commercial floorspace Source: Industry Dara/Agent Insight	Unemployment rate Source: ONS Annual Population Survey	Energy source mix Source: City Council
Commercial vacancies Source: Industry Dara/Agent Insight	Affordable workspace floorspace Source: City Council Data	Quantum of green space Source: County Council
Venture capital investment Source: Scale Up Institute	Housing affordability ratio Source: Centre for Cities	Quantum of brownfield land redeveloped Source: City Council
Volume and value of tourism Source: Experience Oxfordshire	Rent as a proportion of income Source: ONS Private Registered Provider Rent and ONS Small Area Income Estimates	Amount of renewable energy generated Source: BEIS – Renewable Energy by Local Authority
Graduate retention rate Source: Office for Students	Benefit claimants Source: ONS Claimant Count	Number of B-Corps registered Source: B-Corporation UK

Triple Bottom Line 'Success Factors,' Oxford Economid Strategy 2021, pg. 28

THE WEST END AND OSNEY MEAD OPPORTUNITY

The recently adopted Oxford Local Plan 2036 highlights 'Areas of Change' within the city, and includes a number of major development and regeneration opportunities including Oxpens, Oxford Railway Station, and Osney Mead.

The mixed-use nature of the potential projects within Oxford's West End will allow the area to attract and retain more interlinked and highly productive industries. The addition of new commercial floorspace will be particularly important in achieving this ambition, along with the provision of new homes and associated facilities that embrace the principles of a successful city. This enhanced offer will also act as a driver for wider change in the region and through the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

Successful implementation will provide the floorspace to facilitate research & development in key sectors, through a long-term co-ordination between major landowners. The large-scale nature of the ambition for the West End is likely to attract anchors and multinational firms once both public and private sector investment has enabled the sites to come forward, ideally in a planned and coordinated manner.

The various projects are anticipated to provide a mix of uses within the West End, facilitating an environment for knowledge transfers between commercial businesses, the University and other organisations. There is also the potential for these key sites to act as catalysts for attracting further private sector investment into the area.

Major investment to provide an improved public transport hub as part of the railway station development (providing both east and west frontages) will be a significant upgrade for the city, and early implementation will help to set a new context for decision-making on each of the development sites. The planned improvements at the railway station will provide the most important facility that major R&D firms value when choosing a location.

Momentum is building not only as a result of the planned upgrade to Oxford railway station, but also importantly through landowner commitments to long-term co-ordination and quality development within the West End, and through the gathering pace of change in the wider region and the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, in particular.

The West End has the potential to deliver long-term value by attracting and retaining more talent, wealth and opportunity in Oxford, with lasting benefits for local communities, the companies and institutions that invest, and for UK plc. This includes ambitions for zero carbon targets.

To fulfil this potential and take Oxford's success to the next level, the Oxford West End partners are seeking public investment in infrastructure to maximise and accelerate the growth opportunity, and to lever in private investment to help finance and deliver new homes, amenity and innovation space.

Oxford West End will expand the city centre and the various projects are anticipated to treble its amount of commercial floorspace. The opportunity also exists to deliver mixed-tenure homes and a variety of supporting land uses and public realm to optimise the potential of each project and the wider city context through coordinated delivery.

The central location will make for an extraordinary place to live, and work. This will also make it ideal for attracting and retaining the best talent, who are drawn to urban areas.

Integrating Oxford West End into the city centre is key to the place-making ambitions of the area. This will be achieved by seeking to develop complementary uses, but also through investment in new river crossings, bridges and public realm, and to support seamless pedestrian and cycle movement across an expanded city centre. This potential to improve connectivity should also be optimised as projects are delivered and the full potential of locations are realised. Future decisions may be needed as desire lines are established. By way of example Osney Mead could potentially extend connections through to Botley Road to help set up a new strong cycling and pedestrian route into the city utilising planned new bridge crossings connecting to Oxpens and into Castle Street.

In summary it is anticipated to provide:

- A new innovation district, expanding from the city centre
- A new higher-density urban quarter for Oxford
- A location where start-ups, spin-outs and HQs will want to be
- An area designed around people and sustainable movement
- An expanded area that can be greater than the sum of its parts
- A national rail hub and super connected gateway
- A place that will deliver world changing ideas
- A new community that helps meet Oxford's housing needs
- A significant opportunity for levelling up Oxford
- A part of the city that will embrace green innovation at its heart.

STRATEGIC BOARD

In order to achieve these ambitions and ensure the planned coordination between sites, public sector investment, and key new and upgraded infrastructure are delivered a Strategic Board has been established to provide co-ordination and alignment across the key partners throughout the development and regeneration of the West End.

This Board provides the strategic leadership necessary to realise the scale of ambition and opportunity, as the largest-scale mixed-use set of development and regeneration projects in Oxford in recent history. Leadership and coordination are critical to successful implementation and delivery, and the ability to optimise potential through future decision-making as projects and phases are delivered.

The Board includes senior representatives from OxLEP, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Nuffield College, Christ Church, University of Oxford, Network Rail, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Department for Transport, with the anticipation that other central Government departments could join, as required.

Board members share an interest in the long-term success of the city and region, and recognise that the West End can be much more than the sum of its parts, a positive long-term catalyst for the rest of Oxford and the wider Oxford-Cambridge Arc growth area.

In order to achieve this there is an early focus on creating a step change in connectivity and maximising development potential, to build confidence, increase value, and speed up delivery.

A number of structural areas for investment have been identified and include:

- Expedite the reopening of the Cowley Branch Line
- Prioritise the design and development funding for the new track and platform at Oxford Station eastern side
- Collaborate with local partners to unlock issues holding development back
- Support the delivery of Connecting Oxford, to reduce congestion and improve bus and active travel
- Allocate revenue funding to increase the level of officer resource and feasibility work being prepared at a local level.



OXFORD CITY COUNCIL



The Council will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping Oxford's economy by leading and co-ordinating change and using all available levers and powers to achieve this, and assisting in setting up the right conditions within which new investment and phased change takes place.

At the strategic level, planning powers are being used to create innovative and progressive policies that are responsive to the city's economic, social and environmental context.

At the projects level, the Council will use its influence and powers to involve key decision-makers and influencers to help unlock opportunities, overcome barriers and help to meet the needs of the city.

Land and property assets will also be used as part of this approach to deliver positive change. This is particularly the case in the West End, where the Council owns several sites and in the city centre where the Council has a strong property portfolio.

Council resources will also be needed to support relevant initiatives being led by partner organisations in order to enable place-based solutions that meet the needs of the city. Where appropriate, this may be through project management support, external funding, political support or advice. Officers will also help stakeholders understand the different funding pots available to deliver projects.

The opportunity in Oxford is one of national significance. It is therefore reasonable that the projects which will support the aspirations of the strategy should receive some investment from national government.

SOCIAL VALUE

The ambition for the West End and Osney Mead offers significant social value potential for local people and businesses to play many and diverse roles in the future mix, diversity and sustainable success of the area.

The variety of projects from Osney Mead to Oxpens and into the heart of the West End offer a wide-range of potential social value benefits including, but not limited to:

- Investment in meanwhile uses to help establish underused or vacant locations and potentially provide long-term flexible accommodation for new start-ups that will help create a diverse and stimulating context for delivery of wider main-stream ambitions.

- Retention of and investment in established local businesses that may be affected by projects, including relocation within projects or to alternative premises within the city or its environs. This is a core part of successful regeneration that helps protect local jobs and supply chains.

- Provision of facilities for local groups and support services that compliment the wider ambitions for the area and specific projects.

- Opportunities to support the creation and development of start-ups in all their forms from traditional office accommodation to makers' space and from street-based food and drink to local energy generation and the wider green economy. Flexibility and diversity will not only help local residents and businesses but also provide a platform to help retain former students within the city.



IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY PRINCIPLES

In order to achieve the ambition and coordination that is set out in the various reports, it will be important that all the tools available to the projects are utilised as needed. Each project will have its specific challenges and opportunities and it will be important that the contribution each can make to the future prosperity and success of Oxford as a whole is reflected in the delivery structures that are established and any additional funding support that may be required.

1 Strategic Board

Established to help achieve the successful coordination and communication required to optimise delivery of the various projects and phases within larger projects, and to provide support where required, to ensure timings and outputs from individual projects fit within the overall ambition for the West End and wider city and regional contexts.



Infrastructure costs such as the undergrounding of electrical lines and the creation of new connections may require additional funding support between various parties



2 Council Powers

to provide support for projects to secure all the land and property required through CPO procedures, the potential benefits to secure clean title, support for applications to government for funding where required, and political support to help provide the basis for consistency in decision-making, growing confidence in the delivery processes and managing risk.

By way of example the Osney Mead project requires further land acquisition and the project will benefit from having the confidence of control of all the land required to deliver a comprehensive solution, that will benefit the wider ambitions of the Council and University, and help ensure the contribution Osney Mead plays for the wider city is optimised.

3 Financial Viability

Where it is challenging to achieve viability, it will be important for projects to be considered in the wider context so that all of the ambition for the West End can be achieved. This may require appropriate additional financial support or the ability to join viable and unviable projects together so that one can support the other.

The regeneration of land and property often involves significant additional costs when compared with green field development. The ability for projects to achieve their ambitions and deliver financially viable outcomes often requires additional funding support in key areas such as land acquisition and relocations, land remediation and infrastructure (including flood defences, removal/ undergrounding of powers cables, new and improved access including new bridges and opening up locations to become an integrated part of the wider town or city).

Osney Mead exemplifies these challenges and indications suggest there will need to be additional financial support made available to help set up the optimum conditions for change so that all the costs can be met and appropriate financial returns secured by those parties taking development risk.

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY PRINCIPLES



The relocation of some high quality existing businesses is a key principle

4 Relocation of existing businesses

This is a key regeneration principle that will be important to address within the wider city context to support existing businesses that are affected by projects and need to be relocated, helping to retain them in the city and protect the jobs and local services networks.



The Wapping Wharf project in Bristol introduced flexible retail and café space to a former industrial site and spearheaded a wider regeneration of the site. Such a simple intervention may be equally successful on a site such as Osney Mead

5 Provision of meanwhile uses

Provision of meanwhile uses will help set up locations for change that are underused or vacant. To repopulate and help to reintegrate such locations with the core of the city as new infrastructure is delivered and early phases are implemented.

This type of early investment can play a significant role in repopulating a site, establishing awareness of the location, reintroducing people to the location and establishing the right conditions for the early attraction of start-up businesses.



Osney Mead has the potential to utilise meanwhile uses, particularly along its river frontage, which offers a rare opportunity for the city to provide a waterside destination, mix of uses and vibrancy that will act as a catalyst for the wider ambitions for the site and help to reconnect it with the wider city both physically and economically. This has parallels with the Wapping Wharf project in Bristol and its meanwhile uses known as Cargo 1 and Cargo 2.

IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY PRINCIPLES







6 Robust phasing and programming

to enable the West End to improve further as each project is delivered, to manage outputs from each project to ensure values are optimised. The Oxpens project, in particular, has a significant role to play in helping knit together planned major projects including the railway station and Osney Mead, with the core of the city.

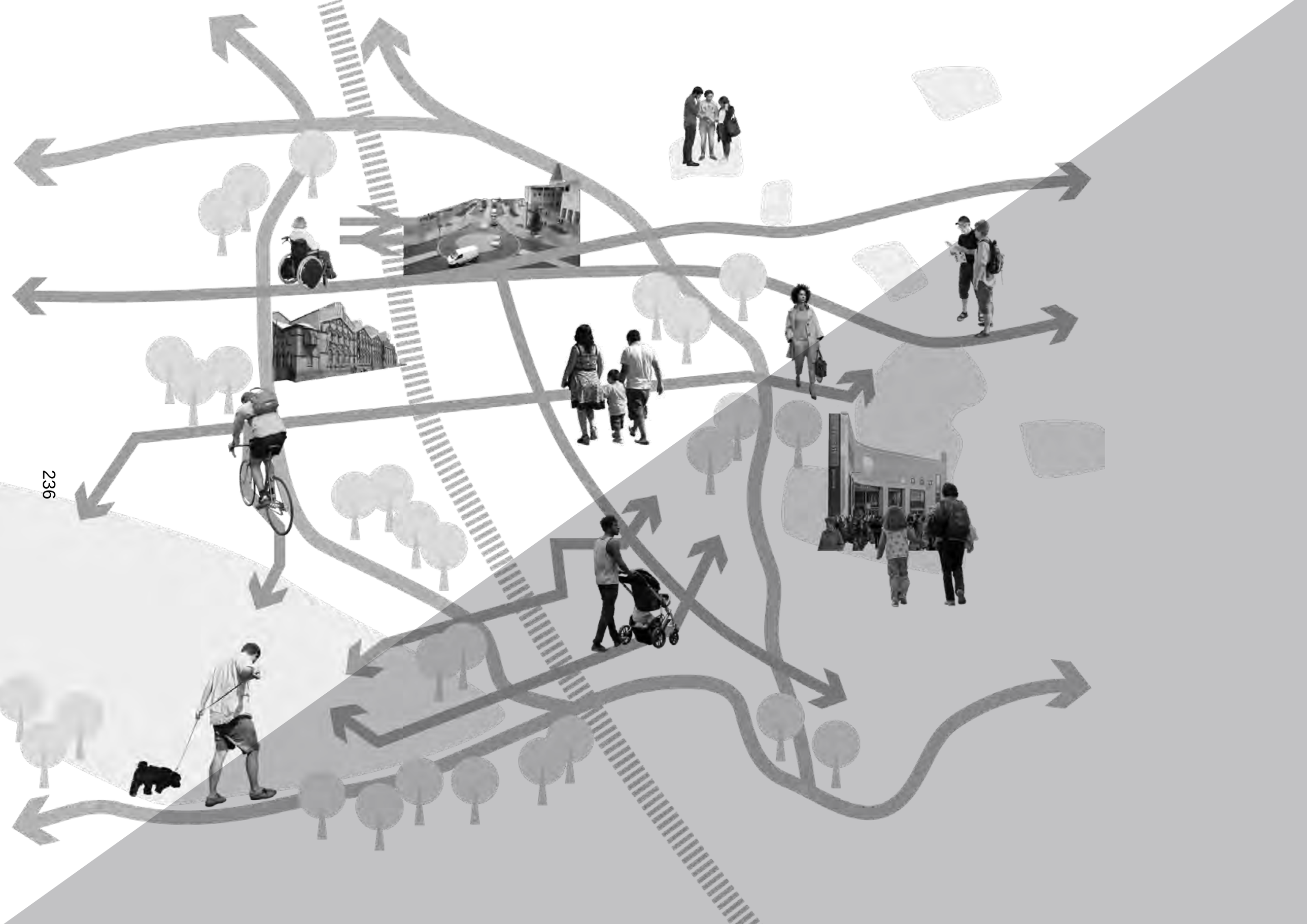
7 Delivery mechanisms

To reflect specific project needs, including potential public and private sector partnering through development agreements or joint ventures and the consideration of longer-term stewardship approaches.

8 Capturing value uplift

To set up the right conditions for projects to benefit from improved financial conditions as quality projects and phases and new infrastructure are delivered.

235



6

These spaces or voids may be the most difficult to quantify, but they matter the most because that's where people gather and experience community.

- Spaces in Between

APPENDIX A
ANALYSIS

STUDY AREA AND INTRODUCTION

Oxford's West End includes much of the City's centre and is divided by the railway line. To the west is Osney Mead; the River Thames and Osney Mead industrial estate. This area sits directly adjacent to Oxford's green beltt and in close proximity to activity on Botley Road and Botley Road Retail Park.

East of the railway line is a mix of retail, residential and educational and civic buildings. The density of university and educational buildings extends east of the West End. The River Cherwell and its green corridor contain the urban area of the city centre and provide valuable green amenity space.

This section summarises the analysis undertaken on the West End. This analysis is comprehensive and spans several layers including analysing policy, emerging developments, the historic context, demographics and activity, townscape and character, public realm and landscape, movement and flooding. This analysis is useful in building the picture of the West End as it is presently and identifying its strengths deficiencies.

This analysis is expanded upon in full detail in the Appendices of this document. This section focuses on the **SWOT (Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats)** identified in the West End based off of the analysis, in effect condensing and summarising the results of the analysis.




Port Meadow
University Parks
River Cherwell
Frideswide Sq and Castle Mill Stream Quarter (Nuffield College Sites)
Station Gateway
Botley Road
Oatland Rd Recreation Ground
Osney Mead
River Thames
Oxpens
Oxpens Road
Oxpens Meadows
St Aldate's
Christ Church Meadows
Grandpont Nature Park

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The West End of Oxford has strategic local, regional, national and international importance. It is well connected and is a pivotal hub for education, innovation and culture.

OXFORD-CAMBRIDGE ARC

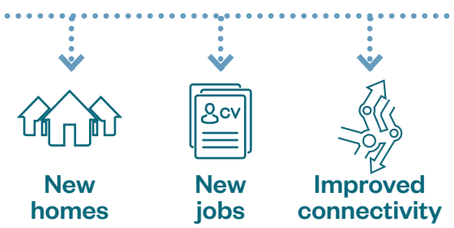
Strategic Context

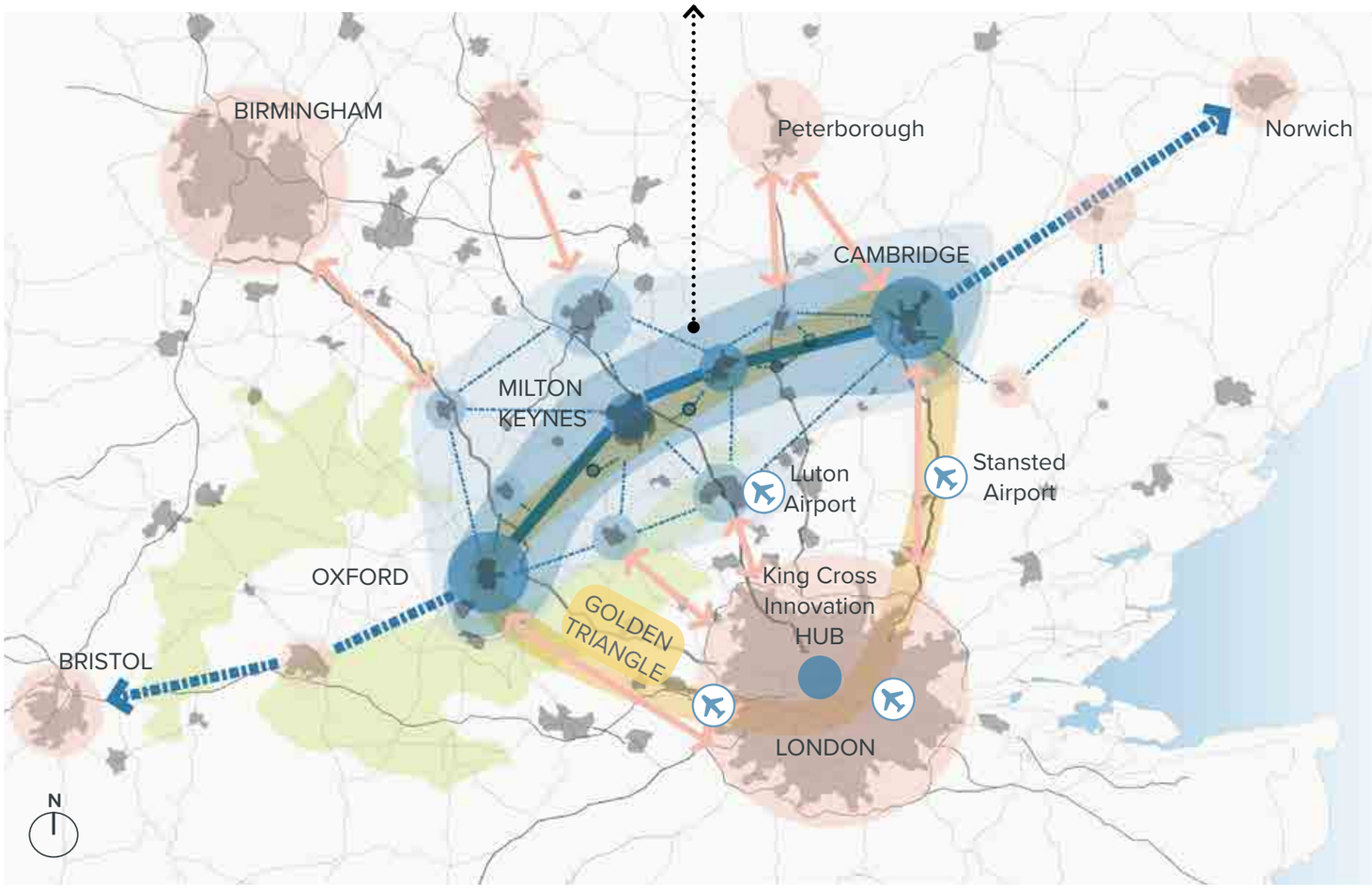
Strategically, Oxford is situated within a complex economic, social and cultural network which operates at a multitude of scales. Regionally, it's a significant hub in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and the Golden Triangle. The Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework (2021) provides a long term vision for the region which seeks to support economic growth, a vibrant place and improvements to the environment. The government's Levelling Up White Paper (2022) and investments will be critical to bolster research and development, and new jobs in the Arc.

The City of Oxford has strategic importance in supporting economic growth at a national and international scale. It has key rail and air links which allow Oxford to be connected to a multitude of places and networks. The 'Build Back Better: our plan for growth' report (2021) highlights how Oxford's pivotal role in the development and manufacture of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine illustrates the value of strong partnerships between different educational and business stakeholders. This makes Oxford a key hub for research and development, something which the UK Government has pledged to increase investment in.

The 'Golden Triangle'- London, Oxford and Cambridge – will continue to grow the science, tech and creative industries with the support of world top ranking universities.

The corridor containing Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford has the potential to be the UK's Silicon Valley

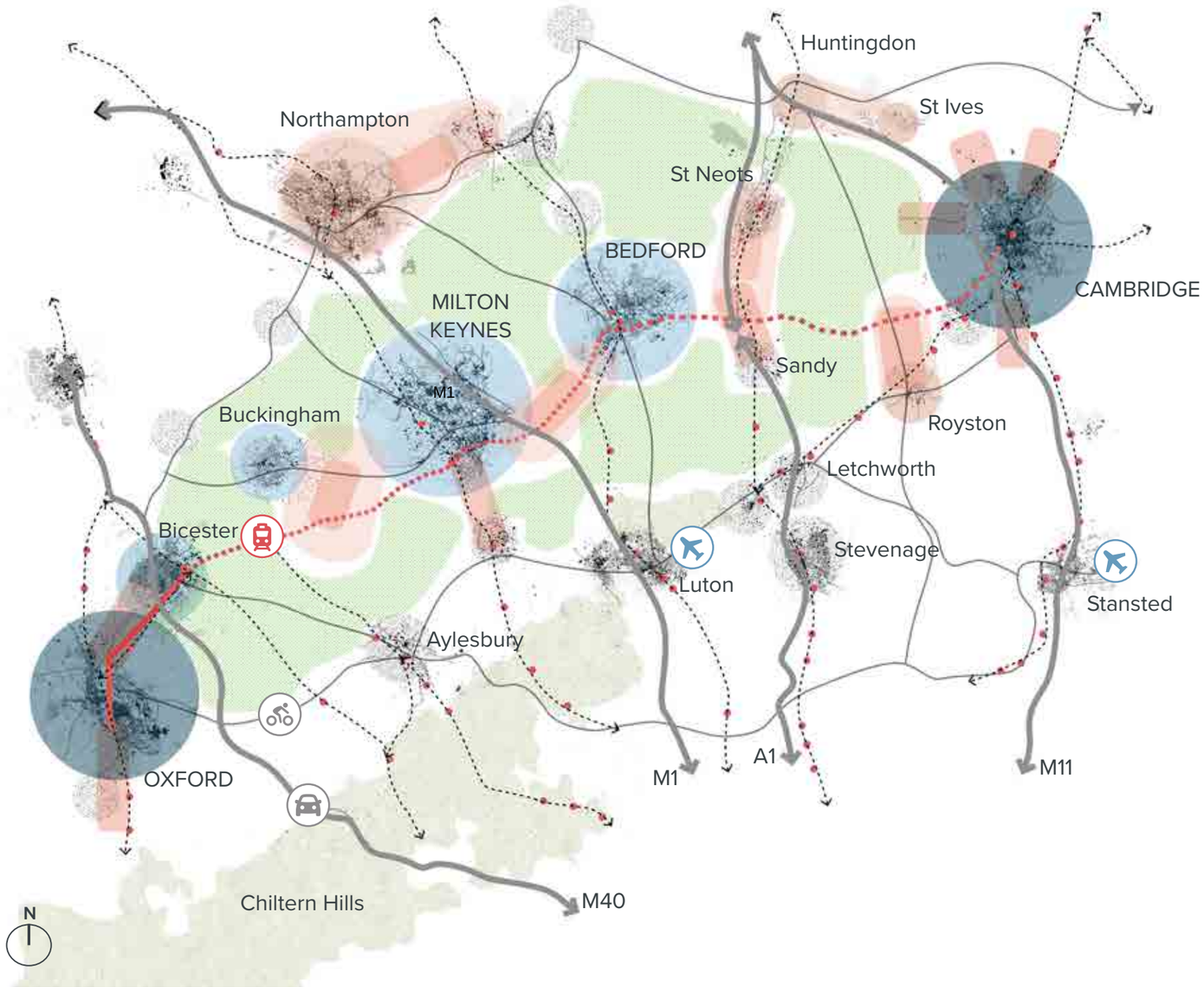




REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

Oxford has a number of key regional connections which are of importance:

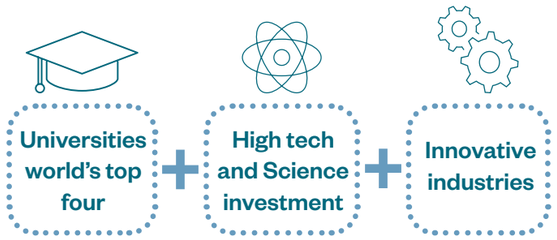
- Oxford sits just off the M40 which connects London and Birmingham
- It is a major stop on the East-West rail linking Oxford to Cambridge via Milton Keynes and other towns
- On a number of railway lines, connecting to London, Reading, Worcestershire and Bournemouth
- On strategic cycleways (route 5, 51 and 57)



- Primary roads
- Secondary roads
- East West Rail network- phase 1 (completed)
- East West proposed Rail network- phase 2 (ongoing)
- East West proposed Rail network- phase 3 (ongoing)
- Existing Rail network
- Existing Rail stations
- Key cities/settlements
- Potential settlement extensions
- Potential linked towns/settlements

The concentration of educational uses, high tech and science and innovation industries within the Oxford-Cambridge corridor make this area highly significant on a local-global scale.

Oxford's role within this corridor is highly significant and advances in rail connections and spaces for high quality facilities will only help facilitate this.





National Infrastructure Commission estimated an annual output of the corridor will increase £163bn per annum by 2050





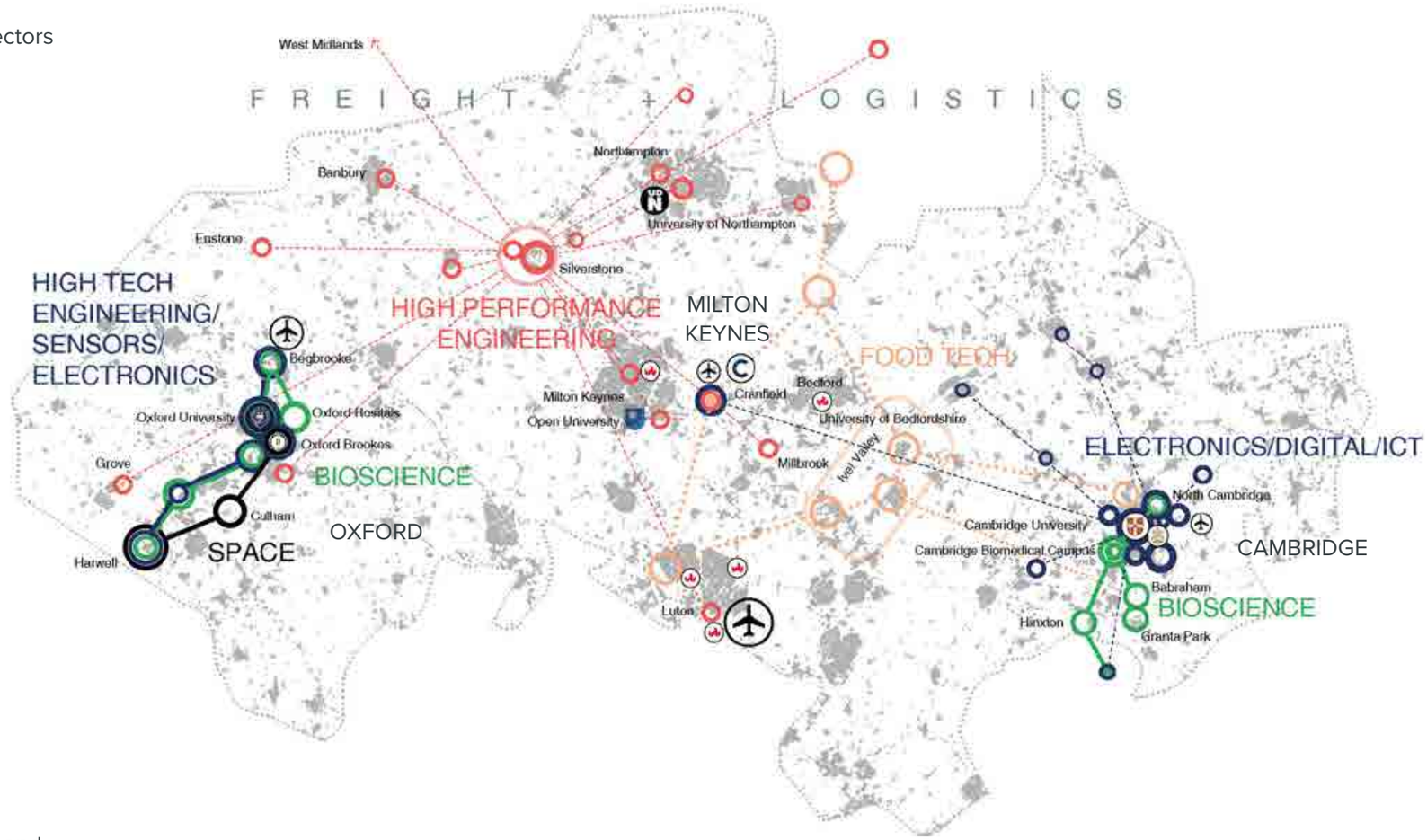


UNDERSTANDING OXFORDSHIRE: ECONOMIC SECTORS AND ASSETS

Strategic Context

The diagram shows the existing patterns formed by clusters of knowledge and growth sectors. This demonstrates the relative lack of interaction across the corridor, with linkages from each sub-area to London being more significant than connection between sub-areas. This pattern responds to the lack of a functional corridor in terms of connectivity and spatial relationships.

The clustering patterns might change with greater connections/ linkages between the various emerging sectors within the Oxford - Cambridge Arc.

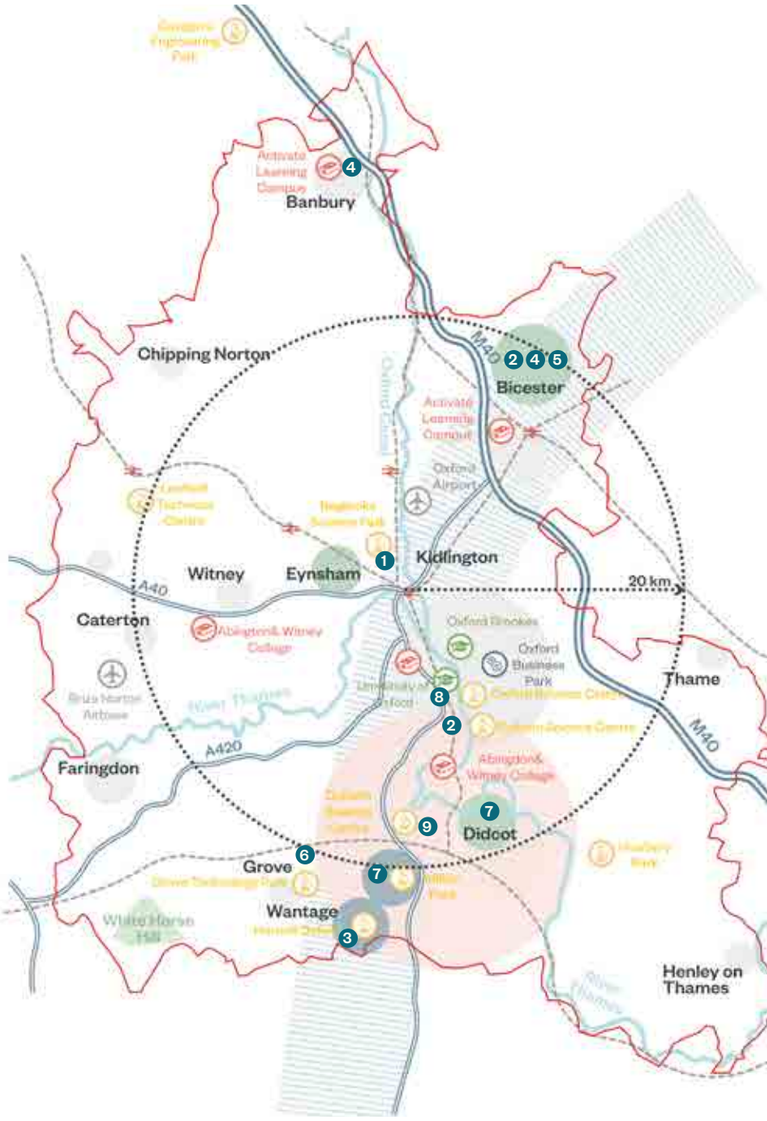


Source: Plan extracted from “Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford Future Planning Options Project” report by 5th Studio

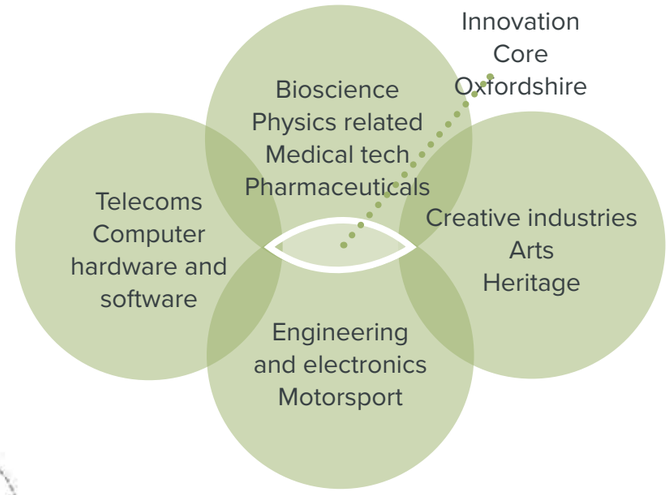
Within Oxfordshire, there a number of significant towns, universities and colleges, and innovation parks that need to be considered within the context of Oxford's West End. These places have created a knowledge spine which links Oxford with innovation around the likes of Didcot and Bicester.

- Railway network
- Major roads
- Secondary roads
- Green town/villages
- Enterprise Zone
- Science Vale UK
- Knowledge Spine
- Railway stations
- FC Colleges
- Universities
- Science Park
- Business Park

1. Begbroke Science Park
2. Living Labs Testbed
3. Harwell Campus
4. Motorsport Valley
5. Upper Heyford Creative City
6. Williams Innovation and Technology
7. Milton Park / Didcot Garden Town
8. Oxford City Science Area
9. Culham Science Park



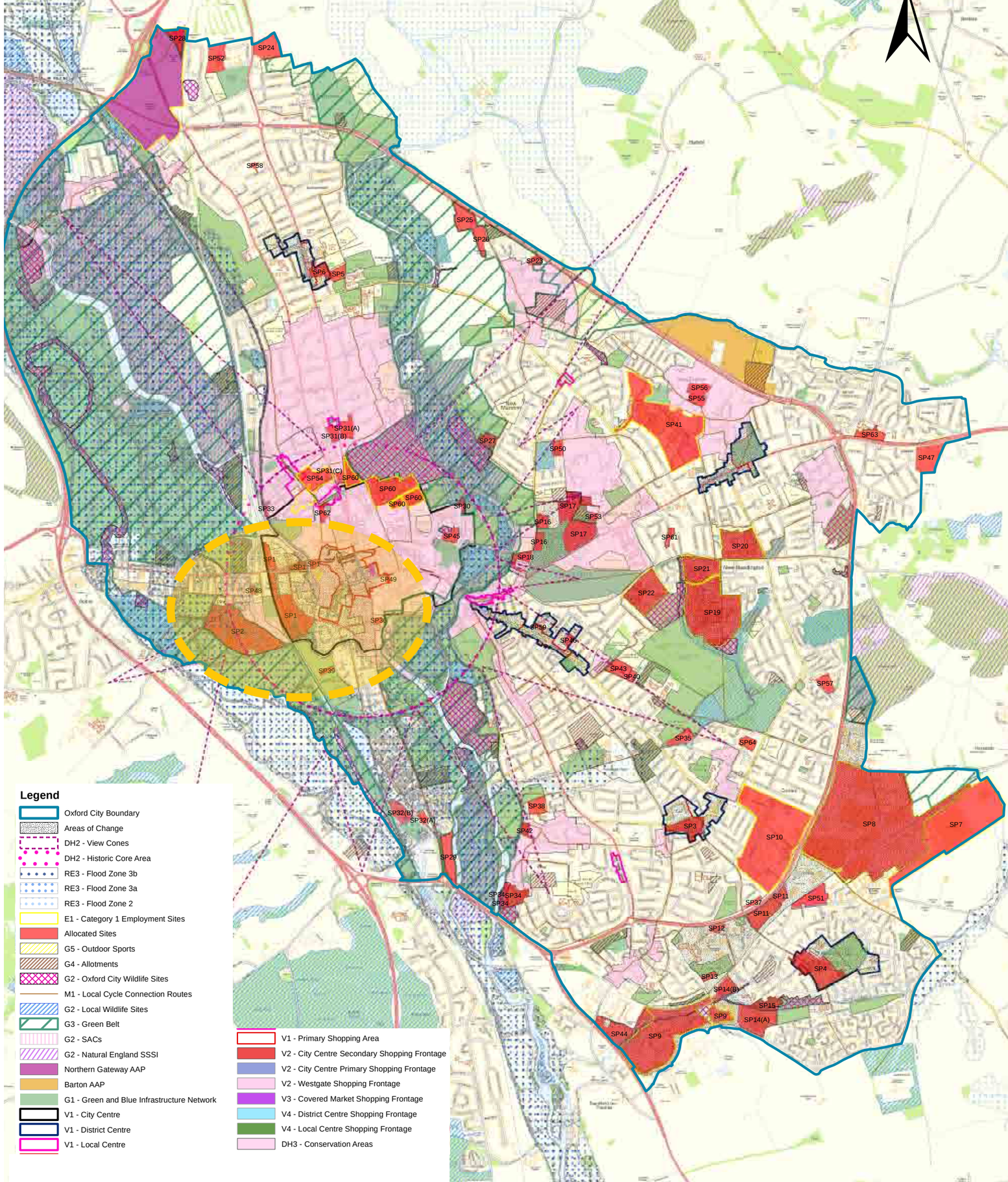
Understanding the innovation core of Oxfordshire: overlapping industries



POLICY CONTEXT

There are a number of key policy documents which provide a breadth of information which has been consulted on. Most significantly, the Local Plan (2036) provides standards, guidance and parameters for many of the sites within the West End.

Note: Significant number of allocated sites defined within wider Oxford are located within the West End.



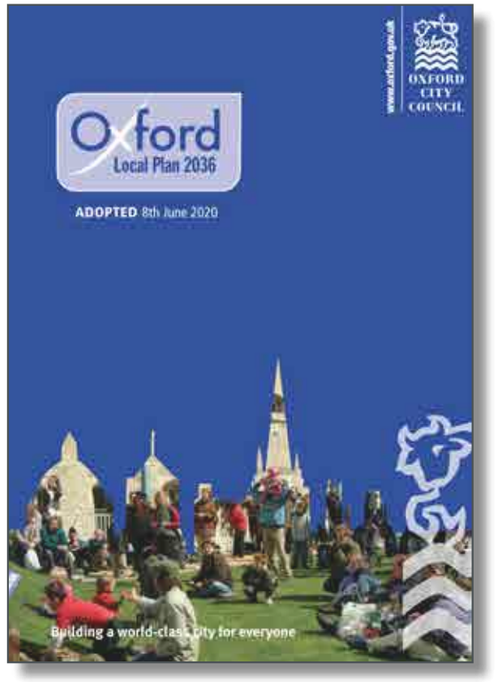
LOCAL PLAN

Policy Context

The Local Plan (2036) considers how best to address challenges, issues and opportunities for the City. It's ambitious vision seeks to create:

- A Centre for Learning, Knowledge and Innovation
- A Prosperous City with Opportunities for All
- An Environmentally Sustainable City
- An Enjoyable City to live in and visit
- A Strong Community
- A Healthy Place

The Local Plan is key to setting out Oxford's housing aspirations and specific policies set out minimum housing requirements for each of the allocated sites. Policy AOC1 advocates for 'high-density urban living' which will inform strategies within this Spatial Framework.



Policy AOC1: West End and Osney Mead

Opportunities to deliver the following, where relevant:

- Create high-density urban living that makes efficient use of land
- Maintain a vibrant mix of uses
- Has regard to the framework set out in the West End Design Code (2008)
- Maximise the area's contribution to Oxford's knowledge economy
- Enhance public realm along the waterways
- Enhance connectivity throughout the area
- Enhance the pedestrian and cycling experience
- Consider the heritage of the area
- Create easy and attractive transport interchange
- Reduce car parking

Policy SP2: Osney Mead

Planning permission will be granted for a mixed use development that:

- Includes employment uses, academic uses, student accommodation, employer-linked affordable housing and market housing
- Development of an innovation quarter
- To deliver around 247 homes and other uses
- Only suitable for academic institutional uses provided that the requirements of Policy H9 are met
- A masterplan approved by the City Council should be developed prior to any development, and all development should comply with the masterplan.
- New high-quality public open space should be created on the site - footpaths to and through the site should be provided and existing routes enhanced; consideration in greater detail how and when a new pedestrian and cycle bridge will be delivered linking this site with the other side of the river.
- Enhance the relationship and connection between site and river and enhance the physical and visual permeability of the site.
- Has a positive impact on view (particular view from Hinksey Hill to historic core)
- Is supported by a Comprehensive Flood Risk Management Strategy and a Flood Risk Assessment.

LOCAL PLAN

Policy Context

Policy SP1: Sites in the West End

Planning permission will be granted for a number of mixed use developments across the West End. Residential development and/ or student accommodation should deliver a minimum of 734 homes on the following sites:

a. Oxford Station and Becket St Car Park: 20 homes

b. Student Castle Osney Lane: 206 homes

c. Worcester Street Carpark: 18 homes

d. Island Site: 40 homes

e. Oxpens: 450 homes

Planning permission will only be granted for new developments and these need to respond to the framework set out in the West End Design Code.

Planning permission will only be granted for redevelopment of the station and Becket Street Car Park if it improves the station for passengers and creates a strong sense of arrival to Oxford, and is in accordance with the Oxford Station SPD.

Planning permission will only be granted for development on Oxpens where it enhances Oxpens Field to create a high quality open space, includes new high quality and well- located public realm, creates an active frontage along Oxpens Road, enhances connectivity to Osney Mead including future proofing the proposals so they do not prevent the landing of a foot/cycle bridge across the Thames and has regard to the Oxpens SPD.

Planning applications for the Island Site and Oxpens site must be accompanied by a site- specific flood risk assessment and development should incorporate any mitigation measures.

Policy SP36: Faculty of Music, St Aldates

Site allocated for academic uses, residential development including employer-linked affordable housing and student accommodation at the Faculty of Music.

Minimum number of homes to be delivered is 40. The site would only be suitable for academic institutional uses provided that the requirements of Policy H9 are met (Policy H9: Linking the delivery of new/redeveloped and refurbished university academic facilities to the delivery of university provided residential accommodation)

Policy SP48: Old Power Station

Site allocated for academic institutional use, student accommodation and/ or residential development, including employer-linked affordable housing on the Old Power Station site. Development of the site may include replacement of existing educational use of the site. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

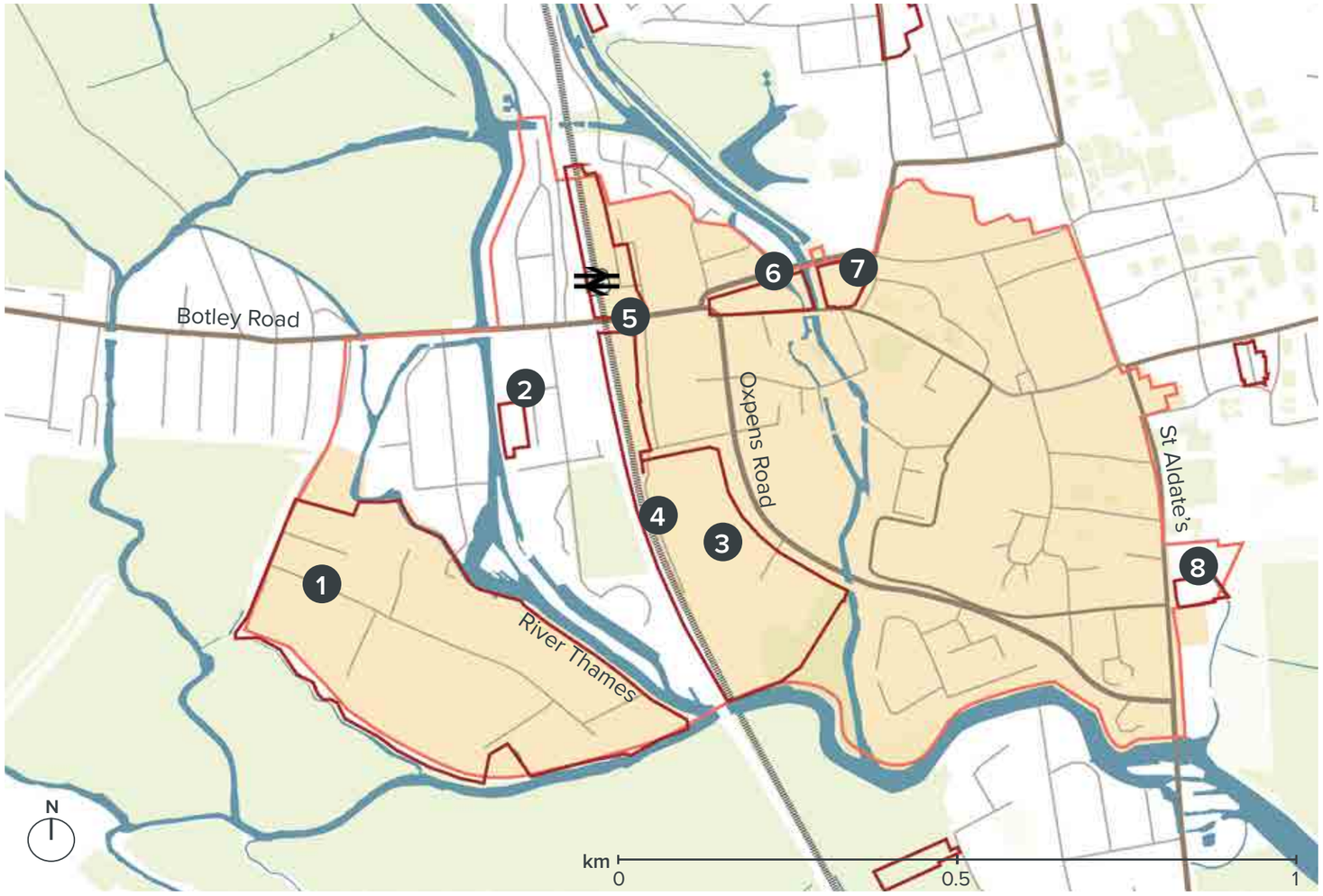
A planning application must be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment and development should incorporate any mitigation measures .

SITE ALLOCATIONS

Policy Context

The Oxford Local Plan (2036) identifies an Area of Change and a series of site allocations for improvements and development. These include the following which sit within the West End's red line boundary:

1. **Osney Mead Innovation Quarter (SP2)**
   Mixed use development (to include employment; academic; student accommodation; employer-linked affordable housing; market housing (expected to deliver around 247 homes)
2. **Old Power Station (SP48)**
   No housing requirement from Local Plan. Employer linked affordable housing can be integrated into site.
3. **Oxpens (SP1)**
   Minimum 450 homes
4. **Student Castle, Osney Lane (SP1)**
   Minimum 206 homes
5. **Oxford Station and Becket Street Car Park (SP1)**
   Minimum 20 homes
6. **Island site (SP1)**
   Minimum 40 homes
7. **Worcester Street Car Park (SP1)**
   Minimum 18 homes
8. **Faculty of Music (SP36)**
   Minimum 40 homes



Area of Change (Local Plan)

Site Allocations

A ZERO CARBON FUTURE: THE NET ZERO OXFORD ACTION PLAN

Policy Context

Oxford City Council has ambitious environmental plans for the city, aiming to be a net zero carbon city by 2040 or earlier and this is set out in the Net Zero Oxford Action Plan.

Policy RE1 (Sustainable design and construction) within the Local Plan also reinforces that planning permissions will only be granted where its demonstrated that sustainable design and construction principles have been incorporated.

The Council is currently working towards targets in the following ways:

- Council's 4th Carbon Management Plan, which aims to achieve zero carbon by 2030
- Continuing to support the installation of renewable energy in and around the city
- Publishing a plan outlining steps toward full decarbonisation of fleet vehicles and moving forward with electrification of 25% of fleet vehicles by 2023.
- Purchasing renewable gas for all sites and offsetting remaining emissions in 2021
- Investing £50m in the retrofitting of council homes with new heating systems and insulation to make them more environmentally sustainable.
- Developing proposals to reduce carbon emissions at key sites after being awarded nearly £11m to explore the provision of heat pumps, thermal storage, and battery storage powered by renewable energy.

The Council has adopted a number of targets and plans, all of which will support the transition to net zero:

Air Quality Action Plan

This includes a city-wide air pollution target of 30 g/m3 by 2025, more ambitious than the legal annual mean limit value for NO2 of 40g/m3. This focuses on the reduction of transport emissions, primarily from the delivery of the Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ) and Connecting Oxford.

The ZEZ seeks to reduce emissions from vehicles in parts of the city while Connecting Oxford seeks to reduce the number of private cars on the city's roads.

Urban Forest Strategy

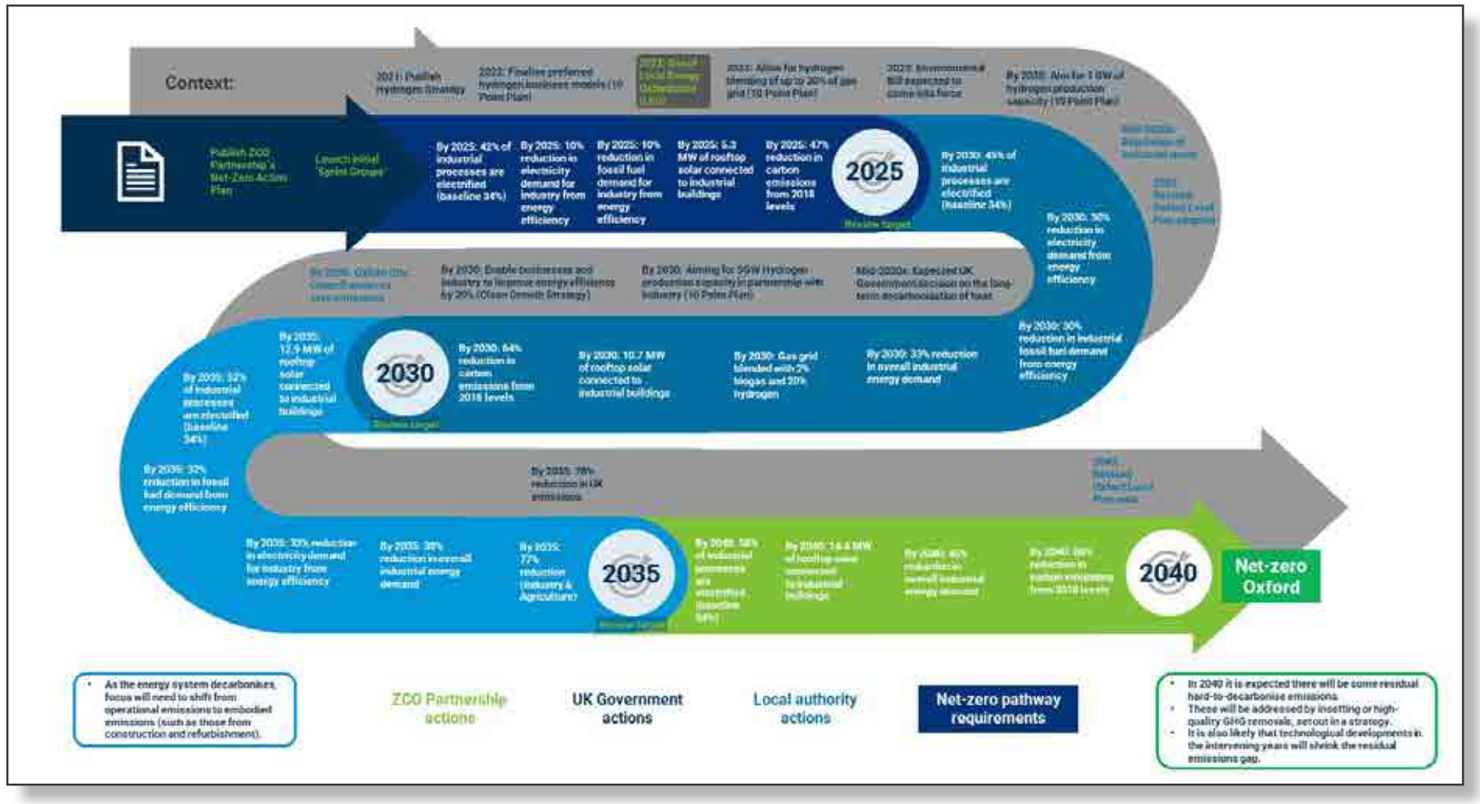
Trees provide shading, biodiversity resources, carbon sequestration and green infrastructure. An Urban Forest Strategy sets out the vision, strategy and actions to protect and enhance the city's urban forest.

Waste and Recycling Strategy

This strategy sits within a hierarchy of waste management strategy and policy at European and national levels. Waste and recycling have a critical role in relation to carbon emissions and resource management.

Biodiversity Action Plan

The Biodiversity Action Plan provides an overview of actions Oxford City Council are taking to improve and conserve biodiversity through our range of functions.



Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership Net-Zero Roadmap (Oxford City Council)

OTHER DOCUMENTS

Policy Context

Other Documents

A number of other policy documents are of particular importance:

Oxfordshire Plan (2050)

The Oxfordshire Plan 2050, which is currently undergoing public consultation is a joint Statutory Spatial Plan which will provide a strategic planning framework for Oxfordshire to 2050, setting out housing, employment and infrastructure needs whilst seeking to protect and enhance our natural environment and improve quality of life for all

The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy

Regionally and county-wide, the strategy supports an East-West rail link between Oxford, Bicester, Milton Keynes and Bedford; rail improvements between Oxford and Didcot; redevelopment of Oxford Station, and upgrades to the A34.

Oxford City Centre Action Plan (2021)

The OCCAP details improvements to the city centre and the West End in particular through key themes and site specific projects. The document presents several detailed spatial strategies addressing constraints throughout the built environment providing tangible and well laid out roadmaps.

West End Investment Prospectus Draft (2022)

The Investment Prospectus sets out an ambitious vision for the West End of Oxford and provides 10 shared principles that have been collectively agreed by landowners and key public and private stakeholders. It looks at key sites of opportunity and understands broadly what investments are needed to achieve the vision.

Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)

The authorities would receive up to £215 million of central government funding in return for delivering 100,000 homes by 2031. The assumption built in to this figure was that 1,400 dwellings per annum were required in Oxford to 2031.

Oxford's Economic Strategy Draft (2022)

The Oxford's Economic Strategy looks at the economic geography of Oxford and sets out a vision which is underpinned by three pillars: an economy that is inclusive, global and green. It unpacks these pillars and sets out a Delivery plan.

Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (2021)

The Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment provides an integrated evidence base to help the Oxfordshire Council's identify the appropriate level and distributions of housing and employment over the period to 2050. It highlights that job growth over the 2010-18 period has outpaced growth in housing and labour. This has helped contribute to the lack of affordability of housing and the increasing in commuting into Oxfordshire.

Oxford Local Industrial Strategy (2019)

The strategy sets out a long term framework of how Oxford will drive R&D and innovation - becoming one of the top three global innovation ecosystems by 2040.

It identifies Oxford as an Ideation cluster which sits within the wider Innovation Corridor. The Oxford-Cambridge Arc provides a key network of resources and connections which are crucial to the Strategy's success

The Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4) of 2015, 'Connecting Oxfordshire' to:

- Support jobs and housing growth
- Reduce transport emissions and meet our obligations from Government;
- Protect, and where possible enhance Oxfordshire's environment and improve quality of life;
- Improve public health, air quality, safety and individual well-being

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

Oxford's LCWIP was approved in 2020, which sets out proposals and evidence as to how a 50% increase in cycling can be achieved in the City. Key to this is providing a comprehensive network of cycle routes and further measures to support cycling, such as Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs). A number of key cycling principles are set out, including improved road maintenance, removing barriers on cycle paths, providing secure cycle parking, and ensuring a well connected permeable network of routes.

Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (2020)

The Local Transport and Connectivity Plan pushes the net zero agenda on Oxfordshire's transportation system by seeking to reduce the need to travel; secure high quality gigabyte connectivity; and make active travel, public and shared transport the natural first choice.

Through this vision is considers themes of environment, health, place-shaping, productivity, connectivity. Currently this plan is in visionary stage and is to be approved and adopted Winter 2021-22.

A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)- Objectives relating to Oxford

- Meet objectively assessed housing numbers using a standard methodology
- Assess the viability of affordable housing
- Provide at least 10% of housing requirements on small and medium sized sites
- Protect the Green Belt except where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified
- Promote good design and well-designed places
- Promote sustainable transport
- Promote healthy communities
- Protect designated heritage assets
- Meet the challenge of climate change and flooding
- Conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment

A CHANGING CONTEXT

The fabric of Oxford City and the West End is changing rapidly with a range of different developments coming forward from redeveloping brownfield land; refurbishment of existing buildings; and the transformation and densification of different uses.

Mapping the future of Oxford in the short, medium and long term is an essential element in understanding the place.

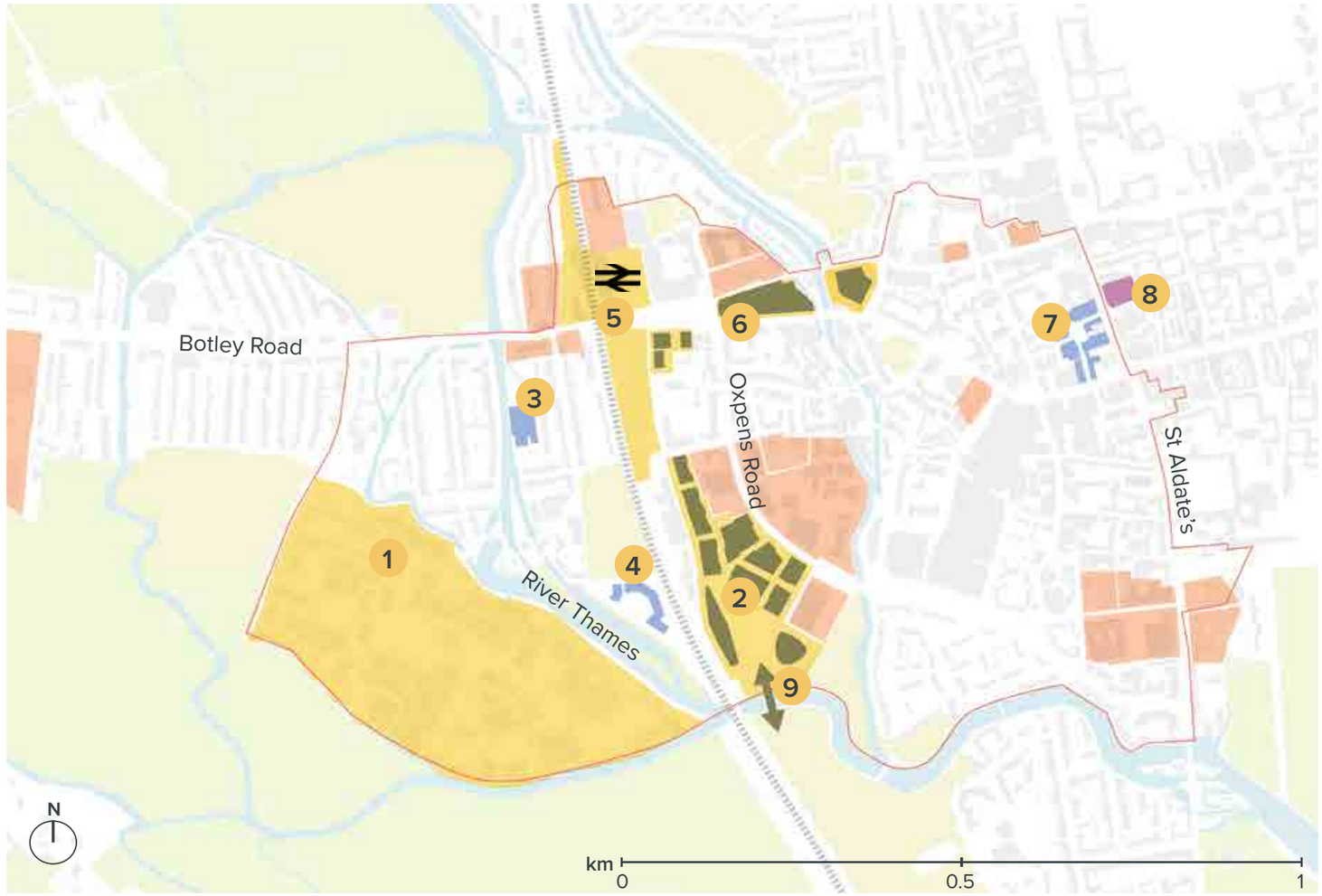


PROPOSALS

An Evolving Context

There has been a number of planning consents and early stage masterplans within the site boundary:

1. Osney Mead masterplan (Initial assessment work)
2. Oxpens masterplan (OPA to be submitted - early 2022)
3. Saïd Business School Global Leadership Centre (Planning consented in 2020)
4. 1-86 Gibbs Crescent (Planning consented in 2018)
5. Oxford Station (Options study underway, 2021)
6. Nuffield College Sites (Application to be submitted Spring/Summer 2022)
7. The Clarendon Centre (Awaiting consent - submitted in Feb 2021)
8. Northgate (under construction)
9. Oxpens Bridge and associated towpath works



- Areas of Opportunity
- Pre-planing development sites coming forward
- Pre-planning block plans
- Construction
- Planning consent

PROPOSALS

An Evolving Context

Osney Mead masterplan (2021 - present)

Oxford University Development Limited have prepared a feasibility study to consider what could be provided on the site. Predominately office, research and university buildings are provided, with some residential. Further technical work and cooperation with other land owners is needed. More detail can be found in Chapter 4.

Oxpens masterplan (2021 - present)

Mixed use development including commercial and residential uses. OxWED (Oxford City Council and Nuffield College) will be submitting a planning application in 2022. More detail can be found in Chapter 4.

SAID Business School (2020)

The conversion, redevelopment and extension of Osney Power Station to Centre of Executive Education run by Said Business School. Consented in Jan 2020 (John McAslan and Partners, 18/02982/FUL)











1-86 Gibbs Crescent (Consented 2018)

Demolition and redevelopment of site into 140 homes (3 x studios; 73 x 1 bed; 60 x 2 bed; 4 x 3 bed) and a green space. It is 6 storeys at its maximum (Yurky Cross Chartered Architects, 18/03369/FUL)

Oxford Station (2021 - present)

The overall masterplan is currently in design stages and includes a series of options for the future of the eastern and western side of the station; Becket St car park; Frideswide Sq and Botley Road (Atkins). More detail can be found in Chapter 4.

Frideswide Square and Catle Mill Stream Quarter (Nuffield College Sites) (2021 - present)

The emerging masterplan for the Nuffield sites provides a series of mixed use buildings which provide spaces for offices, commercial, businesses and services, with some residential. More detail can be found in Chapter 4.

4

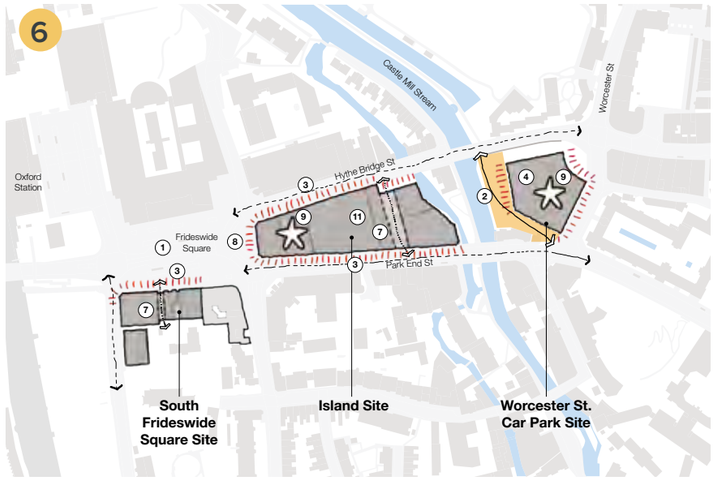




5



6



Key

- development plots
- illustrative new links
- enhanced existing links
- opportunities for height
- new public realm
- key active frontages

N

December 2021

PROPOSALS

An Evolving Context

Clarendon Centre (2021)

Proposed redevelopment incl. partial demolition and partial re-use and extension of buildings - retail; offices; student accommodation; R&D; and a new public square (Marchini Curran Associates) - Awaiting consent (21/00110/FUL)

Northgate (consented in 2018 - under construction)

Demolition and erection of replacement building to provide commercial units, new teaching facilities, ancillary accommodation and student rooms for Jesus College (18/00258/FUL)

Oxpens Bridge 9

Separate but linked to the Oxpens masterplan, the City Council are developing options and designs for Oxpens bridge and associated towpath works. More detail can be found in Chapter 4.

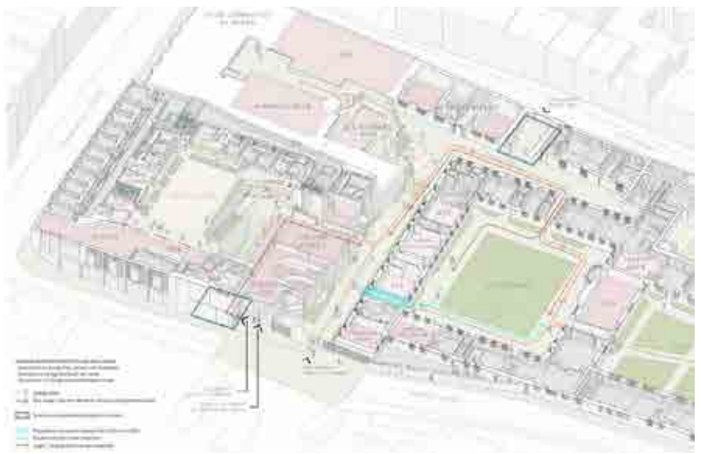
7



8







257

MEANWHILE USES

An Evolving Context

As development proposals and plans are underway, there have been a number of initiatives for meanwhile uses around the city. These have been scattered around within the red line boundary and some lying outside of it.

The main trends include converting these spaces for community uses, such as workshops and co-working spaces. This presents further opportunities for meanwhile uses to be proposed in more locations.

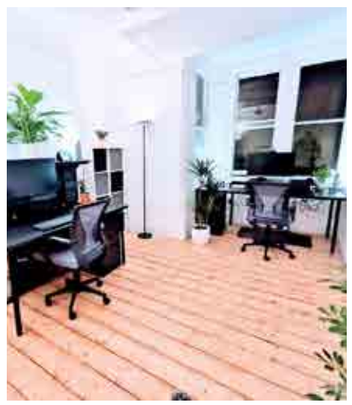


1 Meanwhile uses in vacant shops

Alongside the City Council, Make Space are leading on ‘Meanwhile in Oxfordshire’ which aims to fill vacant shop units with short term/pop up uses while work continues to get them let. A space on Frideswide Square has already opened which has artist studio space and office space.







2 Broad Meadows, Broad Street

This initiative comes from Oxford City Council as Summer 2021 begins. Broad Street would be a lively destination featuring extensive outdoor seating, play opportunities, extended restaurant frontages and a dedicated cycle lane. There are plans to gradually implement this as a permanent scheme if it is successful.



259

3 Start-up space in Covered Market

Oxford City Council and Independent Oxford has piloted start-up business space in Covered Market (which originally opened in 1774). The scheme provided a space for the ‘Indie Oxford Market Place’ which provided a space for small businesses to sell.

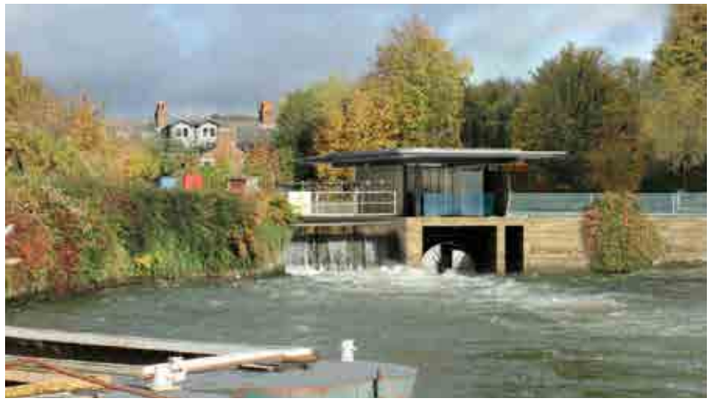
4 Project LEO (Local Energy Oxford)

The Osney Island Smart and Fair Neighbourhood Trial aims to understand the impacts and opportunities for small dense urban environments to make the switch to electric vehicles (EVs). It also aims to maximise the renewable electricity generated by the Oxford Lock Hydro.

5 James Sadler Oxford Balloon Experience

Proposals for a tethered balloon and centre within Oxpens.

















HISTORIC CONTEXT

The City of Oxford has an incredibly rich history which is highly significant for the growth and transformation of the UK. It's historical context underpins the city as a place of educational excellence; innovation and culture.

The City has a number of key heritage designations that have historic and community value. Listed Buildings; Conservation Areas and Viewing Cones are all things that need to be considered; along with the role heritage has to play within the character of the West End.



Timeline

Oxford was founded in the 9th Century when the Saxon, Alfred the Great created a network of fortified towns called burghs across his kingdom.



Oxford became a key manufacturing town noted for cloth and leather. The University of Oxford was founded in the 12th Century and soon began to dominate the city by the 14th and 15th centuries.

Within the 17th and 18th Century, Oxford became established as a market town with a key High Street and a density of coffee shops. By the end of the 18th Century the city had a population of nearly 12,000 people.





Within the 20th Century the city continued to prosper and became an important manufacturing centre spearheaded by the Morris Motors car company. Boundaries of the city were extended and in the 1930s new housing was built in Botley and North Hinksey.

9th C
10th C
11th C
12th C
13th C
14th C
15th C
16th C
17th C
18th C
19th C
20th C
21th C

By the time of the Normans, Oxford was a large and important town (population of 5000). Oxford Castle was built next to the River Thames in the late 11th Century within the Saxon walls.



By the 16th Century Oxford had significantly declined in national importance and had a population of around 3,500 people.

Tudor Oxford was economically dependent on the university and students provided a large market for beer, food, clothes and other goods.

Modern sewers and piped water; St Ebbe's gasworks; and the Oxford to London railway were all built during the 19th C Oxford. Oxford expanded rapidly and industries of marmalade; publishing and iron casting boomed.





Today, the population of Oxford is more than 152,000 and the city's main industries are car manufacturing; publishing, higher education and biotech.

OXFORD'S WEST END THROUGH TIME

Historical Context

1888

Osney Cemetery was established in 1848 as a result of central Oxford churchyards becoming full

Tight rows of terraces

Osney Abbey dates back to 1129

In the 1850s Oxford Railway was re-located here

St Ebbe's Gasworks was in operation from 1818-1960. Terraced housing was built around the works site.

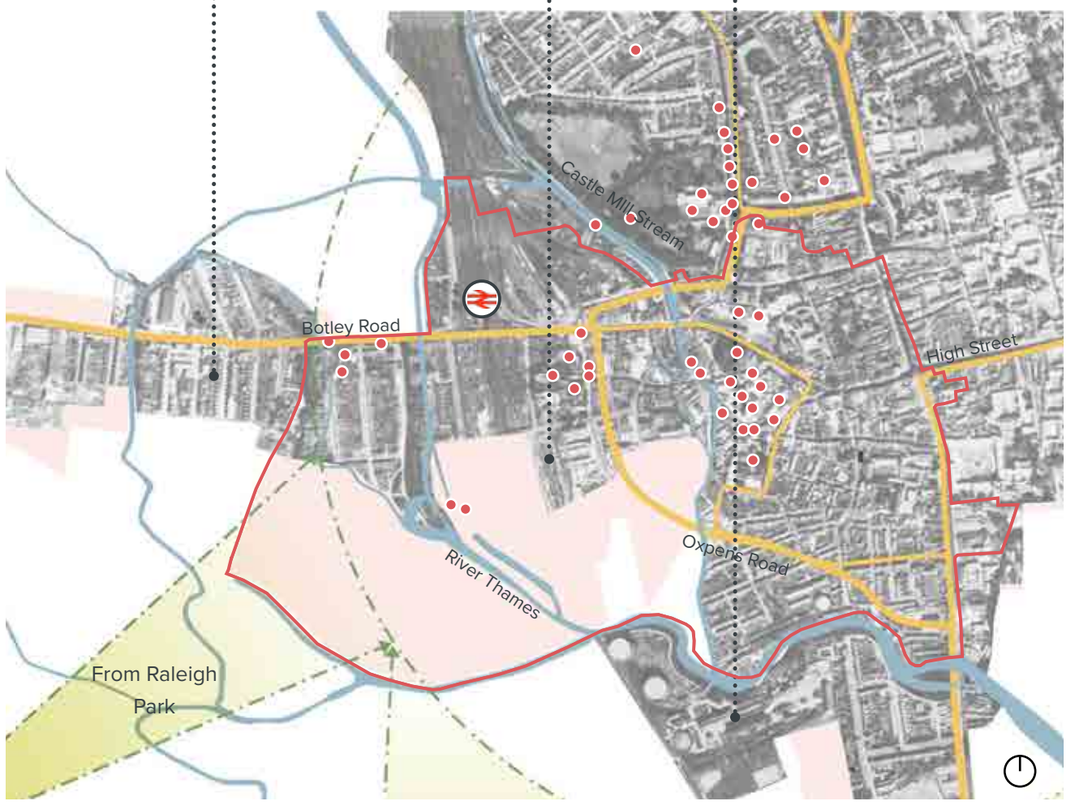
The line of the High St dates back to at least the 16th C



1945

A series of roads were built out in the early 20th C

The towns industrial uses lined the railway



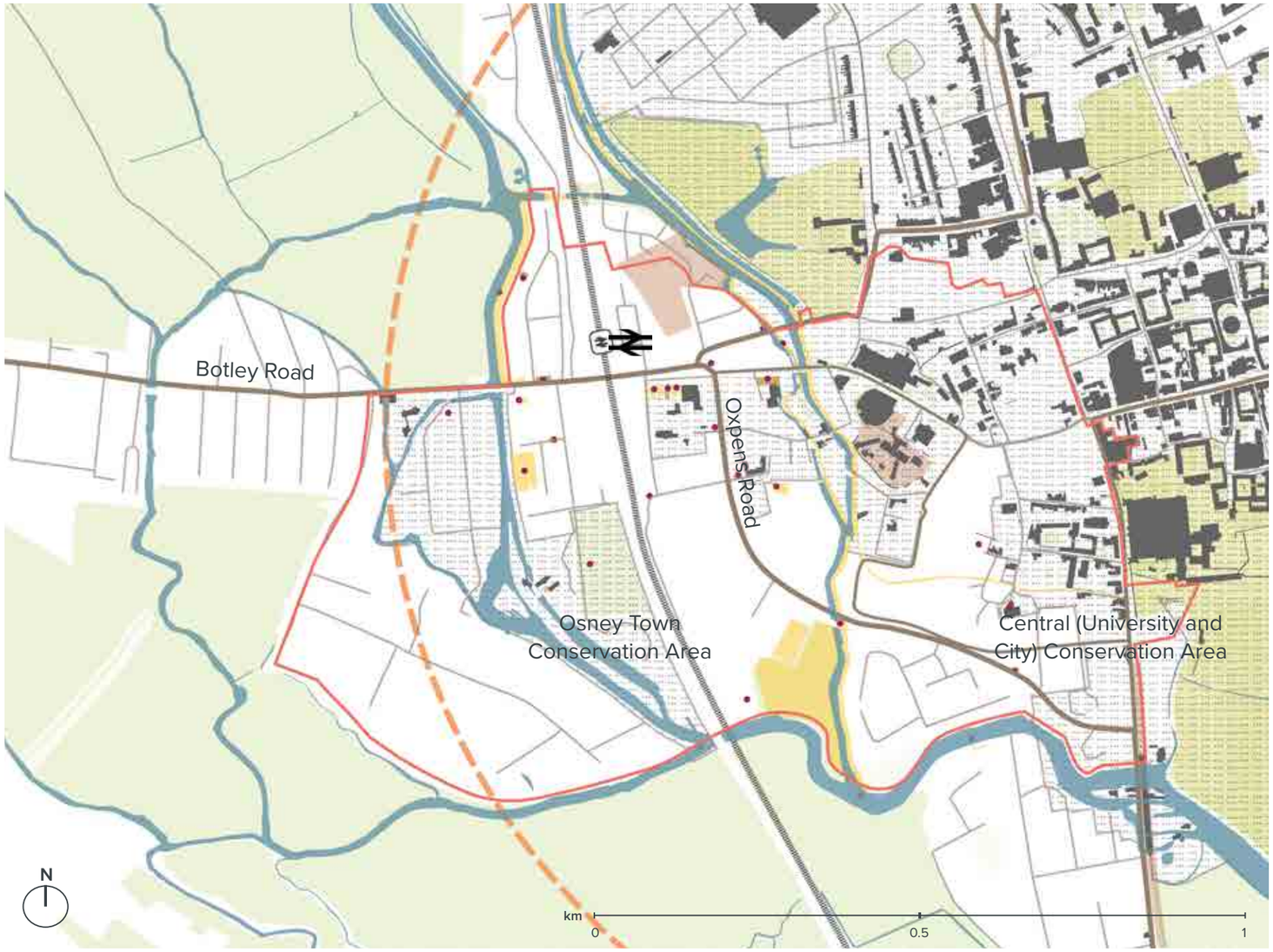

2004
The area of St Ebbe's was redeveloped between the 1950s and 80s and Oxpens road was constructed
Creation of Botley Road Retail Park
The Oxford Green Belt was formally approved in 1975
Osney Mead Industrial Estate was developed in the 1960s
Oxford's Ice Rink opened in 1984
A large amount of housing was built to the south-east of the Town Centre during the late 20th C
Castle Mill Stream
Botley Road
Oxpens Road
High Street
River Thames
From Raleigh Park
Listed Buildings
Extent of today's built area
Footbridges
Viewing cones

HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS

Historical Context

The quantity and quality of heritage assets help define the character of Oxford. This includes their setting; views to and from them; and the opportunity for them to be a key place-making tool mean they are a key consideration within the masterplanning process.

The majority of the site is covered by the Historic Core Area which has two Conservation Areas and many Listed Buildings; Scheduled Monuments, buildings and areas that are on the Oxford Asset Heritage Register list. The eastern side of the site has a higher concentration of listed buildings reflecting the city's historic centre.



- Listed Buildings
- Conservation Areas
- Scheduled Monuments
- Oxford Asset Heritage Register
- Oxford Asset Heritage Register Points
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Historic Core Area

Osney Town Conservation Area

Osney Town is a riverside community located off Botley Road. The Conservation Area is partially sited on an island at a point where the River Thames splits into several channels.

The majority of the Conservation Areas' 300 households live in 19th Century terraced cottages built on a tight grid. These homes were constructed as a result of influx of workers from the opening of the railway station. There is a high townscape quality and the regularity of fenestration, doorway details and materials give the streets a regular rhythm and unity.

The Conservation Area has an important relationship with the River Thames and limited bridge access to the settlement creates a sense of containment and isolation. Proposed built form and connections will need carefully to be considered to retain the identity of this Conservation Area.

Oxford Central Conservation Area

The Oxford Central Conservation Area covers the areas around the principal streets (High Street; St Aldates; Cornmarket St) which have been in place since at least the 16th Century. The 'Western Fringe' borders the Conservation Area to the west which has been an industrial quarter of the city since the Middle Ages.

Surrounding the castle there are characters of the medieval town where there is a tight grid of medieval streets with characteristically long plots. College typologies also dominate the western side of the town. Nuffield College and Worcester Colleges both have grand formal architecture which sit in spacious grounds.

Osney Abbey

Osney Mill complex incorporates the surviving 15th Century remnants of the former Osney Abbey. Osney Abbey is Grade II Listed and consists of a rubber and timber framed structure.

Osney Lock

Constructed in 1790, Osney Lock is an important and vital feature of river life and the surrounding character. Long views up and down the river can be seen from the lock area.

The redevelopment of Osney Mead Industrial Estate will need to respond sensitively to Osney Lock and the adjacent buildings - Osney Mill Cottage; Osney Mill and Osney Abbey.

St Thomas the Martyr's Church

Founded in the 12th Century this Anglo-Catholic church is Grade II Listed and sits just south-east of Oxford Railway Station. It's setting at the end of St Thomas' Street and onto Becket Street is an important consideration for proposed development.

Takeaway points

- Consideration of the sensitivity of several key Listed Buildings; Scheduled Monuments and Asset Heritage Register points.
- Character and sensitivity of Conservation Areas to inform masterplanning.
- Opportunity to use historic references to inform design.



Aerial view of Osney Lock



View from Osney Bridge overlooking Osney Town Conservation Area

2 65

Oxford, West End Spatial Framework | Chapter 6. Appendices

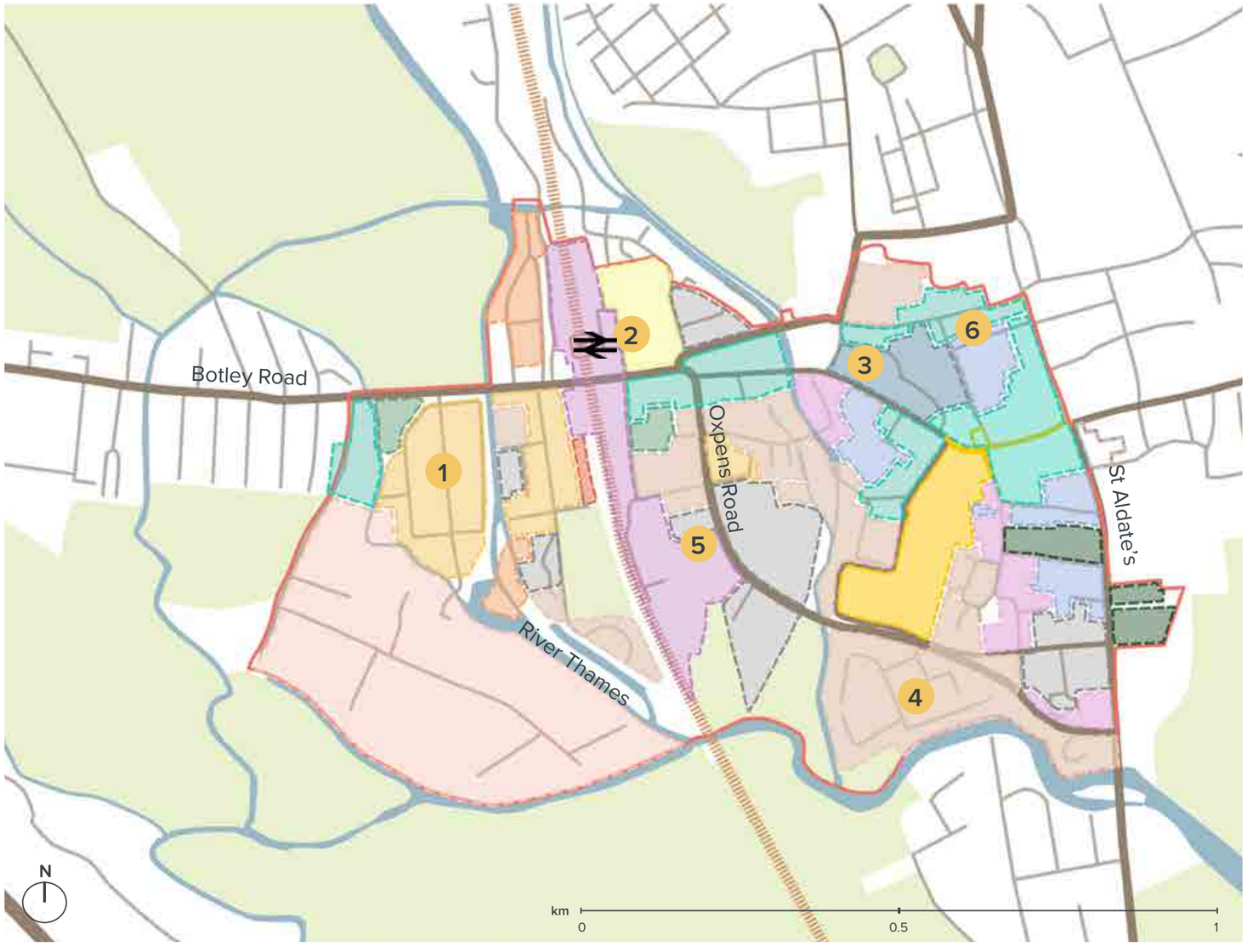
225

HISTORIC CHARACTER AREAS

Historical Context

Oxford Town Centre and the West End has seen a multitude of change over different centuries. The adjacent plan seeks to broadly categorise areas into character areas which stem from the historical growth of Oxford.

- Pre 18th C
- Church and setting (pre 19th C)
- Pre 19th C Colleges
- 19th C Terraced Cottages
- Larger 19th C Housing
- Early 20th C uni/colleges
- Late 20th C Housing
- Rail side industrial uses (20th C)
- 1960s Industrial sheds
- Late 20th C offices/institutional buildings
- 20th C Apartments/Offices
- Late 20th C/21st C Shopping Centre
- 21st Century Boarding House
- 21st Century Business School
- Mix of uses and ages



Takeaway points

- Consideration of the character of different areas to inform the masterplan



Bridge Street is characterised by a tight grid of 19th Century Cottages with narrow pavements and on-street car parking



The SAID Business School was built during the late 20th Century and fronts onto Frideswide Square



To the right - Nuffield College built in the early 20th C and to the left - the remains of the Castle (dating back to the 11th C)



Large amounts of housing was built to the south-east of the Town Centre during the late 20th C



A series of offices and institutional buildings sit along Oxpens Road



St Micheals Street dates back before the 18th C and consists of college buildings and some retail

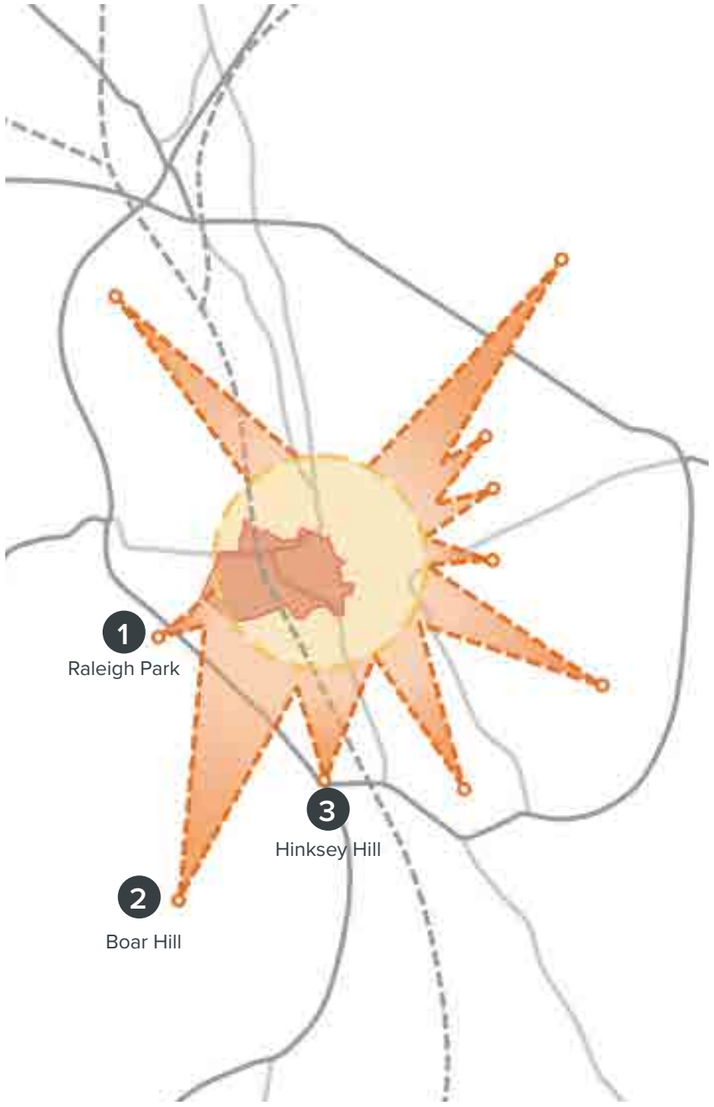
VIEW CONES

Historical Context

Several significant views of great importance to the City of Oxford are identified in the Assessment of Oxford View Cones (2015). This is predominately due to a collection of buildings which rise above the lower level roof-scape of the city.

This includes St George's Tower; the University Church of St Mary the Virgin; Christ Church Cathedral; the Tower of Five Orders; Wren's Tom Tower; and the spire of Nuffield College. These assets are deemed to have historical, evidential, aesthetic and communal value.

The 10 View Cones identified within the Local Plan are from different key landscaped locations. Most relevant are the following views:



1. The view from Raleigh Park which looks north east across Osney Mead.
2. The view from Boar Hill which looks north-east over the site
3. Hinksey Hill (A34) Interchange looks north over the western area of the site

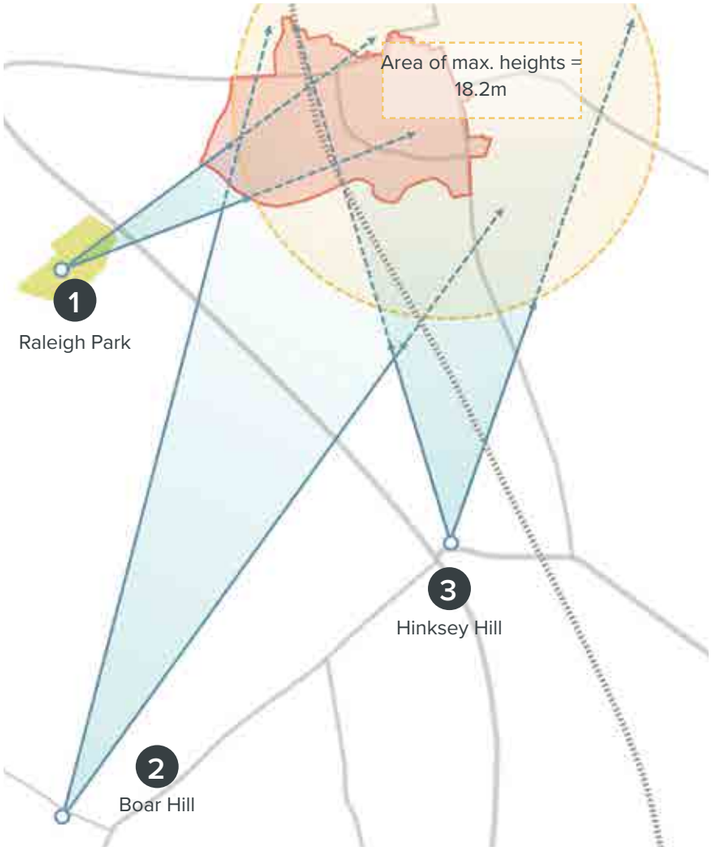
Site boundary

Historic Core Area

Viewing Cones

Heights

Under Policy DH1 (High Quality Design and Place-making) in the Local Plan it states that development within the historic core area must not exceed 18.2m. Development in the areas within the viewing cones must ensure they respond to the heritage views.



View from Raleigh Park

The view from Raleigh Park has been important since the early 18th C and was made public with the establishment of Raleigh Park in the early 20th C.

The Assessment recognises an opportunity to enhance this view by reducing the prominence of the industrial estate's roof-surfaces - either by using a darker or less reflective material; or using tree planting to break up the area of roof surfaces.

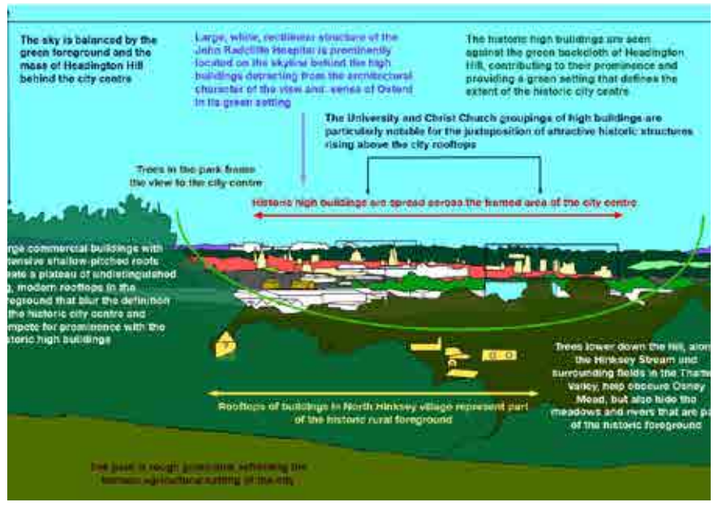
It also considers the long side elevation of the Westgate Centre as hindering the view and seeks to break them up through use of shorter lengths of different materials - creating a finer grain of other roof-surfaces.

View from Boars Hill

This view has also been admired since the 18th Century and looks north-east to the city centre over Hinksey Heights Golf Club. The green space between the viewing point and the urban area of Oxford is protected by the green belt which safeguards 'the setting and historic character of the city.' (View Cones Assessment, 2015)

View from Hinksey Hill

This view looks north from the A34 Interchange which has historically been a crossing point for vehicles since the Middle Ages. It overlooks the green valley of the River Thames and is a view predominately experienced by those travelling in car.



Analysis of the view from Raleigh Park (Assessment of the Oxford View Cones (201%)

Takeaway points

- Opportunity to improve the roof-scape and view from Raleigh Park (and Boar Hill; Hinksey Hill) as discussed in the Assessment of the Oxford View Cones
- Development above this height (18.2m) should be limited in bulk and must be of the highest design quality

DEMOGRAPHICS AND USE

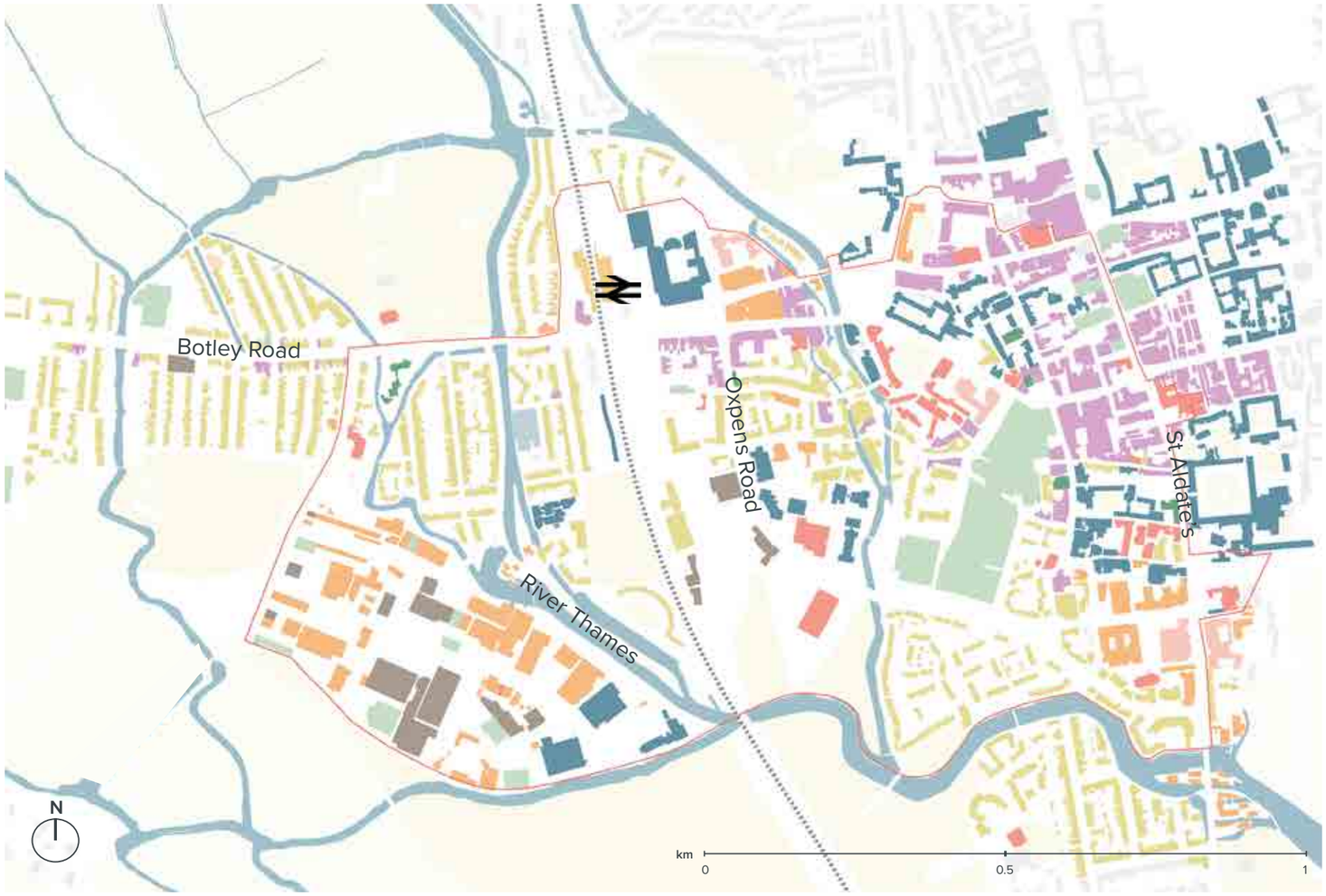
The people that live, work and play within the West End are essential to understand in terms of their demographic; their movements and the hubs of activity and character they create.



LAND USE

The greatest diversity in uses is found towards the city centre, which contains a great deal of mixed uses alongside community and commercial uses. Higher education is prevalent throughout Oxford, including the West End, with several key university sites such as the Said Business School Sites and Nuffield College Sites.

Osney is nearly wholly residential whereas Osney Mead Industrial Estate is a greater source of employment, mostly in industrial and office professional sectors.



- Rail station
- Residential
- Higher Education
- Offices and Professional Services
- Retail and Commercial
- Community, Culture, and Leisure
- Religious and Worship
- Civic and Public Services
- Light Industrial
- Mixed Uses

DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE WEST END

Demographic data will be vital in informing the masterplan - it gives us a high level overview of who lives and works in the area; and what their needs are. This analysis will be built upon further in comprehensive consultation exercise.

In general the population of Oxford is young and relatively highly educated. There are big differences between areas separated by the railway line. To the west, residents mostly live in houses and are homeowners. There is a higher car ownership level and a much lower student population.

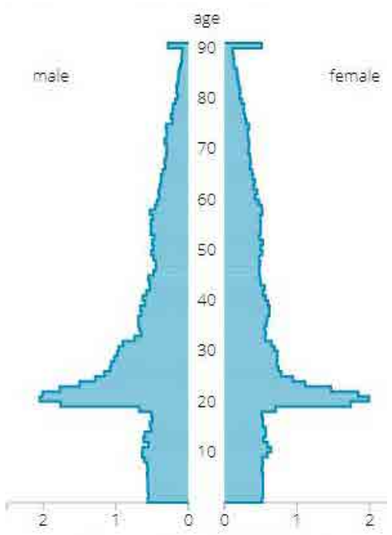
To the east of the railway line - household sizes are smaller; residents don't own their homes; there is a much higher student population and lower car ownership. There are a number of pockets of deprivation within the West End which sit alongside wealthy areas.

The residential demographic and built form which houses them help contribute to different character areas within the site and will inform the masterplanning going forward.



32% of Oxford's population is aged 18-29 years old (16% for England and Wales)

- England and Wales Youngest City
- Oxford's population reduces by 10% in out of university/ school term time
- 24% of city's adult population are full time students



Distribution of population within 2021 (Oxford Council website)



A high percentage of residents have a university degree

- Two universities - University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes
- 60-70% of residents have degrees within Osney and housing area east of Oxpens Meadows.



The % of people who have a degree (e.g BA; BSc) or higher degree (e.g MA; PhD; PGCE) (Datashine, Census, 2011)

Takeaway points

- Creating a vision that celebrates and supports young population and a dominance of education within the city
- Masterplans for allocated sites to interrogate existing and predicted housing needs
- Understanding of modes of transportation to inform masterplan design and help shift people to more sustainable forms of transportation

Varying levels of deprivation and wealth; and sizes of homes

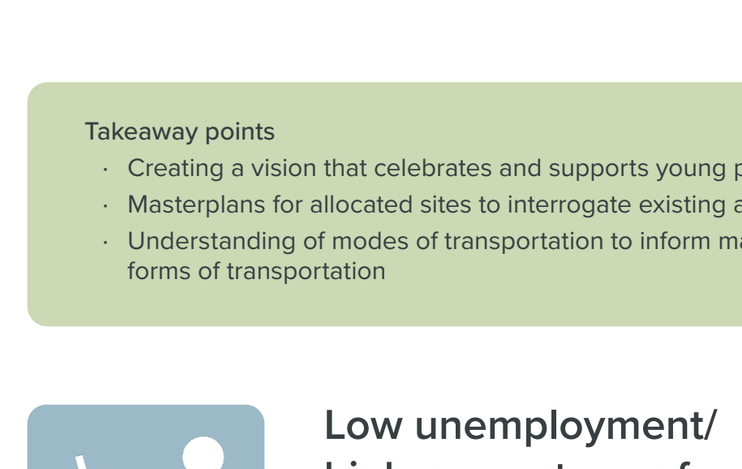
- There are pockets of deprivation - higher degrees of deprivation in the SE of the site. Osney has very low degrees of deprivation.
- Home ownership drops as you move towards the city centre
- Concentration of 1-2 bedroom homes to the east and 2-3 bedroom homes to the west.



The percentage of households which are not deprived any dimensions (Datashine, Census, 2011)

Low unemployment/ high percentage of people working in education

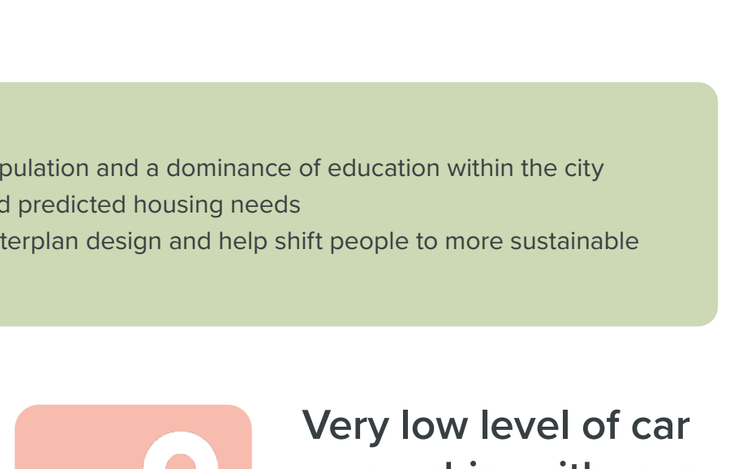
- A high percentage of people work in the education sector; and in science, research, engineering and technology
- Low unemployment figures



The percentage of working age adults within the education industry (Datashine, Census, 2011)

Very low level of car ownership, with many people walking or cycle to work places

- Within Osney 27-40% of people either walk, cycle or use an alternative method to get to work
- To the east of the site car ownership levels are low with 50-80% of people not owning a car. In Osney 45-55% of people own one car.



The percentage who walk, cycle or use an alternative method to get to work (Datashine, Census, 2011)

HUBS OF ACTIVITY

Community and Character

The site and surrounding area has an intensity of uses which help contribute to the character of the area. The following hubs are particularly significant:

1. Botley Road Corridor

Starting from the station, Botley Road has a number of non-residential uses which are essential for the local community. Most notably, the West Oxford Community Centre; a supermarket (Waitrose); and many local shops/restaurants. At the Western end of the agglomeration of uses, sits Botley Road Retail Park. There is opportunity to redevelop and rejuvenate parts of the Retail Park.

Botley Road itself is currently dominated with cars often causing congestion. Improving walking and cycling along the road may encourage surrounding residents and workers to use shops and facilities more; and travel into the city centre actively. Cycle improvements at the Seacourt Park and Ride junction have started, and in future phases will be implemented along the length of Botley Road (up to Ferry Hinksey Road.

2. Station Arrival

Fridewide Square; Said Business School; and a number of shops form the Station's Arrival. Future plans for Oxford Station and the Island site will help regenerate this area as a key Station Gateway.

3. Employment and Education

The uses in and around Osney Mead Industrial Estate and Oxpens road is largely made up of lots of different employment uses - wholesalers; offices; car repair shops; university laboratories and coffee roasters. Alongside this there are many educational uses (City of Oxford College; Oxford University buildings) a sports and conference centre.

With the re-development of Osney Mead Industrial Estate, there is opportunity to integrate some of these uses within mixed use blocks and create a better quality environment with connections into the City.

4. Retail Core

The intensity of retail uses is concentrated around Westgate Shopping Centre and the streets of Queens St; Cornmarket St; and the High Street. Along with retail there is a concentration of food and drink offering and services.

Many of the streets within the retail core are pedestrian only or pedestrian first and Bonn Square provides a public space where shoppers can dwell. There is opportunity to improve the pedestrian experience within the retail core.

5. Culture

This area has a multitude of uses including cultural buildings (museums, galleries, theatres, the Town Hall); university buildings; retail; and food and drink offering.



An intensity of uses: Oxford University's Laboratories; a gym; taxi company; software company; stone suppliers; electronic repair shop; masonry contractor



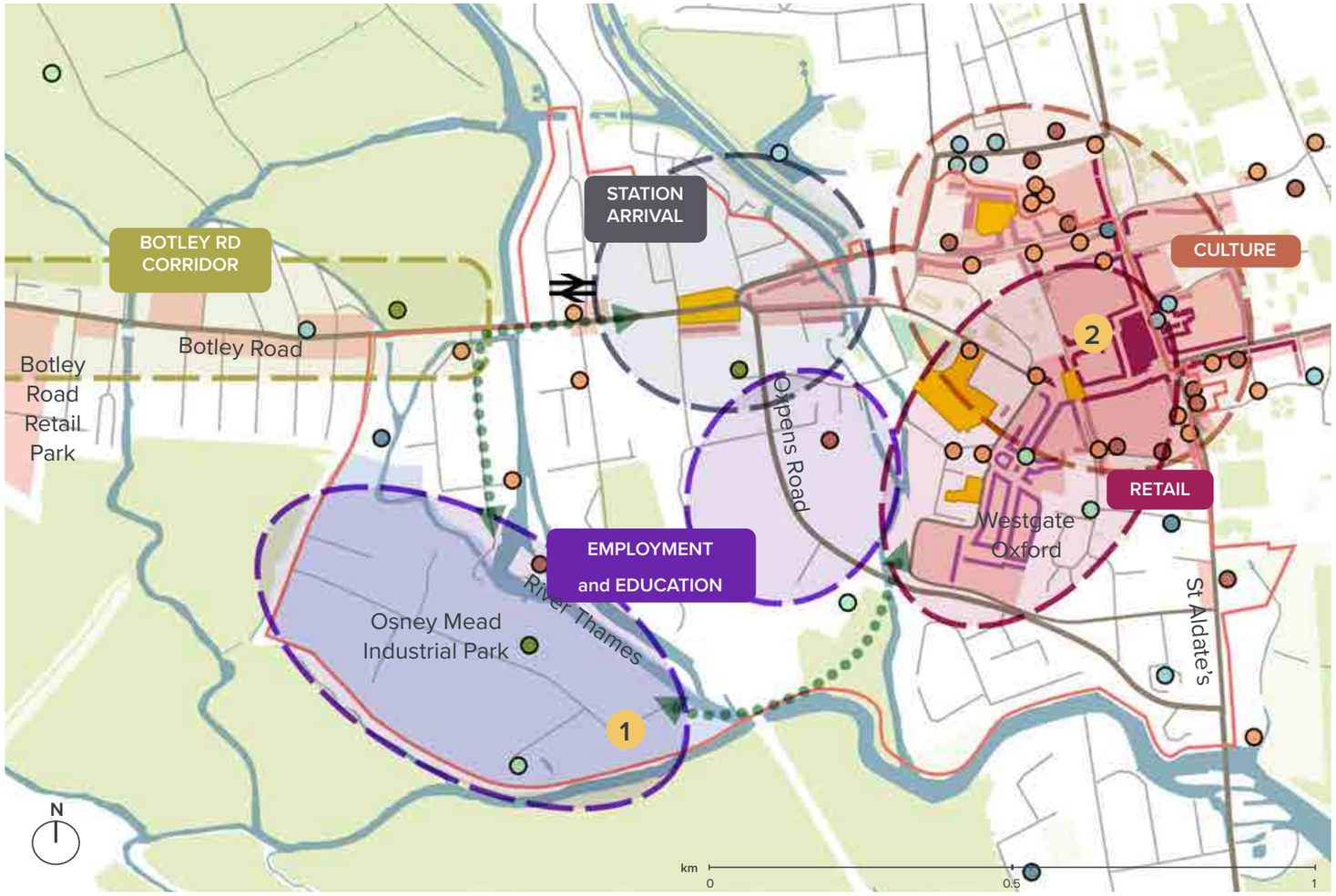
Regenerated in 2008, Bonn Square provides a place to dwell and move through. It is home to the Tirah war memorial and the surrounding shops/cafés activate the space

- City and District Centre
- Areas of Retail and Leisure
- Primary Shopping Frontage
- Secondary Shopping Frontage
- Westgate Shopping Centre Frontage
- Osney Mead Industrial Estate
- Category 1 employment space
- Public Spaces
- Community and Conference Centres
- Schools
- Healthcare facilities
- Culture and leisure
- Pubs
- Sports facilities

Note: Facilities highlighted are predominately publicly accessible. There are also many private or semi-private facilities (e.g University libraries) which aren't accessible to all.

Takeaway points

- Opportunity to create better connections and synergies between different hubs of activity.
- Opportunity to improve and integrate facilities on Botley Road through improved public realm.
- Opportunity to re-provide many of the existing employment uses on Osney Mead through innovative mixed used typologies and create a better quality environment with connections into the City.
- Opportunity to provide some further activation around the station with sites such as Becket St Car park and the Island site coming forward.
- Opportunity to improve the public realm of both the retail and cultural quarters and create an innovative strategy for activating vacant units and spaces with meanwhile uses.



INNOVATION AND EMPLOYMENT

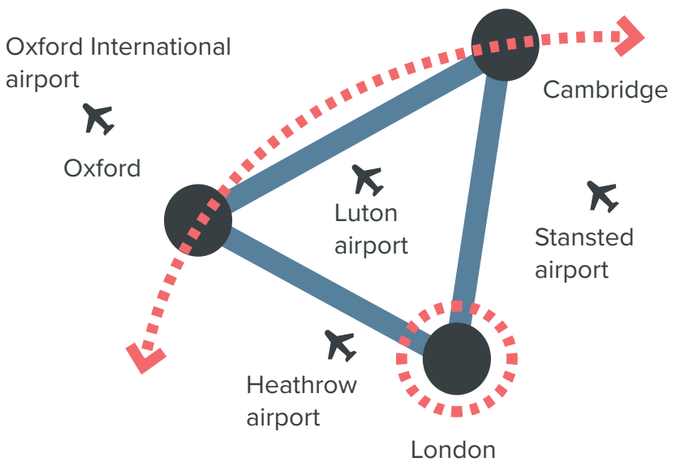
Oxford’s West End accommodates a number of employers and innovators and enhancing this offer will be a significant element of transforming the West End.

INNOVATION DISTRICT

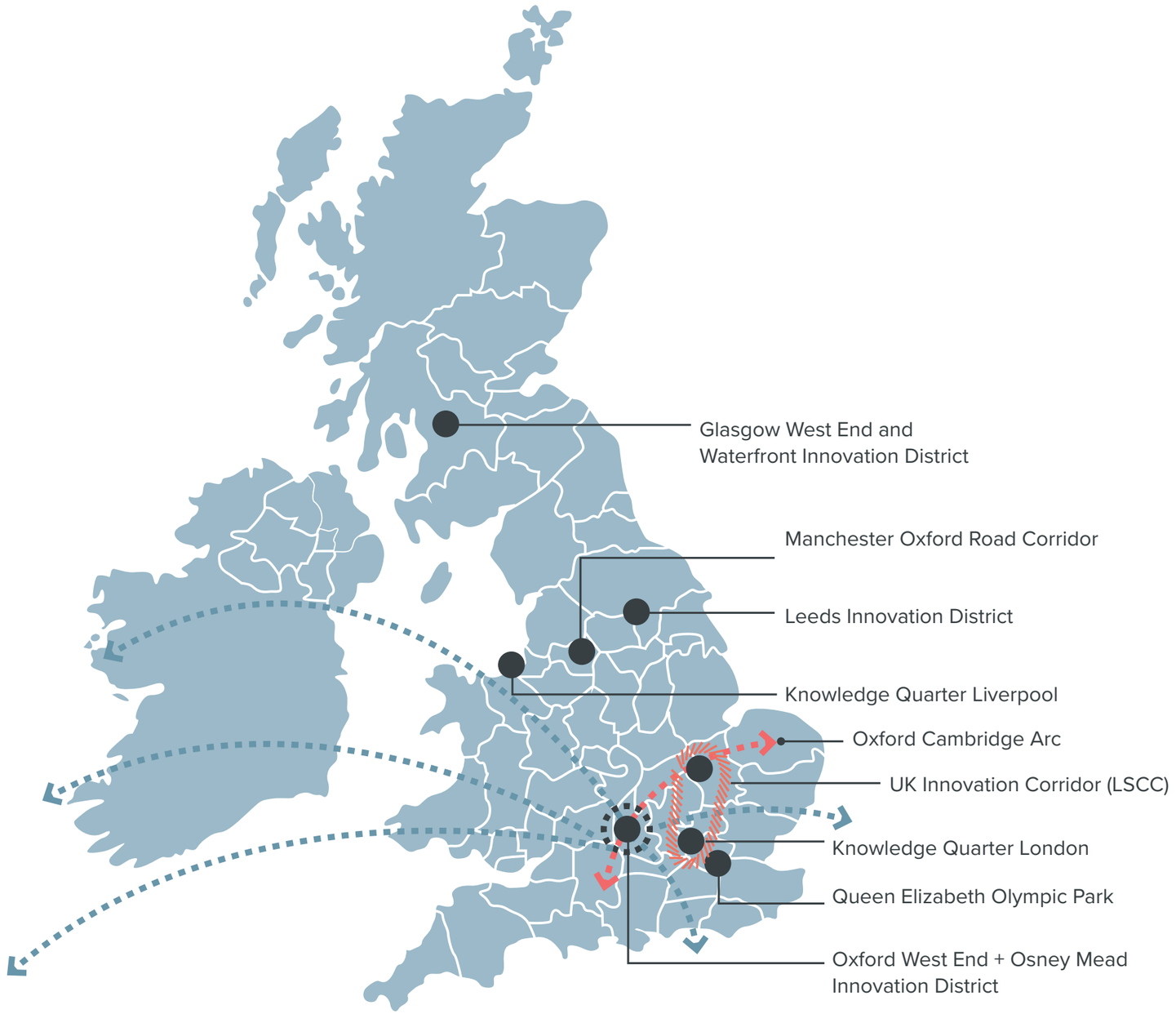
An Innovation District with regional, national and international importance

The future Oxford West End and Osney Mead Innovation District sits geographically close to a series of other hubs and innovation corridors. The networks and interactions between these hubs are an essential factor to help establish the much needed synergies between the UK's innovation, education and technology sectors; and support many livelihoods across the UK.

Within the south-east, The Golden Triangle has emerged which encompasses the Innovation hubs of Oxford, Cambridge and London; as well as access to air travel linking to other global innovation hubs. Oxford Innovation District will need to be designed following a holistic approach in relation to these other emerging innovation districts within this network.



The Golden Triangle



OXFORD'S ASSETS

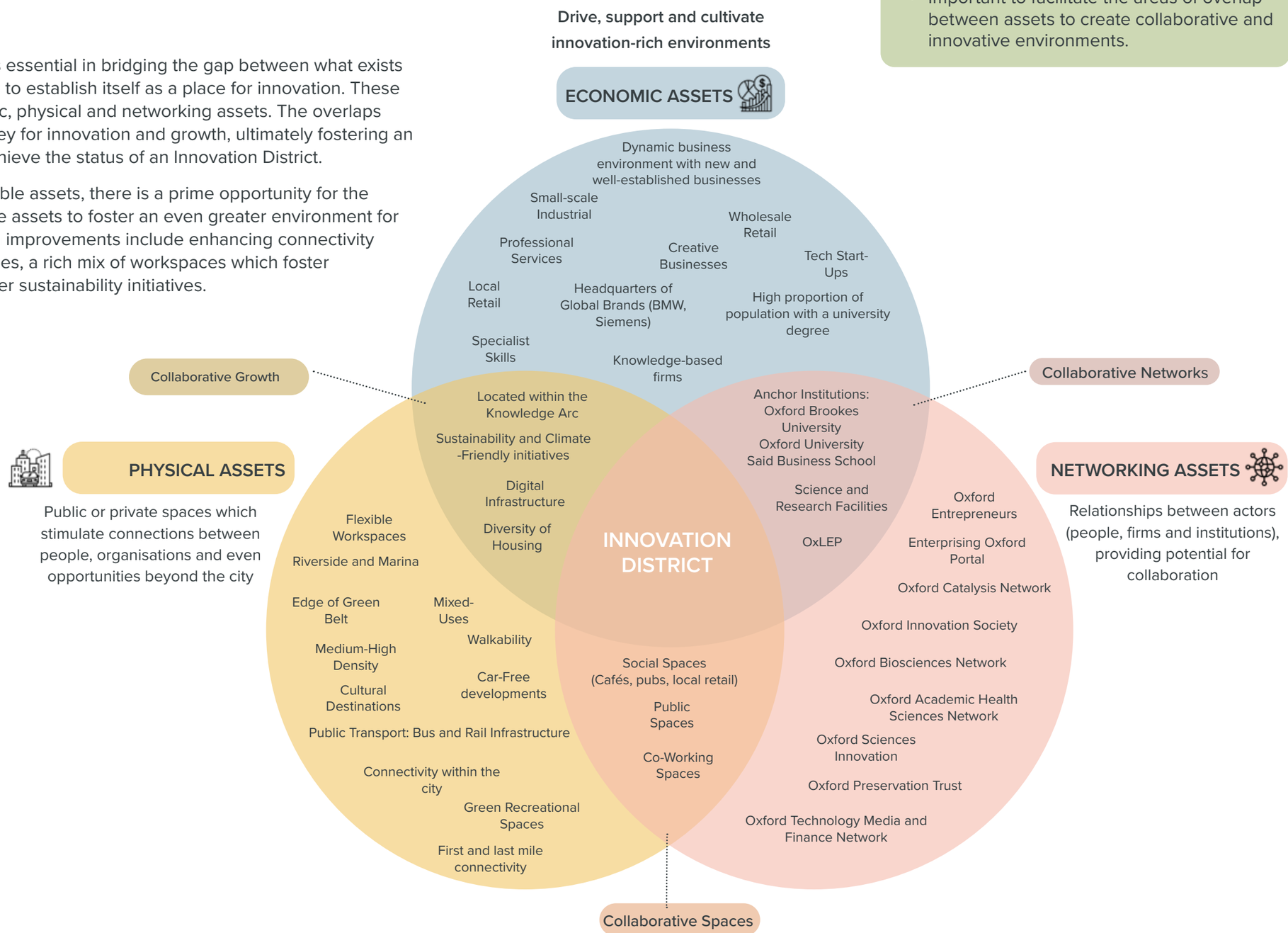
An Innovation District for Oxford

Recognising Oxford's key assets is essential in bridging the gap between what exists in the city, and what the city needs to establish itself as a place for innovation. These can be broken down into economic, physical and networking assets. The overlaps which occur between assets are key for innovation and growth, ultimately fostering an environment which the city can achieve the status of an Innovation District.

Though Oxford boasts many valuable assets, there is a prime opportunity for the city to improve upon many of these assets to foster an even greater environment for innovation and collaboration. Such improvements include enhancing connectivity within the city, delivering new homes, a rich mix of workspaces which foster collaboration and promoting greater sustainability initiatives.

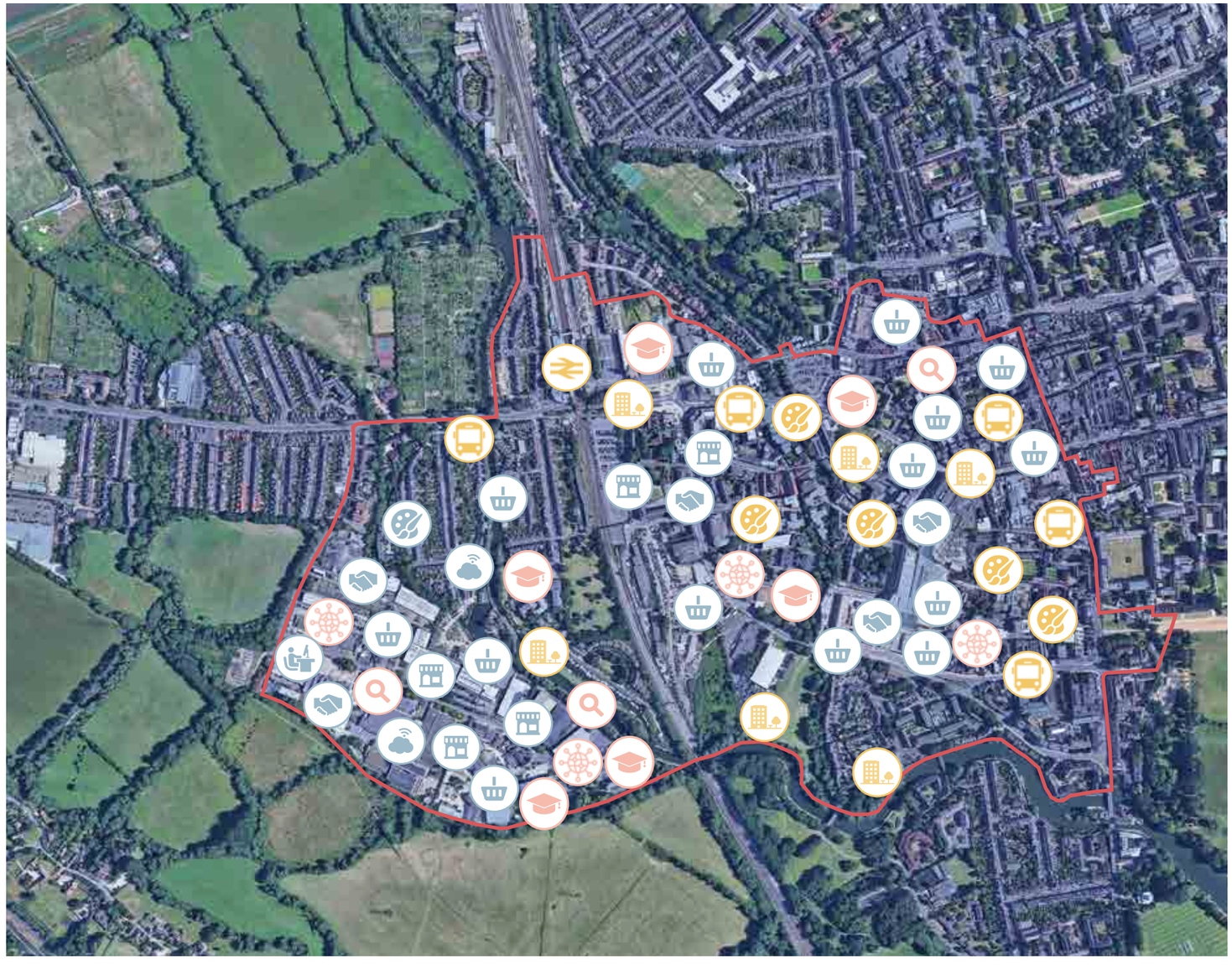
Takeaway points

- Opportunities to improve upon Oxford's existing economic, physical and networking assets.
- Important to facilitate the areas of overlap between assets to create collaborative and innovative environments.



The existing Oxford West End already has many of the key ingredients of a Global Innovation District. The adjacent plan and diagram shows just a few of these. This scenario has organically emerged over the years. Although these uses are established in the West End, a clear strategy to provide distinct connections and linkages between these many uses will form the key to its future success as a recognised Global Innovation Quarter.

Using the existing uses and the social and technical networks which interconnect them will be essential in transforming the area into a Global Innovation District. In addition by adding new and improved uses and spaces to the area particularly through mixing of uses this will aim to create an environment with an innovative and creative energy for the people that live, work and play there.



- Retail/ Commercial
- Co-Working Spaces
- Arts and Culture
- Public Spaces
- Bus Stops
- Rail Infrastructure
- Creative Businesses
- Tech Start-Ups
- Small-scale Industrial
- Places of networking
- Educational Institutions
- Research and Development

TOWNSCAPE AND CHARACTER

The townscape within the West End varies greatly and a number of visual landmarks define views and provides legibility when moving around the city. Townscape along with a variety of other factors contribute to the character of Oxford's West End.



BUILDING HEIGHTS

Oxford for the most part is comprised of relatively low rise buildings, with most being between two to three storeys tall. For this reason, positive visual landmarks and alternatively tall new development proposals are of a heightened importance in Oxford. The recent Westgate shopping mall is one of the few building clusters which levels out at more than four storeys. New development will necessarily undergo a great deal of scrutiny, especially when proposing buildings taller than four storeys.

Osney Mead, owing to its industrial and maisonette residential land use, stands out as having a noticeably lower average building height. Most buildings in Osney Mead and its surroundings are between one and two storeys offering largely unobstructed views.



1-2 storeys

3-4 storeys

5 storeys +

VISUAL LANDMARKS

Townscape

Throughout Oxford, there are distinctive visual landmarks, such as spires and towers, which make up the city's townscape. These can include both historically significant heritage listed buildings as well as non-listed buildings. Townscape views can be seen at different levels, from the street in which certain buildings or elements may be framed through building openings, or as an entire elevated vista in which the townscape in its whole can be appreciated.

Furthermore, there are other visual landmarks throughout the city which are prominent from multiple angles. For example, Saïd Business School and Nuffield College have towers which can be seen by pedestrians and cyclists throughout the surrounding street network, guiding them to their respective destinations. Using these as way-finding tools can assist in legibility throughout the city whilst drawing attention to these landmarks.

While some strategic views are protected in planning legislation, a townscape is not static. A townscape will evolve and change as new buildings replace old ones with new developments in some cases becoming just as iconic. For example, the Saïd Business School has become an iconic part of Oxford's skyline despite being much younger than Oxford's medieval core.



Listed Building

Sight Line

Saïd Business School

Oxford Ice Rink

Oxford Castle and Castle Mound

Morrell's Brewing Company Chimney

Osney Power Station

Nuffield College

Carfax Tower

St. Thomas Martyr Church Tower

Tom Tower Christ Church College



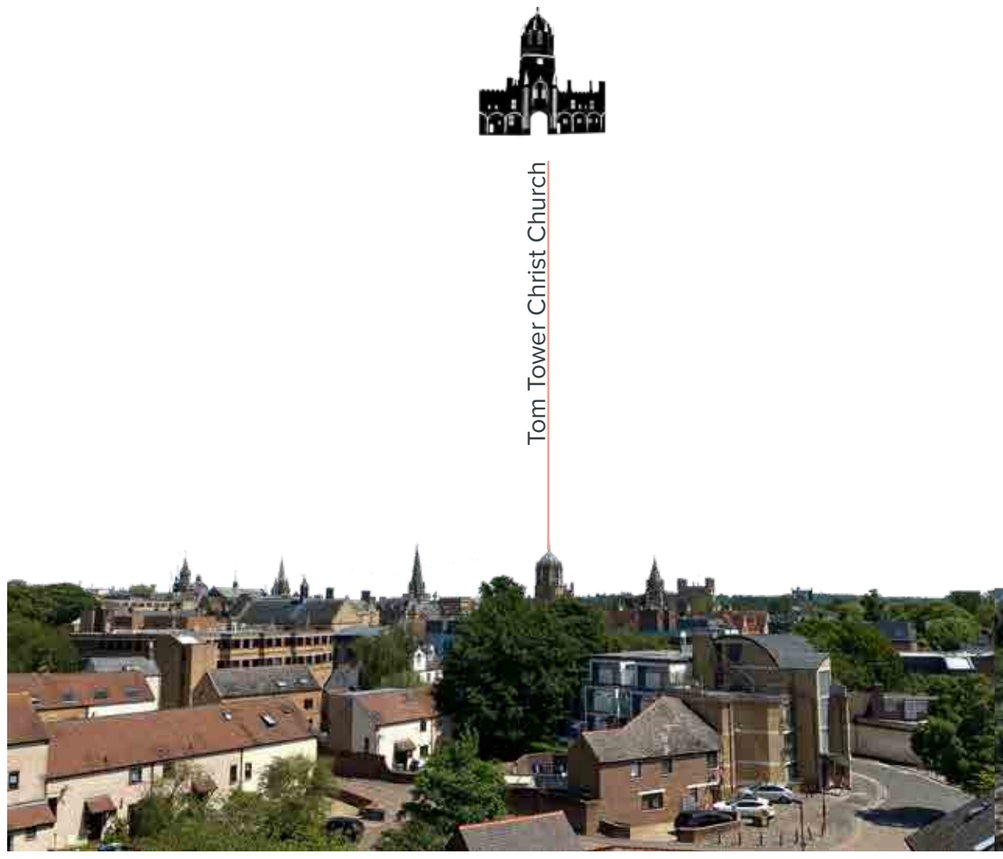
Nuffield College and Castle Mound from Beckett Street Car Park



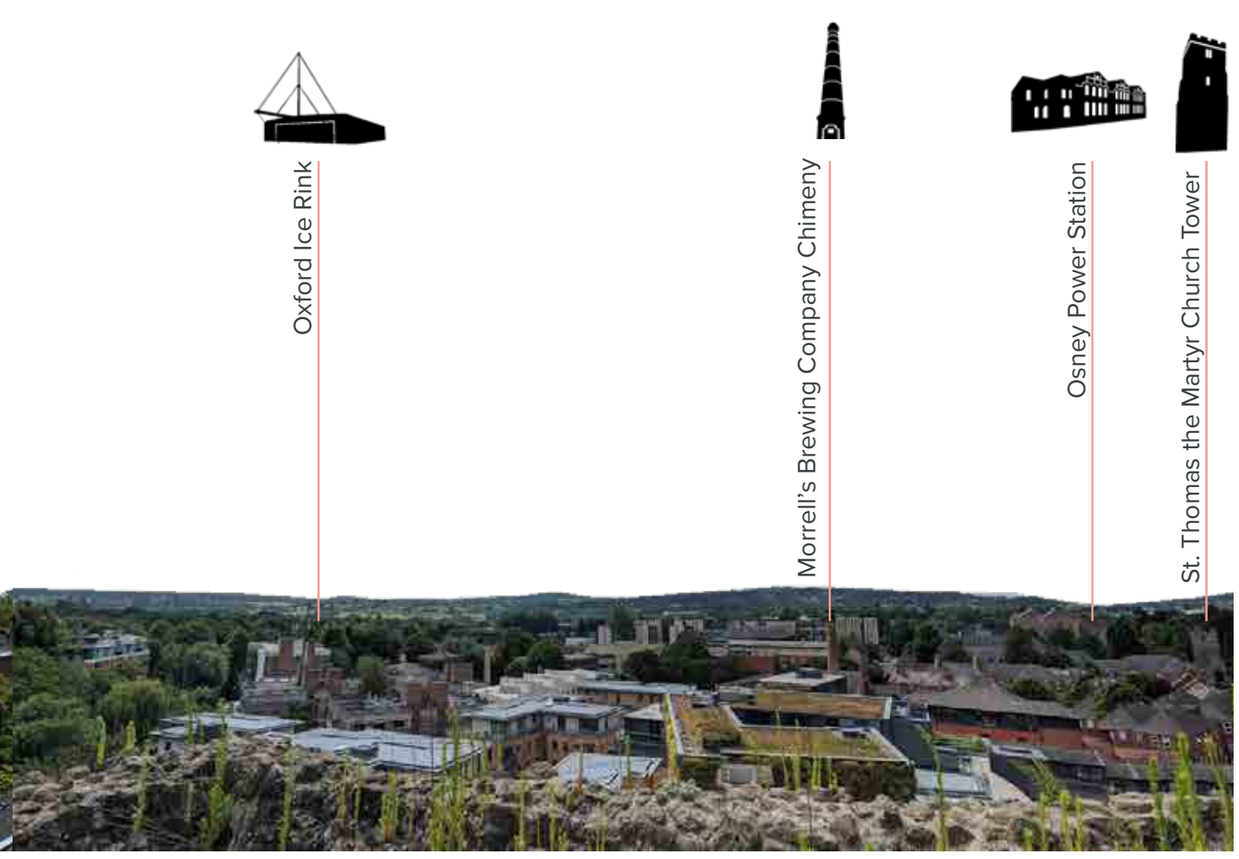
Saïd Business School from Frideswide Square



Wesley Momorial Methodist Church from Park End Road



Townscape Views towards city centre from Westgate Shopping Centre



Townscape Views towards the West End from Castle Mound

VISUAL LANDMARKS

Townscape



Looking east on Hythe Bridge Street



Nuffield College from Bonn Square



Wesley Memorial Methodist Church from Oxford Castle



Nuffield College from Gloucester Green



Morrell's Brewing Company Chimeny from Osney Lane



All Saints Church from High Street

285



Nuffield College and Oxford Castle Mound from Quaking Bridge



City centre from Westgate Shopping Centre



Nuffield College from Bulwarks Lane



Carfax Tower, Queen Street

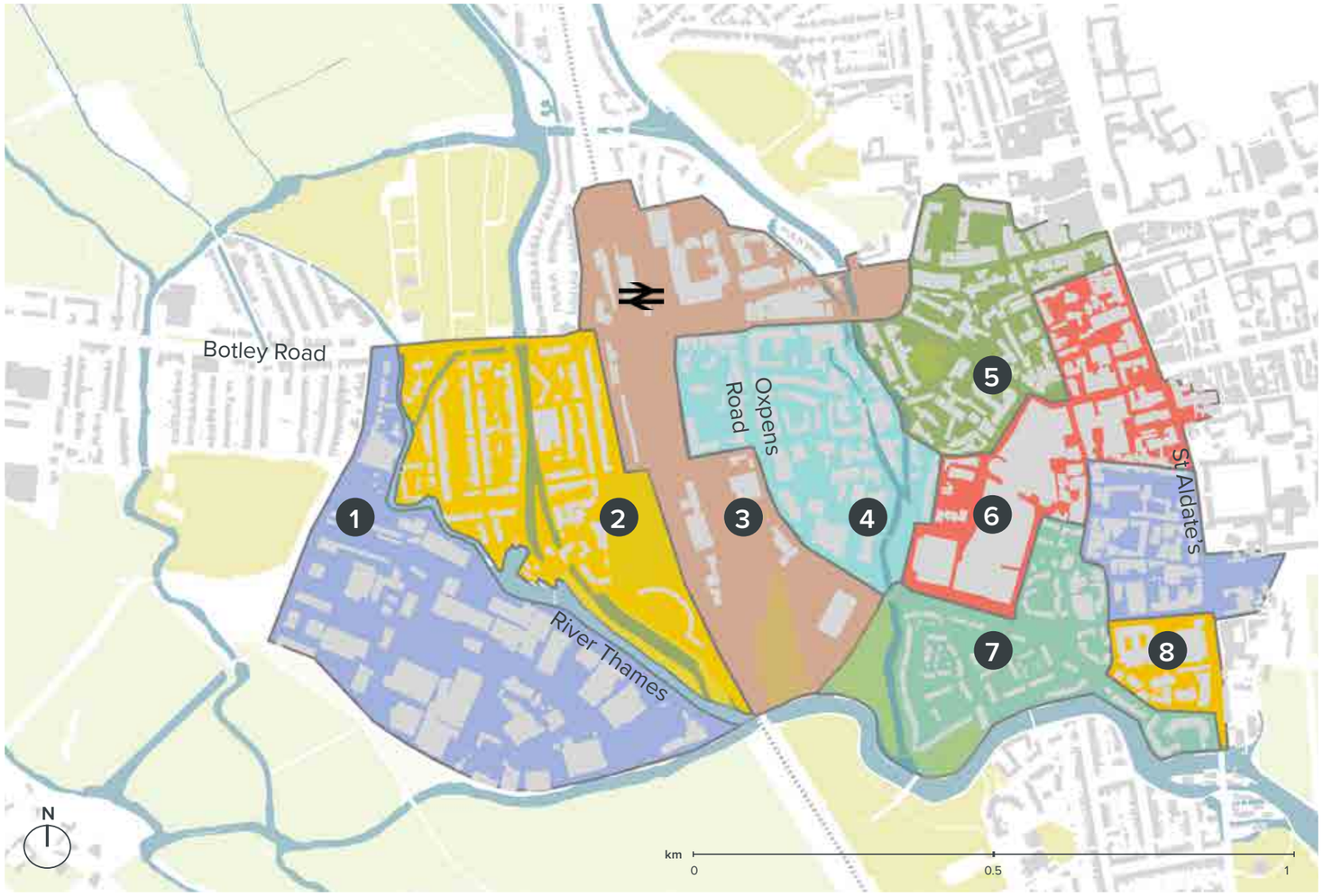
CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Community and Character

Broadly, the site can be divided into eight character areas that are distinct in their land use, building style, age, natural environment, and other characteristics. A place's character can strongly influence peoples' desire to spend time and resources in a place.

Having areas of different characters is positive at the city level - offering residents and visitors choice between areas with different amenities and looks. The diversity of urban character is what makes cities such as Oxford enjoyable and dynamic.

Furthermore, character areas are often flexible, with some elements carrying over throughout. Changes to the urban fabric can change a place's character, for better or for worse. For example, the Westgate Shopping Centre fundamentally changed Oxford's city centre, enough so that it today forms part of its own character area. For this reason, considering character areas is an important first step when considering any potential intervention into a space.



Osney Mead Industrial Estate
Osney
Millennium Development and Transport Infrastructure
City centre homes and education
Heritage Quarter
Retail Core
Mid-century residential development
Historic University Quarter
Administrative Quarter

1 Osney Mead Industrial Estate

- A diversity of employment uses from industrial to office spaces
- Some residential buildings on Ferry Hinksey Road though they are disconnected from the industrial estate as a whole
- Mid to late 20th Century warehouse and office buildings
- Though situated on the water, there is little public interface with the river

2 Osney

- Nearly all residential land use with some restaurants and pubs
- One to two storey 19th century workers' cottages
- Streets are fine grain and have an intimate and historic character
- Several crossing points at Osney Bridge and Osney Lock
- The watercourses through Osney are both fronted on and backed onto and contribute significantly to the area's character

3 Millennium development and Transport Infrastructure

- Nearly all residential land use with some restaurants and pubs
- Characterised by building and public realm development dating from the early 2000s to mid 2010s including the Saïd Business School and Frideswide Square
- Large amounts of space dedicated to travel infrastructure from railway depots to car parks
- Pedestrian friendly streets around Frideswide Square with some active frontage



Environmental Agency Depot, Osney Mead



Restaurant on East Street, Osney



Frideswide Square and the Saïd business school



Electrical Pylons, Osney Mead Industrial Estate



Housing on South Street, Osney



Beckett Street car park

4 Oxpens Residential

- Some new residential developments along Castle Mill Stream, Woodins Way and Oxpens Road
- Former industrial conversion and workers' cottages near former brewery site [Morrell's Brewing Company]
- Limited Access to green space
- Woodins Way a key linkage through the area connecting the Castle Quarter to Oxpens Road

5 Castle Quarter

- Dominated by the medieval Oxford Castle and several key Oxford Colleges (Nuffield College Sites, St. Peter's)
- Development around Gloucester Green is more modern and provides a key public space which is used for weekly markets.
- Historic buildings mostly oriented towards leisure activities and the tourist economy
- New residential developments around the castle largely in compatible building materials, styles, and dimensions to historic surroundings
- The most pedestrian friendly of the character areas

6 Commercial Core

- The site of a large amount of commercially oriented developments and chain high street retail
- Public-ness of public space is ambiguous here including several semi-public spaces such as the Westgate main concourse
- Spaces such as Bonn Square provide key amenity space for visitors and locals.
- Interface between historic buildings on the high street and nearby Castle Quarter and contemporary Westgate development



Falkland House, Oxpens Road



Oxford Castle





Westgate Shopping Centre



Oxford High Street



Osney Lane and Morrell's Brewing Company Chimney



Space within the Castle Quarter where the old castle meets new residential development



Bonn Square and Queen's Street

7 Mid-Century Residential Development

- Mid 20th Century housing developments laid out in cul-de-sacs which lack permeability.
- The quiet residential character of this area is bisected by the busy Thames Street
- Public-ness of public space is ambiguous here including several semi-public spaces such as the Westgate main concourse
- Residential community relies on green spaces of Oxpens Meadow, River Garden and Grandpont Nature Park

8 Commercial and Administrative Slabs

- Southernmost extent of the highstreet, mostly large commercial and administrative buildings including several court buildings
- Buildings of varying ages though similar scales
- Wide streets and little active street frontage, largely little design acknowledgement of pedestrians
- Little green space but close proximity to Christ Church Meadows



Faulkner Street has a strategic cycle route through it



Thames Valley Police



Housing at Sadler Walk



Speedwell House

PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACE

The Oxford's West End has a number of key open space and public realm assets. There are a number of key public squares and spaces; formal and recreational parks; and informal green spaces.

Prominent to the character of the West End is the watercourses and the opportunity for movement; leisure and ecology on them.

These spaces are essential as part of the green and blue infrastructure of the West End in Oxford; and will need to be improved and better connected to.



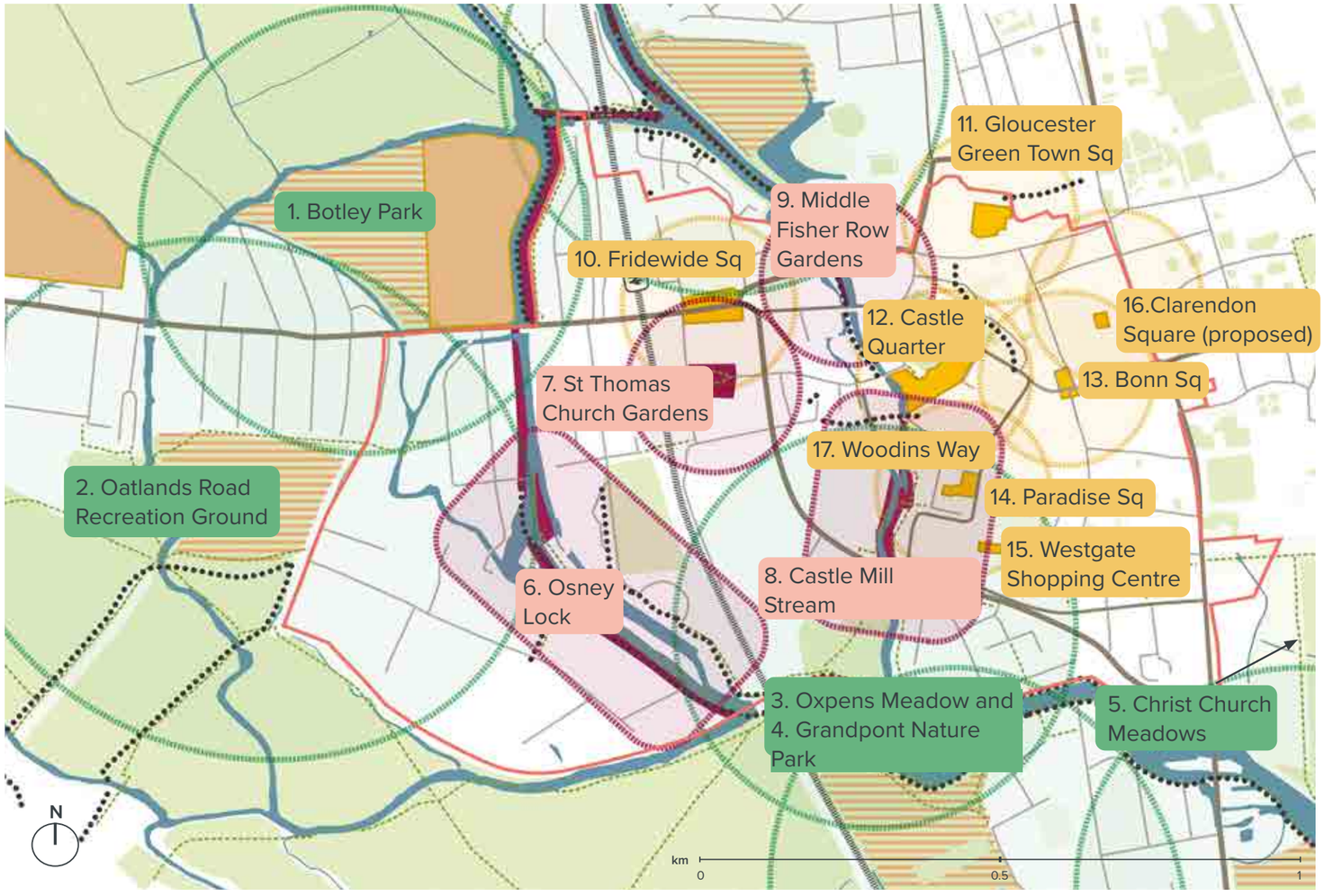
PUBLIC REALM

The public realm in Oxford is varied in that it provides a multitude of experiences and environments for users. These may include lively commercially oriented public squares such as Bonn square, or quieter places for reflecting and enjoying nature such as Grandpont Nature Park.

Most public spaces are within short walking distance of each other allowing pedestrians a good variety of public amenities available at any given point. While Oxford has a diverse and well connected public realm, there are comparably fewer high quality public spaces, especially hard public squares, to the Western most extents of the site.

Beyond Grandpont Nature Park, there are few green spaces within the site boundary though there are several within close distance including Christ Church Meadows, Botley Park, the green belt, and others.

- Parks
- Other Green Spaces
- Public Squares
- Approx. 5 mins. walk from parks
- Approx. 2 mins. walk from informal greens
- Approx. 2 mins. walking from squares
- Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Allotments



PUBLIC REALM

Public Realm and Open Space

Oxford has a range of different public spaces of varying sizes, use and quality. The adjacent plan maps the following:

Parks and Recreation Grounds

1. Botley Park

2. Oatlands Road Recreation Ground

3. Oxpens Meadow

4. Grandpont Nature Park

5. Christ Church Meadow

6. Osney Lock

- Tow-path; vegetation and green space adjacent to River Thames
- Opportunity for future development to improve amenity space offering and front positively onto.

7. St Thomas Church Gardens

- Quiet garden surrounding St Thomas's Church
- Opportunity for future development to respond to Grade II Listed church and green space

8. Castle Mill Stream

- A series of hard and soft pedestrianised spaces from Oxpens Meadows to the Castle Mound
- Opportunity to provide a safer pedestrian crossing to Oxpens Meadows across the A420

9. Middle Fisher Row Gardens

- A small garden on the Castle Mill Stream
- Opportunity to improve and integrate with future development on Island Site.



Osney Lock



Osney Mead Towpath



St Thomas Church Gardens



Oxpens Meadow

Public Squares and Spaces

Plan shows a 2 minute walking distance

10. Frideswide Square

- Large square with through road; tree planting; cycle parking; and seating
- Opportunity to reduce traffic creating a more pedestrian focused square

11. Gloucester Green Town Square

- Surrounded by shops with flats above, this square is used weekly for food and antiques markets
- Opportunity for public realm improvements

12. Castle Quarter

- A sequence of courtyards (closed overnight)

13. Bonn Square

- An urban square fronted with retail units.

14. Paradise Square

- A small square with dense tree planting
- Opportunity for public realm improvements

15. Westgate Shopping Centre

- Indoor public spaces which are managed by Westgate shopping centre
- Only open during Westgate shopping centre hours

16. Clarendon Square (proposed)

- Indoor public spaces which are managed by Westgate shopping centre

17. Woodins Way

- A key pedestrian only link between Oxpens and the Castle Quarter/city centre



Frideswide Square



Gloucester Green Town Square



Castle Quarter



Bonn Square

PUBLIC REALM

Public Realm and Open Space

Woodins Way

- Woodins Way has been identified as a strategic east-west route linking Oxpens road to the city centre which could be significantly improved
- Woodins Way is currently used as a pedestrian linkage between the Oxpens site and the Castle Quarter/ city centre
- It goes through a back alley, and leads to a pleasant riverside crossing and path
- It was well utilised despite the unactivated frontages and lack of uses around
- There is a prime opportunity to improve connections like these in Oxford as they are currently key routes people use







Takeaway points

- Oxford has a number of public squares but there is big opportunity for public realm improvements and to improve the connections between them.
- Osney Lock - opportunity to improve and expand green space.
- Despite not being within the red line boundary - a number of parks with sports and recreation surround the site and should be connected to the main sites of intervention.
- Opportunity for future development to frame, activate and improve adjacent public spaces and informal green spaces.
- Opportunity to improve connections like Woodins Way which are currently well utilised.





LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS

Public Realm and Open Space

Takeaway points

- Site sits on the nationally important Thames Pathway trail from its source in the Cotswolds finishing at the Thames Barrier in London
- Site sits between two strategic Areas Of Natural Beauty

Oxford lies in between two strategic East - West green corridors. These corridors are designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the development of nearby areas should protect the character of these assets.

The River Thames corridor runs through Cotswolds AONB and Oxford and North Wessex AONB. These corridors have a rich variety of biodiversity and wildlife and are significant pieces of green and blue infrastructure in the region.

Oxford is surrounded by several hills which offer long distance views of the city. These hills and their views play an important role as environmental assets and make up an important and distinctive feature of its character (Oxford Landscape Character Assessment 2002).



Oxfordshire in relation to strategic green and wildlife corridors

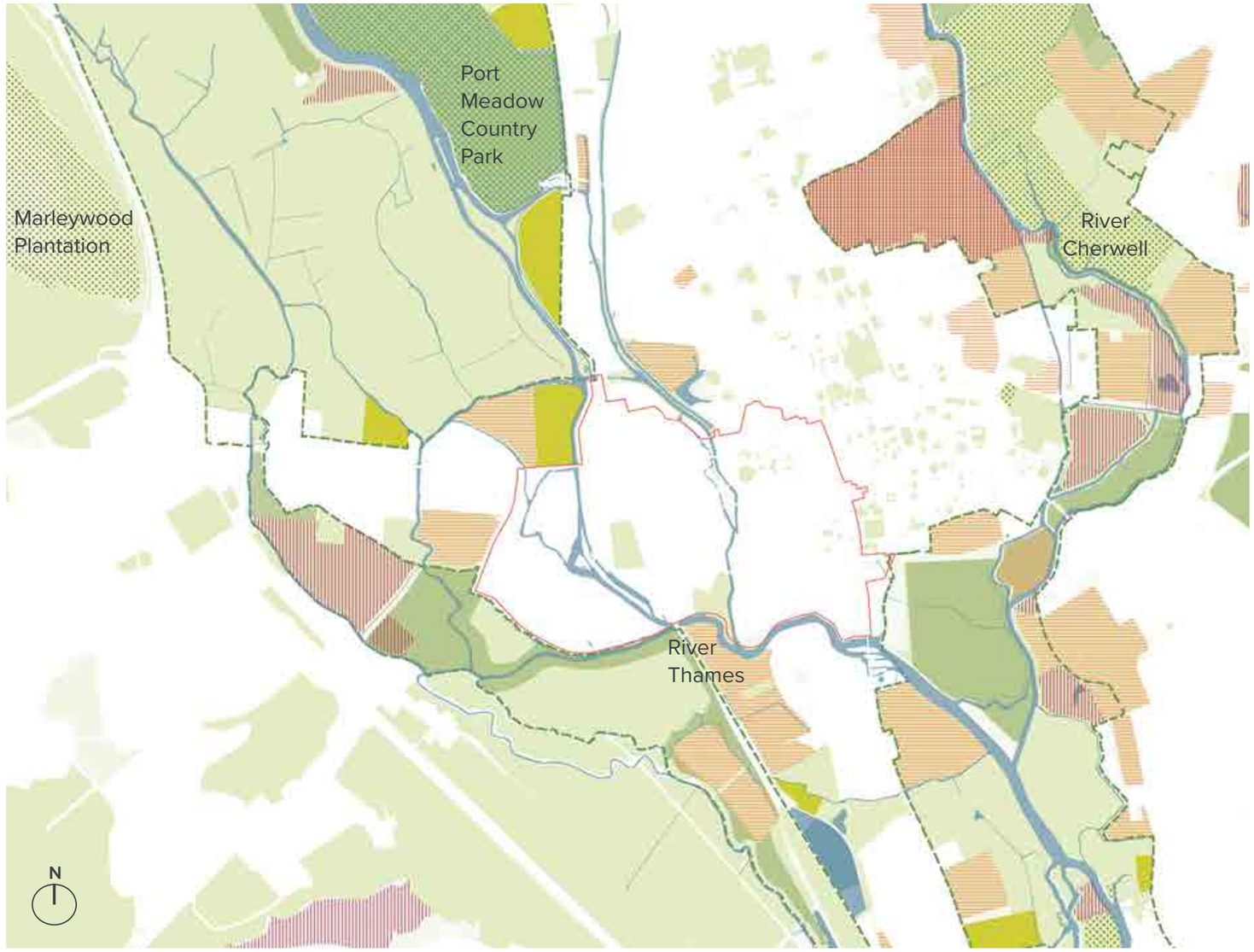
LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS

Public Realm and Open Space

Strategically, the West End sits within a rich ecological context with multiple Local Wildlife Sites, Wildlife Corridors and SSSI's. A number of watercourses dominate the landscape. Of particular significance is the River Thames and Cherwell - both having a number of environmental assets sitting adjacent to them.

Takeaway points

- West of the site - Local Wildlife Site - consideration into the protection of this area when thinking about wider connections to Botley.
- North-west of the site - some important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- River Cherwell green corridor to the eastern side of the city centre.
- Proximity and adjacency of Green Belt edge



Green and Blue Infrastructure

Allotments

SSSI (A Site of Scientific Special Interest)

Outdoor Sports

Wildlife Corridors

Local Wildlife Site

Green Belt

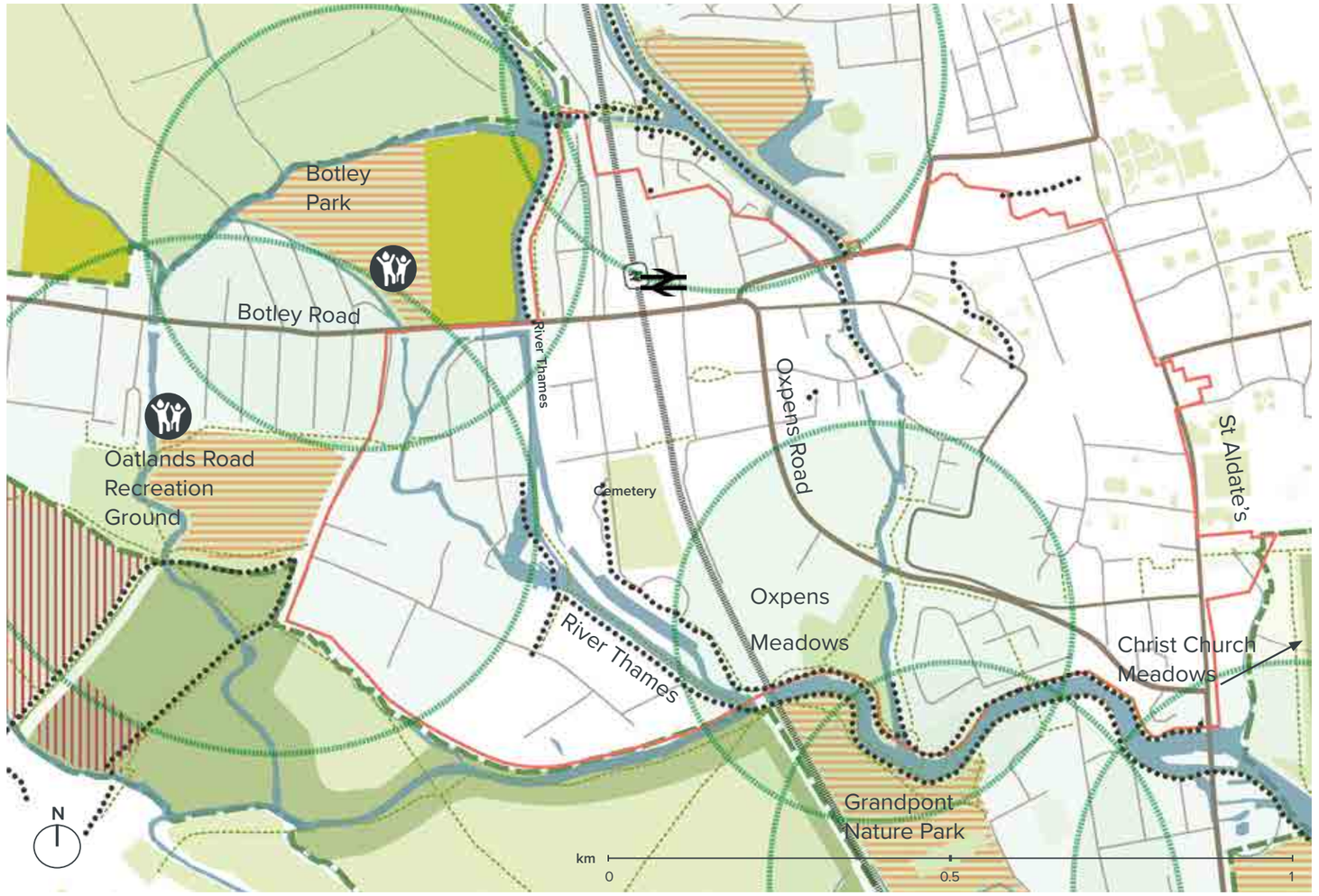
Takeaway points

- Importance of the protection of green spaces as outlined by the Local Plan
- Shortage of green spaces within the site area, especially to the east of the area.
- Lots of green amenity space bordering the south-west of the site - masterplan development must respond positively.

The site is the convergence of town and countryside and therefore there are a number of semi-nature green-spaces bordering the western and southern edge of the site.

Within the site itself Oxpens Meadows is the only formal park. Botley Park; Oatlands Road Recreation Ground and Grandpont Nature Park are all vital amenity spaces for the local community. Also, the areas extensive green belt area and riversides provide lots of opportunities for walkers.

Policy G1-G5 and G7 within the Local Plan 2036 seek to protect existing green infrastructure, including all those marked on the plan. Policy G8 asks development proposals to demonstrate how new or improved green or blue infrastructure features will be incorporated - including encouraging public access; food growing; recreation and play; biodiversity; links to the green network. It then sets out standards for green space provision for larger development proposals.



- Play Area
- Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Allotments
- Outdoor Sports
- Wildlife Corridors
- Local Wildlife Site
- Green Belt
- 5 minutes walking distance

PARKS

Public Realm and Open Space

Botley Park sits adjacent to a large area of allotments and accommodates lots of sports facilities: a Multi Use Games Area; tennis courts; West Oxford Bowls Club and green; and football goals. A community centre and cafe along with play area sits to the south of the park.

There is opportunity to improve pedestrian connections to this asset. It currently takes approx. 10 minutes to walk from Botley Park to Osney Mead.

Oatland Road Recreational Ground provides play equipment, two football goals and is bordered with mature trees and a watercourse to the west. There is opportunity to improve the interest within the park - enhancing play and sports facilities as well as improving biodiversity and promoting it as a place for the community to dwell. There is also opportunity to improve access from of the park to Osney Mead, despite being directly adjacent.













Takeaway points

- Consideration of the connections to these important public parks
- All parks could be improved with a landscape strategy
- Local parks should be assessed in terms of local needs to understand what types of play and recreation areas they might be able to accommodate.
- Access and entrance points to Oatland Road Recreational Ground could be improved creating an improved synergy between Osney Mead and the park.

Grandpont Nature Park is a mix of open meadow areas, woodland areas and sports, recreation and play. Especially in the summer, people frequent the park for picnics, relaxing in the sun and for nature walks.

Oxpens Meadows is an open green space and is subject to be improved by the City Council. Links to and through these green spaces will be a vital consideration within the masterplan.

Christ Church Meadow is a large green meadow along the Thames though it is privately owned by Christ Church College.













WATERSIDE WALKS

Public Realm and Open Space

Recreation along and on the river is an important part of the West End's community and connectivity along the watersides. Proposals need to be balanced with recreational facilities and preserving the areas for ecology.

River Thames flows just east of Osney and then south of the city centre. It is a key recreational and navigational route. It also provides space for canal boats; Osney Lock and borders a number of important green spaces.

It's character changes throughout the site but is often shaped by heritage buildings and historic towpaths.





View south from Osney Bridge towards Osney Mead



Said Business School fronts onto the River where there is lots of canal boats



Osney Lock and weir



Osney Marina is full of boats for recreation and living



Crossing of Bulstake Stream and under the railway line



South-east along the River Thames with Gasworks Bridge

The **Castle Mill Steam** flows through the western part of the city centre and joins up to the River Thames in the south. The character through the city centre is quite urban with many residential and educational buildings fronting onto it.

To the west and in the greenbelt, the watercourses take a much more natural character.

Takeaway points

- Highlighting the importance of the watercourses as key recreational routes
- To highlight the different characters of each of the watercourses.
- Opportunity to enhance frontages onto watercourses
- Opportunity to create waterside paths where missing and improve connectivity
- Opportunity to link any proposed new blue - green infrastructure into this natural system as part of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) solutions



The watercourse runs through the middle of the Nuffield College Sites



University buildings front onto the watercourse



Newly improved public realm sits in front of Mill Stream House

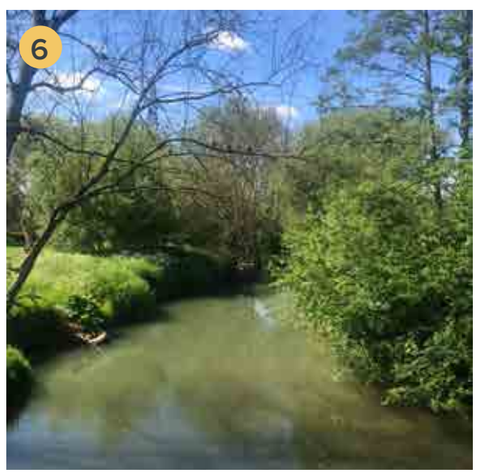




The intersection between Castle Mill Stream and the River Thames



Artist impression of Willow Walk Bridge 15 years after the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme is complete



The watercourse runs through Oatlands Road Recreation Ground

FOOD GROWING

Public Realm and Open Space

There are three designated food growing sites in close proximity to the site:

1. Twenty Pound Meadow Allotments (4.5ha) has 180 plots of varying sizes

2. Botley Meadows Allotments (1.5ha) has around 60 plots of varying sizes

3. Cripley Meadow Allotments (6.5ha) has approx. 200 plots of varying sizes

A strong network of food growing is already established within Oxford and there are some key stakeholders which will be key to consult and work with including Good Food Oxford; OxGrow; University of Oxford; and Incredible Edible Oxford.

Takeaway points

- There is a strong network of infrastructure and groups for food growing already existing in Oxford,
- Opportunity to collaborate with food growing stakeholders for information sharing and food growing projects.
- Opportunity to design smaller scale food growing opportunities - along streets; existing parks; under-utilised land) and also link this into the blue - green infrastructure
- Opportunity to incorporate productive landscapes as a key driver for the Osney Mead Masterplan



Twenty Pound Meadow Allotments is bounded by the River Thames to the east and Bulstake Stream to the north



Botley Meadow Allotments is bounded to the north by the Botley Stream





New student housing has emerged to the east of Cripley Meadow Allotments



A strong network of food growing is already established in Oxford.

CEMETERY

Osney Cemetery was established in 1848 due to central Oxford churchyards becoming too full. It has a lych gate and a stone wall surrounding it. The cemetery is now closed for new burials.

It's location is very hidden from key routes and it sits adjacent to the railway line and Osney Mead.

Takeaway points

- Within the redevelopment of Gibbs Crescent and the improvements of east-west connections across the railway line - consideration of the setting of the cemetery is essential.
- Highlighting the visual amenity of the cemetery and its importance as a visual landmark

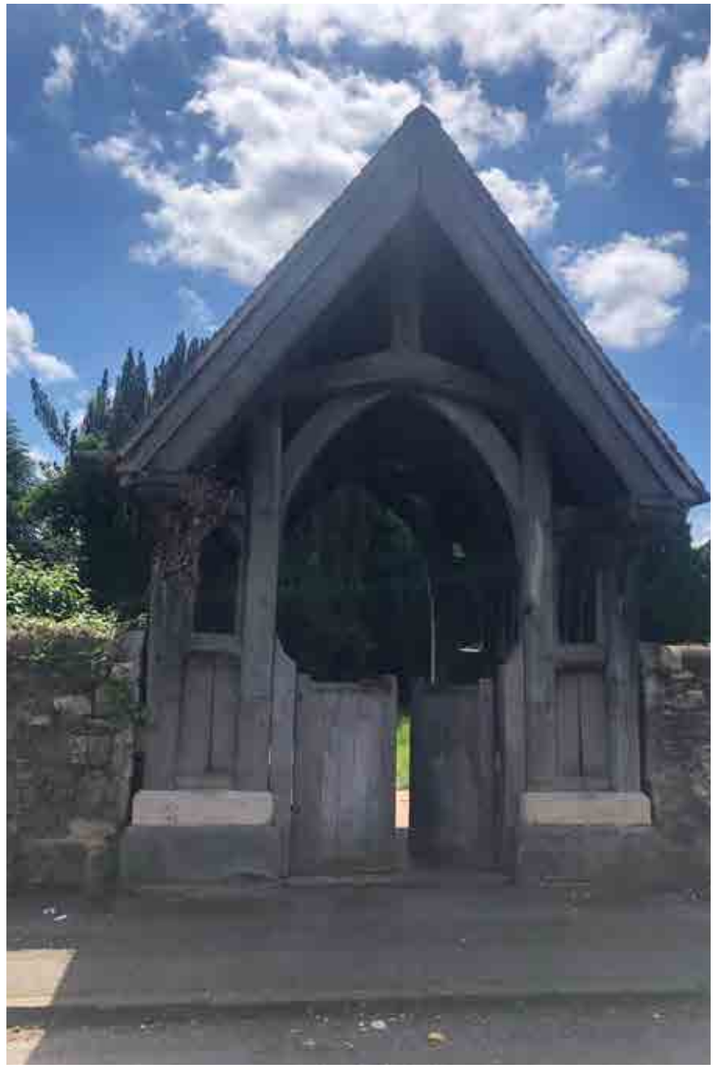


The cemetery has a fairly dense tree coverage and planting





Osney Cemetery is a key visual landmark as you cross the bridge over the railway from Oxpens



The wooden lynch gate is surrounded by a low stone wall and is the only entrance in which sits on Osney Lane

MOVEMENT AND TRANSPORT

Understanding movement at a strategic and local scale is an essential component of the Spatial Framework. Promoting active travel within the surroundings of the site will require a holistic overview which needs new bridge; new links and an improved quality of experience along existing routes.

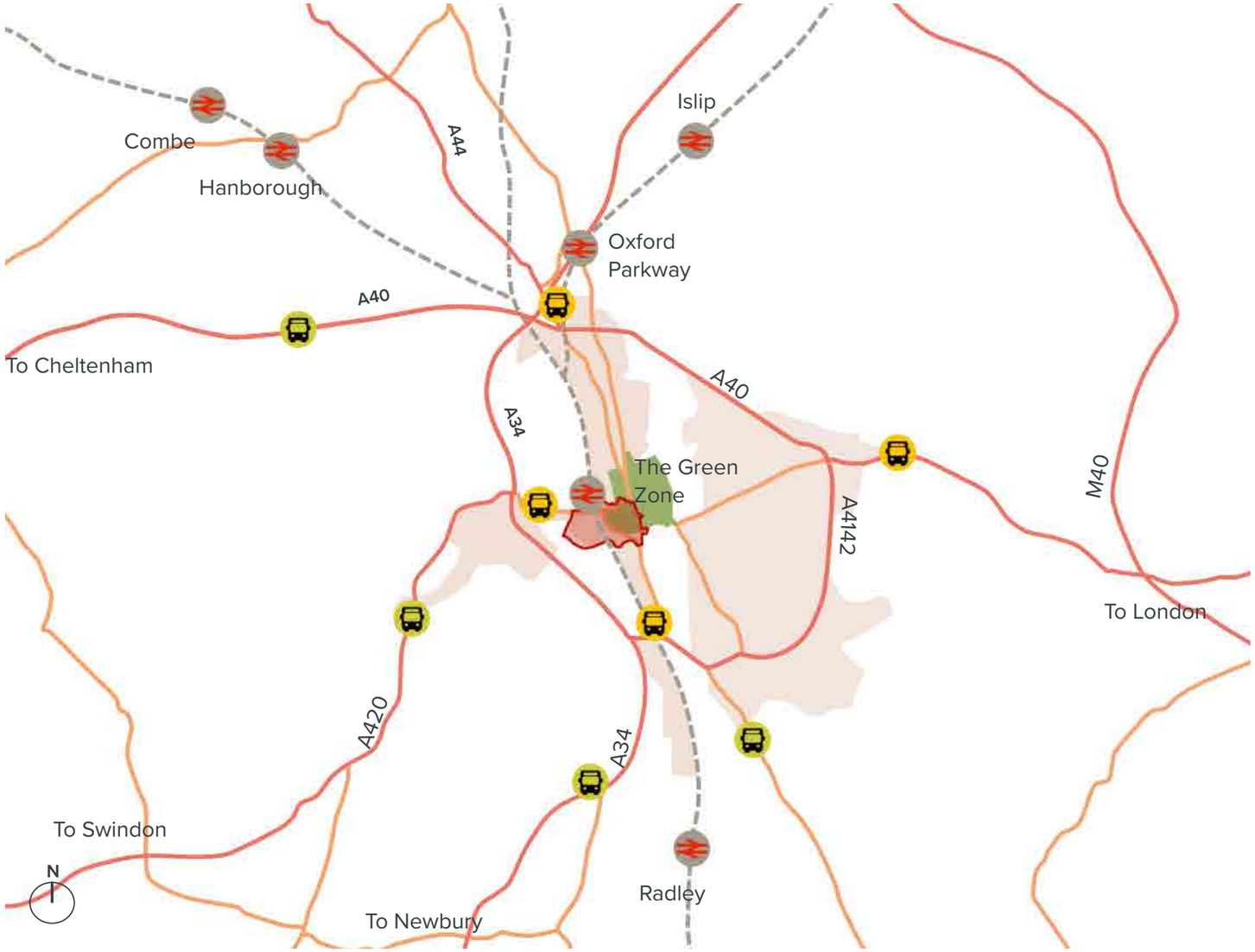


WIDER TRANSPORT NETWORK

Oxford sits strategically between London; the West Country and the West Midlands. The Great Western Railway and Cross Country provides services to Reading (approx. 25 mins); London (approx. 50 mins); and Birmingham (approx. 1h10).

A number of existing Park and Rides are established, and new ones proposed around the city - aiming to reduce congestion into and within the City. The Green Zone enforces low emission and zero emission requirements from 2021/22.

In March 2021, the Zero Emission Zone Pilot was approved by Oxford City Council's cabinet and will involve restricting polluting vehicles from key city centre streets during the day. Those who drive polluting vehicles into the zone will be charged a fee, with the level of the charge dependent on how polluting the vehicle is. The ZEZ pilot is the first phase of the Zero Emission Zone and will allow pave the way for a larger Zero Emission Zone covering most of Oxford city centre to be implemented in 2022, subject to further public consultation. Several key West End streets were included in the Pilot program including New Inn Hall Street and Bonn Square.



- Railway Station
- Existing Park and Rides
- Proposed Park and Rides
- Built form area of Oxford
- Area of influence
- The Green Zone (2021-22)

EXISTING CONNECTIONS AND SEVERANCE: WALKING

Movement and Transport

There is a disparity between the quality and comprehensiveness of walking routes and connections in the eastern and western parts of the study area. The east of the study area benefits from a comprehensive network of footways / walking routes linking key destinations within the city centre and between towards the station. Although walking connections are available to Osney Mead, the main route (Ferry Hinksey Road) is vehicle dominated and indirect. Walking connections are also available via the Thames towpath, however these suffer from issues such as flooding and lack of lighting.

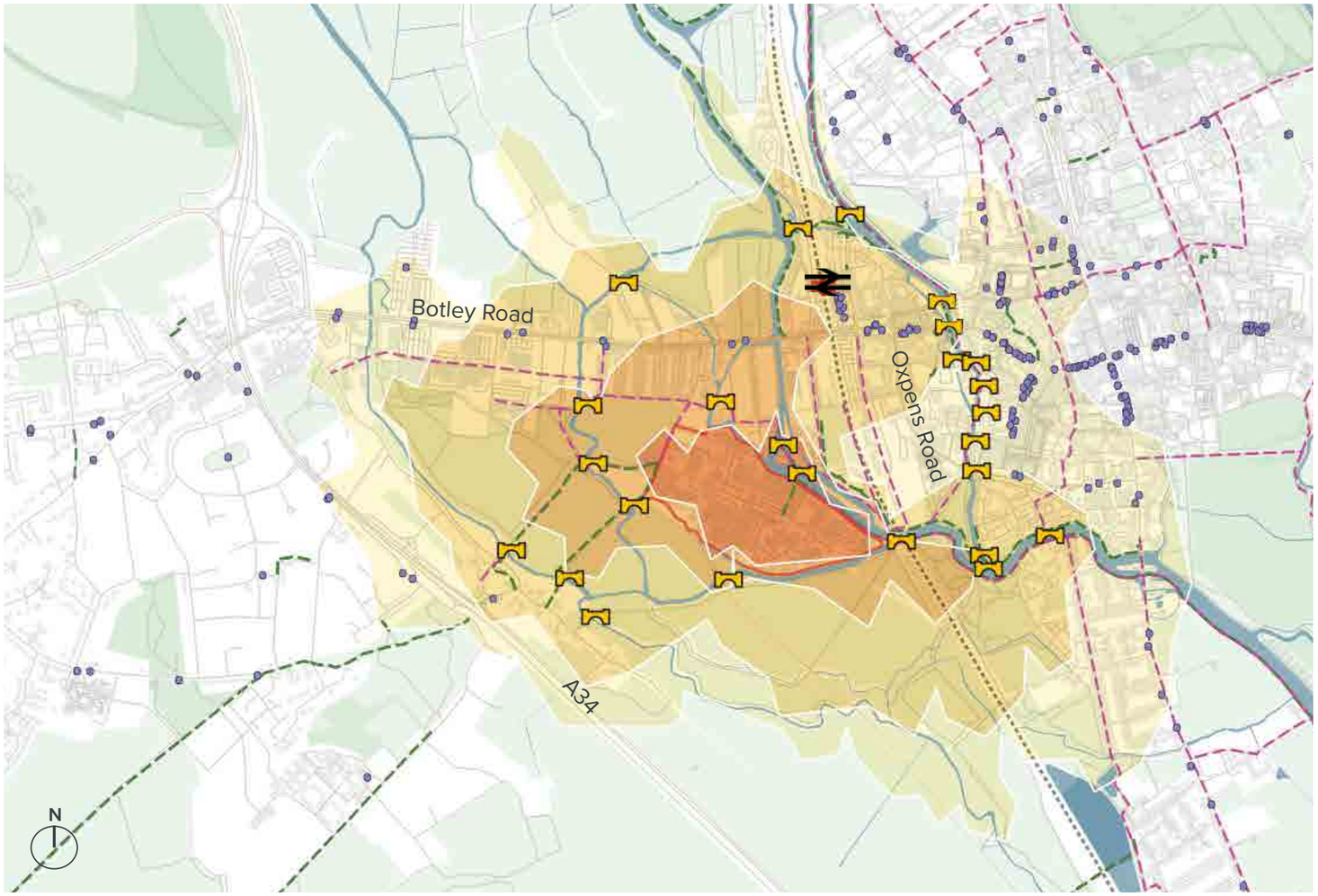
Walking isochrone analysis of the West End of Oxford currently shows that there is significant severance and poor connectivity between the east and the west of the area of interest. This can be attributed to the barriers created by the River Thames and railway line. It currently takes over 15 minutes to reach the city centre and Westgate shopping centre on foot from Osney Mead. Connections are provided in the north along Botley Road, across the railway at the Becket Street – Osney Lane footbridge and to the south across the Gasworks walking and cycling bridge.

The central focus area of the West End at Osney Mead can only be currently be accessed on foot via Ferry Hinksey Road or via the River Thames towpath, which bounds East Street and Osney Island to the north, or through Grandpont to the east. Osney Mead as it currently stands has a high Travel to Work car mode share (around 55%) meaning that at present there is a high proportion of vehicular movement into the area during the morning peak hour and out of the area during the evening peak hour. The station and local bus stops are also likely to be key destinations for those working in Osney Mead, which can be accessed via Ferry Hinksey Road or the Thames towpath via Osney Island.



Takeaway points

- There is significant severance and poor connectivity between the east and west in the study area, which can be attributed to the barriers created by the River Thames, railway line and north-south by highways and built-forms.
- Despite its proximity to the city centre, it currently takes over 15 minutes to walk from Osney Mead to the city centre and Westgate Shopping Centre due to severance and lack of connectivity.
- There is a disparity between the quality of walking routes and connections in the eastern and western parts of the study area.
- Poor inclusivity and accessibility for those who may be mobility impaired, with a lack of adequate lighting, wayfinding and weather protection.



Walking accessibility from site

- Existing Bridges
- Bus Stops
- Local Walking Routes (incl. Bridgleways)
- Local Cycle Routes
- 5 mins
- 10 mins
- 15 mins
- 20 mins

EXISTING CONNECTIONS AND SEVERANCE: CYCLING

Movement and Transport

The cycling isochrone analysis shows that the majority of the city centre can be accessed within a 15-20 minute cycle of Osney Mead (based on a cycling speed of 21 kph).

On-street painted cycle lanes are provided on most of Botley Road, providing east – west connections for cyclists towards the city centre, however not in the greatest level of quality considering the likely volume of cyclists using this as a main route into the city centre from the west. Improvements to cycling infrastructure are currently being implemented along the Botley Road corridor between Eynsham Road (to the west) and Ferry Hinksey Road (to the east). Cyclists can also use the Thames towpath to travel from the Osney Mead to the city centre, however this is shared use with pedestrians and lack of opportunity to provide separate facilities due to current width constraints. The surface quality along this route is also variable, and there is a lack of lighting, wayfinding and weather protection. There are also height restriction under some of the bridges, which could affect cyclists.

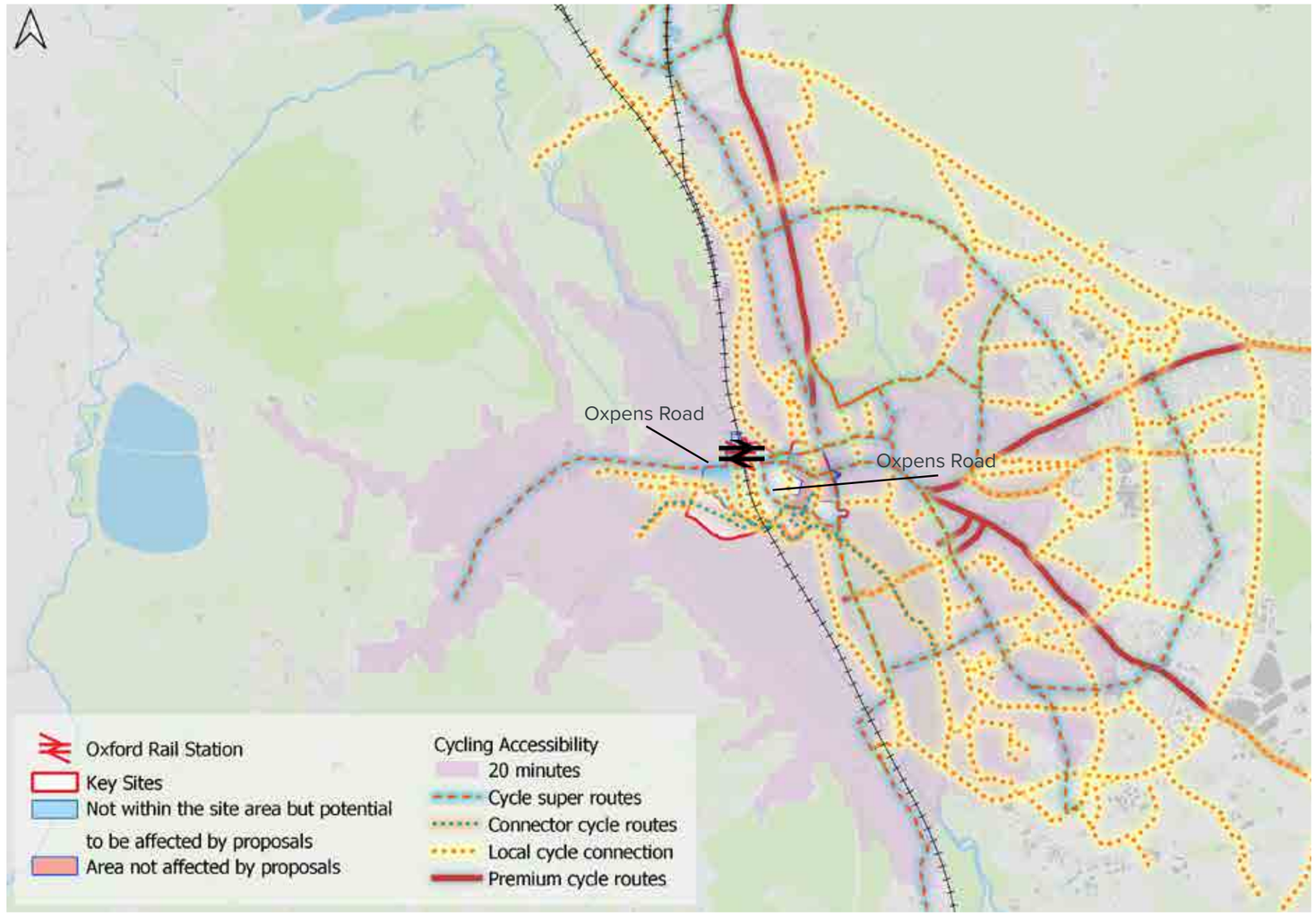
On-street painted cycle lanes are present along Oxpens Road, although as noted previously, this road is dominated by vehicular traffic and this does not provide a pleasant cycling environment. The spatial constraints within the historic city centre means that dedicated cycling infrastructure is generally limited.

The Oxford Transport Strategy (2016) proposes a network of Cycle Super Routes, Premium Routes and Connector Routes, which would link Oxford city centre with key destinations in the surrounding area such Headington, Summertown, Kidlington and Blackbird Leys.

The Oxford LCWIP (2020) further supports the creation of a comprehensive network of mixed cycle routes to destinations throughout Oxford. The LCWIP has an ambitious aim for increasing cycling in Oxford by 50% by 2031. As well as creating a comprehensive network of cycle routes, key pillars of the LCWIP include Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and traffic restrictions in the city centre.

Takeaway points

- Cycle lanes are provided along Botley Road and Oxpens Road, however there is a lack of protected infrastructure from vehicular traffic.
- Spatial constrains within the historic city centre means that dedicated cycling infrastructure is generally limited.
- The Oxford Transport Strategy proposed the introduction of a network of cycle routes linking Oxford city centre with key destinations in the wider area.



EXISTING PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK



Well used bicycle parking in Bonn Square



Oxford Railway Station



Cycle storage at Oxford Railway Station



Poor pedestrian experience on Oxpens road with lack of legibility, poor crossings and inactive street frontages



Poor pedestrian access from Oxford Station to Osney



Limited cycle infrastructure on Botley Road

EXISTING PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK

Movement and Transport

There is a disparity in access to public transport services between the eastern and western parts of the study area. The eastern part of the study area is well served by multiple bus stops and routes, and the railway station can easily be reached via the network of walking routes available. Several bus stops are located outside the Westgate Shopping Centre, however there are currently no public service routes available from stops on Oxpens Road.

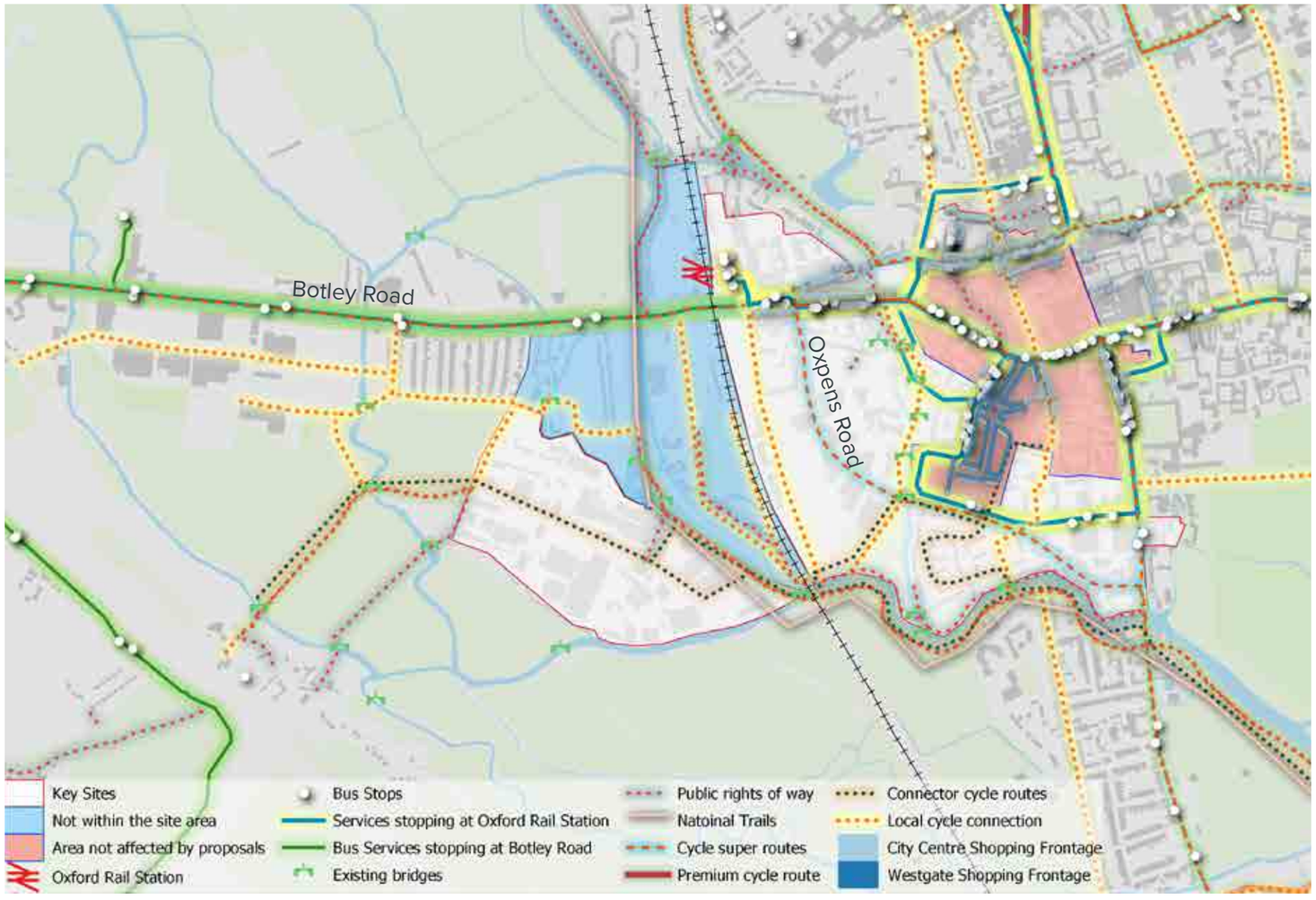
The eastern part of the study area (Osney Mead) is not directly served by any bus routes or stops. The nearest bus stops to Osney Mead are a 10 minute walk, which have to be accessed via Ferry Hinksey Road. Whilst bus services from this location on Botley Road provide east – west connections, including to the city centre, these suffer from peak hour congestion affecting bus journey times and reliability. The railway station and additional bus services can be accessed in around a 10 minute walk from Osney Mead, via the Thames towpath and Botley Road'

North-south connectivity from the station and Botley Road to Oxpens and Osney Mead are currently poor for walking and cycling. The severance as mentioned previously, causes a lack of opportunity for east-west movement to the town centre.

Owing to this poor connectivity, bus stops in the city centre are currently outside a 10-minute walk from Osney Mead. There are proposals for some improved connections to the east, including the proposed bridge delivered as part of the Oxpens masterplan (policy SP1 in the Local Plan and Oxpens SPD) linking Oxpens with Grandpont and Osney Mead, which could reduce the time taken to reach these bus stops, making services from these stops more accessible.

Takeaway points

- The station is located at the heart of the study area, providing access to rail services and city-wide bus routes.
- There is a disparity in public transport accessibility between the eastern and western parts of the study area.
- Bus stops are available on Botley Road and the Westgate Centre. There are currently no bus services available to be accessed on Oxpens Road.
- Whilst bus services are available on the Botley Road providing access to the city centre, these suffer from peak hour congestion affecting bus journey times and reliability.
- Owing to the poor east – west connectivity, the bus stops in the city centre are over a 10-minute walk from Osney Mead. Opportunities to improve Osney Mead's access to the public transport network may improve in future through the delivery of the proposed bridge as part of the Oxpens Masterplan.



POTENTIAL TRANSPORT NETWORK AND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS: OCC AND 3RD PARTIES

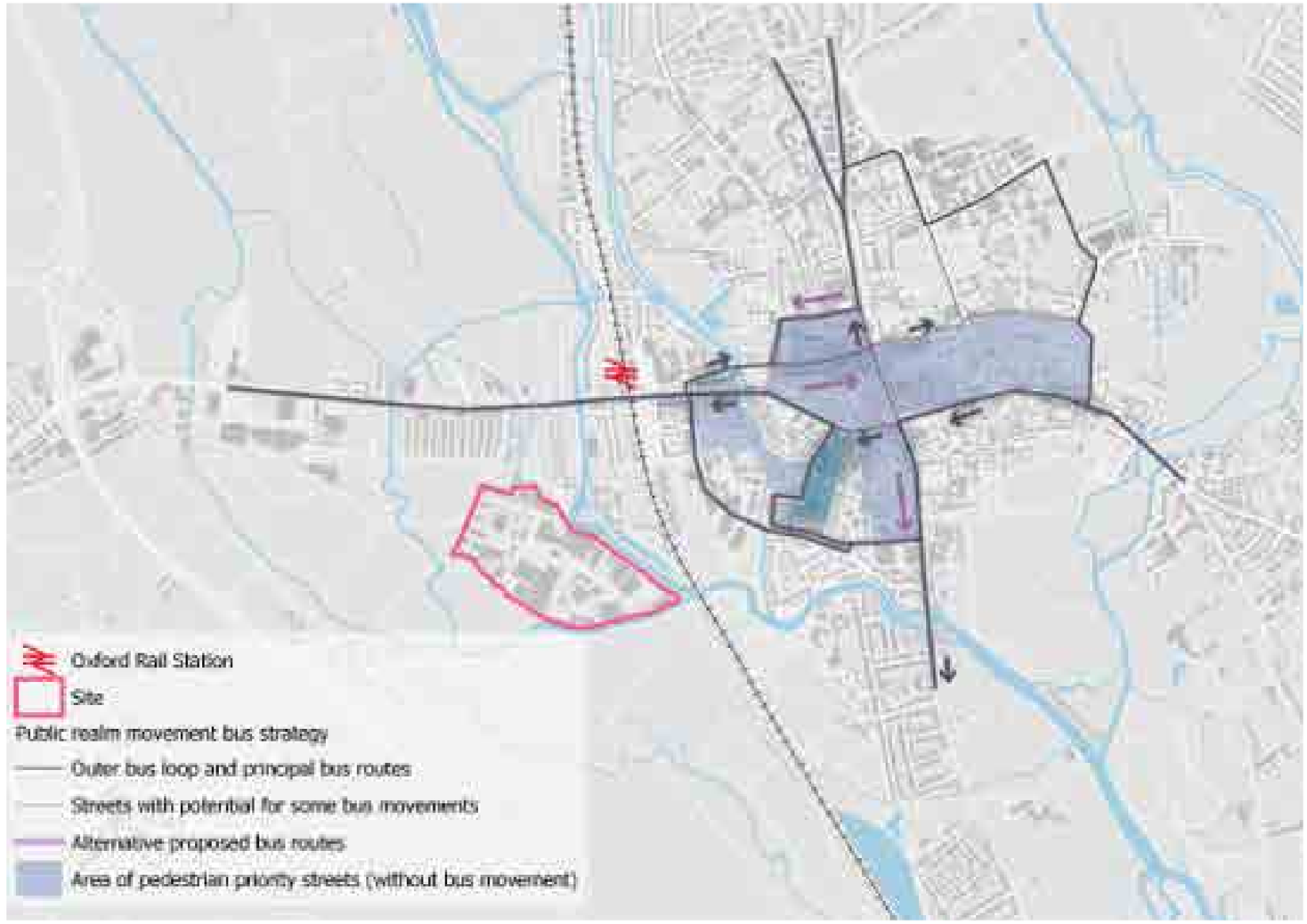
A number of transport interventions and improvements have been proposed by Oxford City Council (OCC) / Oxfordshire County Council and third parties in recent years, including:

- Oxford City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy (MPRS) (Phil Jones Associates on behalf of OCC and the County Council, 2018).
- Alternative Movement and Public Realm Strategy (AMPRS) (Stantec on behalf of Oxford Bus Company and Stagecoach, 2019).
- Connecting Oxford (OCC and the County Council, 2019).
- Oxford LCWIP (2020)

The status of the interventions and improvements contained in these is currently unknown, owing to difficulties receiving stakeholder buy-in. The key shared principles of all of the proposals are:

Buses – both the MPRS and AMPRS propose changes to bus routing which would increase the number of bus services running along Oxpens Road, thus potentially improving the public transport connectivity of within the study area and increasing the public transport accessibility catchment.

Walking and cycling – All documents cited above promote reallocating space away from vehicles and towards people walking and cycling in the city centre and on corridors into it.



Bus Strategy - Phil Jones Oxford City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy and the Alternative Movement and Public Realm Strategy (2018)

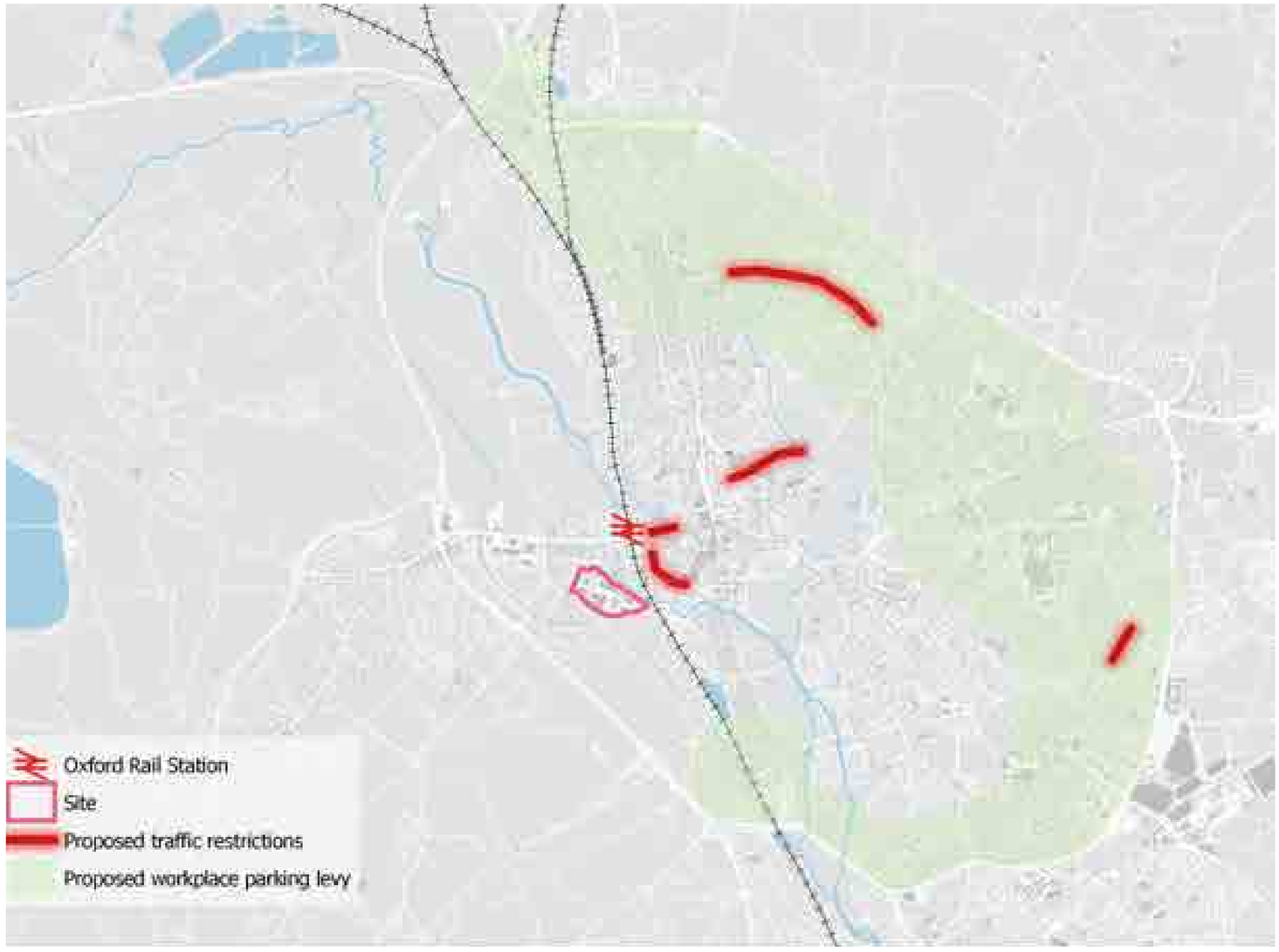
POTENTIAL TRANSPORT NETWORK AND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS: OCC AND 3RD PARTIES

Movement and Transport

The Connecting Oxford strategy proposes wide ranging interventions, including bus gates, one of which is proposed on Oxpens Road / Thames Street which would limit access for private cars during certain times of the day. A Workplace Parking Levy for employers located in the Eastern Arc of the City is proposed. These changes are due to be implemented by 2023.

Proposals for the Station are currently being developed by Network Rail and Atkins (as Masterplanners). More details about the proposals are referred to in Chapter 4 of the Spatial Framework. Various options for the redevelopment of the Station are being explored, including the potential for a new bus interchange and active travel improvements on surrounding streets.

A pilot of the Zero Emissions Zone (ZEZ) is due to be introduced in August 2021, covering streets in the city centre. This will levy varying charges on vehicles based on tailpipe emissions, with only 100% zero emission vehicles being able to enter the zone free of charge. The wider ZEZ is due to be implemented in Spring 2022 and will cover streets in the study area, including Oxpens Road and Hythe Bridge Street.



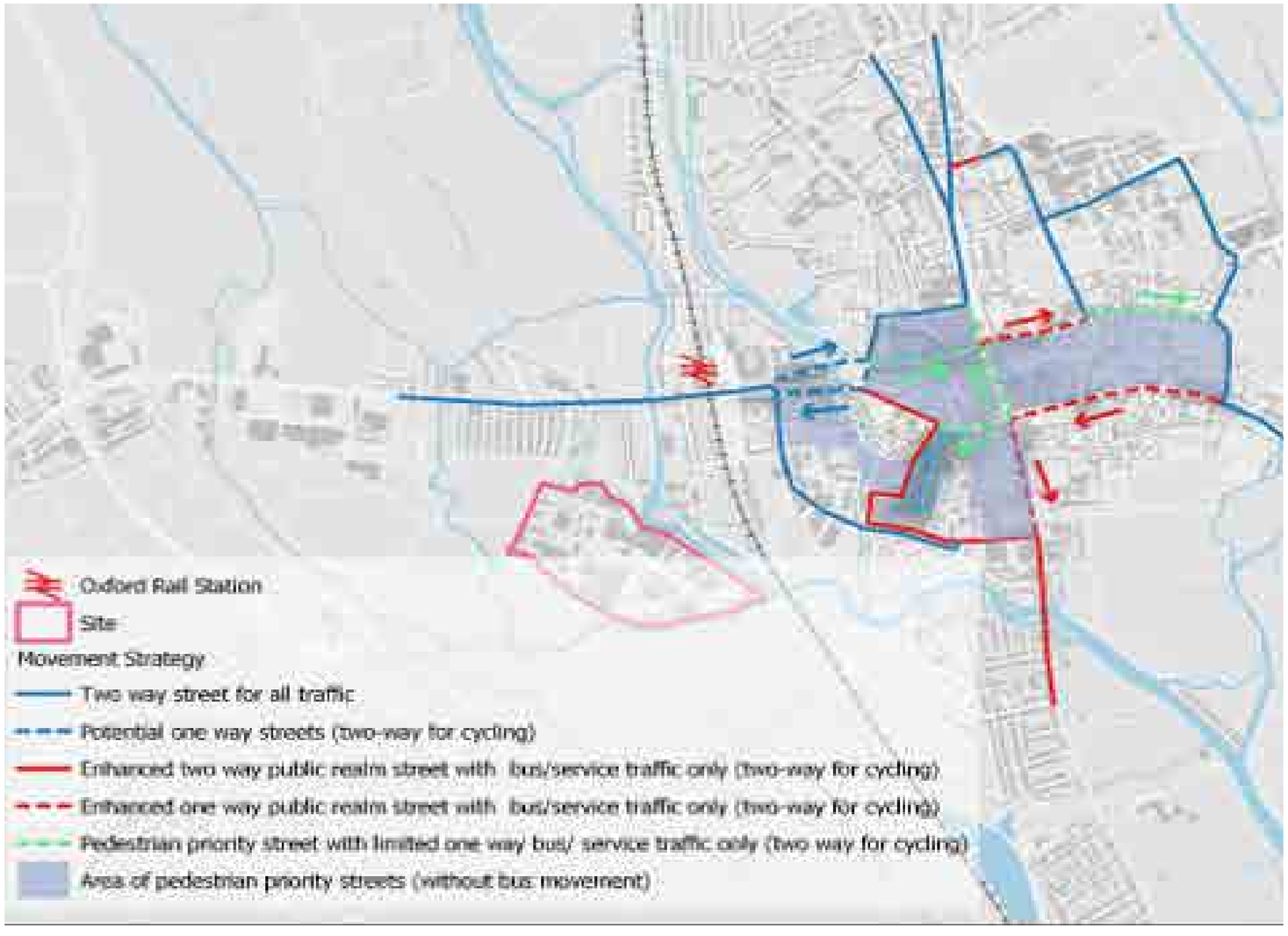
Connecting Oxford, Oxford County Council

The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was adopted in 2020 and sets out a target to achieve a 50% increase in cycling trips in Oxford by 2031. The LCWIP sets out proposals for active travel improvements in the area, including the implementation of a comprehensive cycle network (to be formed of 'quick' and 'quiet' routes), a series of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) and public realm proposals to help support walking.

Future policy changes – the County Council are currently updating the Local Transport Plan (to be renamed the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan), which will set out core policies and principles to be considered and this is due to be adopted in the near future.

Takeaway points

- A number of transport interventions and improvements have been proposed by Oxford City Council / Oxfordshire County Council and third party stakeholders in recent years. The status, priority and programme for delivery of these interventions is unclear.
- Changes to bus routes have been proposed, which would potentially increase the number of bus services running along Oxpens Road, thus potentially improving public transport connectivity in the study area.
- Proposals for a bus gate could limit access for private cars on Oxpens Road at certain times of the day.
- Proposals for the Station redevelopment envisage the creation of a distinctive new gateway to Oxford. The provision of a new bus interchange at the Station is also being explored.



Movement Strategy, Phil Jones Oxford City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy (2018)

SENSE OF ARRIVAL

Movement and Transport

The study area covers a wide spectrum of different environments. Frideswide Square (photo 5) has undergone transformative change over the last few years, providing a new higher quality gateway to the city centre and West End. However, similar changes have not been undertaken at the west side of the station, which has a lower quality sense of arrival for visitors (photo 6). There are plans to improve the station forecourt and arrival space, but connections between these focus areas and others are poor.

For instance, Osney Mead is currently accessed via Ferry Hinksey Road (photo 1), South Street (photo 2) and the Thames towpath (photo 3). From the station, Osney Mead is reached via Botley Road which provides a bridge over the River Thames (photo 4).

The current accesses do not create a gateway befitting a global innovation quarter. The accesses are generally narrow in width and have limited / no street lighting or overlooking, particularly in the case of the towpath. The towpath has a mixed surface quality, only paved in places and is liable to flooding, making it muddy or impassable at certain times of the year.

Ferry Hinksey Road is the main vehicular access to Osney Mead and is currently vehicle-dominated, with little sense of place, and substandard sustainable transport infrastructure, despite recent interventions.

Botley Road is a key vehicular corridor from the west into Oxford, and is also car-dominated and heavily congested at peak times.

Despite being a key movement corridor to the west, pinch points currently exist on some footways, in particular on the bridge over the river (photo 4). However, Network Rail's plans to redevelop the west side of the Station were approved in November 2021. The redevelopment will provide a new second entrance to the Station and public realm improvements next to the Station on the north side of the Botley Road. This paves the way for further improvements to the east of the Station as part of the wider redevelopment proposals.

Oxpens Road (photo 7) has seen recent changes to facilitate the redevelopment of the Westgate shopping centre. Basic cycling and pedestrian infrastructure is provided along here, however the street is vehicle dominated and provides access to the Westgate shopping centre car park which has 1,000 spaces.



Takeaway points

- Some parts of the study area, particularly to the east of the station around Frideswide Square, have undergone transformative changes in recent years to provide a higher quality gateway to the city centre.
- The current access points to Osney Mead do not create a gateway befitting a global innovation quarter.
- Oxpens Road has benefited from changes in recent years, however it is still vehicle dominated and provides access to the Westgate Shopping Centre car park which has 1,000 spaces.



Ferry Hinksey Road



South Street



Towpath



Botley Road (bridge over Thames)



Frideswide Square



Botley Road (west of station)



Oxpens Road

EXISTING BRIDGES CONNECTIONS

Movement and Transport

There are currently four places where the river / railway line can be crossed and provides east-west connectivity:

- Botley Road (photo 4).
- Becket Street – Osney Lane bridge over the railway line (photo 5).
- The Gasworks bridge over the river linking St Ebbe's with Grandpont (photo 3).
- Under the railway line along the Thames towpath (photo 6).

The existing connections are not of high quality and lack inclusivity and accessibility for all users. They also suffer issues including being liable to flooding (photo 6), being very restrictive in width, (photos 1, 2, 4 and 5) and not providing step-free access (photo 5).

Regarding existing and future bridges, further information has been gathered as follows:

- Knight Architects published a RIBA Stage 1 Report in October 2021 investigating potential locations of a newly proposed Oxpens Bridge. Key elements to consider for the bridge location include the relationship between Oxpens / Osney Mead and wider connectivity in the area, the proximity to the railway line, the design of the bridge (so as to minimise length and height), aligning the bridge with the Oxpens masterplan street layout, and reducing the impact on the Field in Trust designation area in Oxpens Meadow. The bridge will cater for a range of users and will provide access to the Oxpens development as well as the wider area.
- Oxford University have previously informally raised the idea about a new bridge linking Barrett Street and South Street (Osney Island). The view at the time was that this would be a useful new route, however would present challenges in terms of land ownership and potentially being unattractive for cyclists who would need to dismount to travel over the bridge as the appropriate gradient ramps could through not be achieved, as well as the route across the lock. However, it is understood that this could be explored further with the University and City Council as part of Osney Mead discussions.
- It is understood that Network Rail are considering removing the bridge over the railway line linking Beckett Street with Osney Lane as part of the station masterplan work. This would worsen east-west connectivity in the area. This clearly presents a challenge in terms of wider connectivity, regardless of whether other connectivity proposals are delivered.



Takeaway points

- There are currently four locations where the river / railway line can be crossed to provide east – west connections in the study area.
- Existing connections suffer from issues such as a lack of inclusivity, accessibility and step-free access, being liable to flooding and being restricted in width













317

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Movement and Transport

Opportunities

1. Opportunity to improve public transport connectivity to Osney Mead.
2. Opportunity to improve connections under / over railway line and river. Network Rail are looking to re-provide it within the Station masterplan.
3. Opportunity to enhance walking and cycling facilities on existing streets in the area, in collaboration with the County Council and developers.
4. Opportunity to utilise the river as a point of access and improve the quality of experience on it.
5. Opportunity to collaborate with developers to enhance the gateway to the city centre from the station.
6. Opportunity to utilise the Station as an impressive gateway to the City.

Challenges

1. Large retail car park for the Westgate Centre contributes to significant vehicle flows in the West End area and on Oxpens Road.
2. The existing footbridge is of poor pedestrian quality though Network Rail are looking to re-provide it within the Station masterplan.
3. Currently car parking and vehicles dominate streets and the public realm. Network Rail are looking at options for the amount and configuration of car parking and options for the future of Becket Street.
4. Existing walking and cycling connections to Osney Mead are generally of poor quality and in need of upgrading. Poor public transport accessibility


3
6
3
5
2
2
2
4
1
4
4
2
4
2
3
1

FLOODING

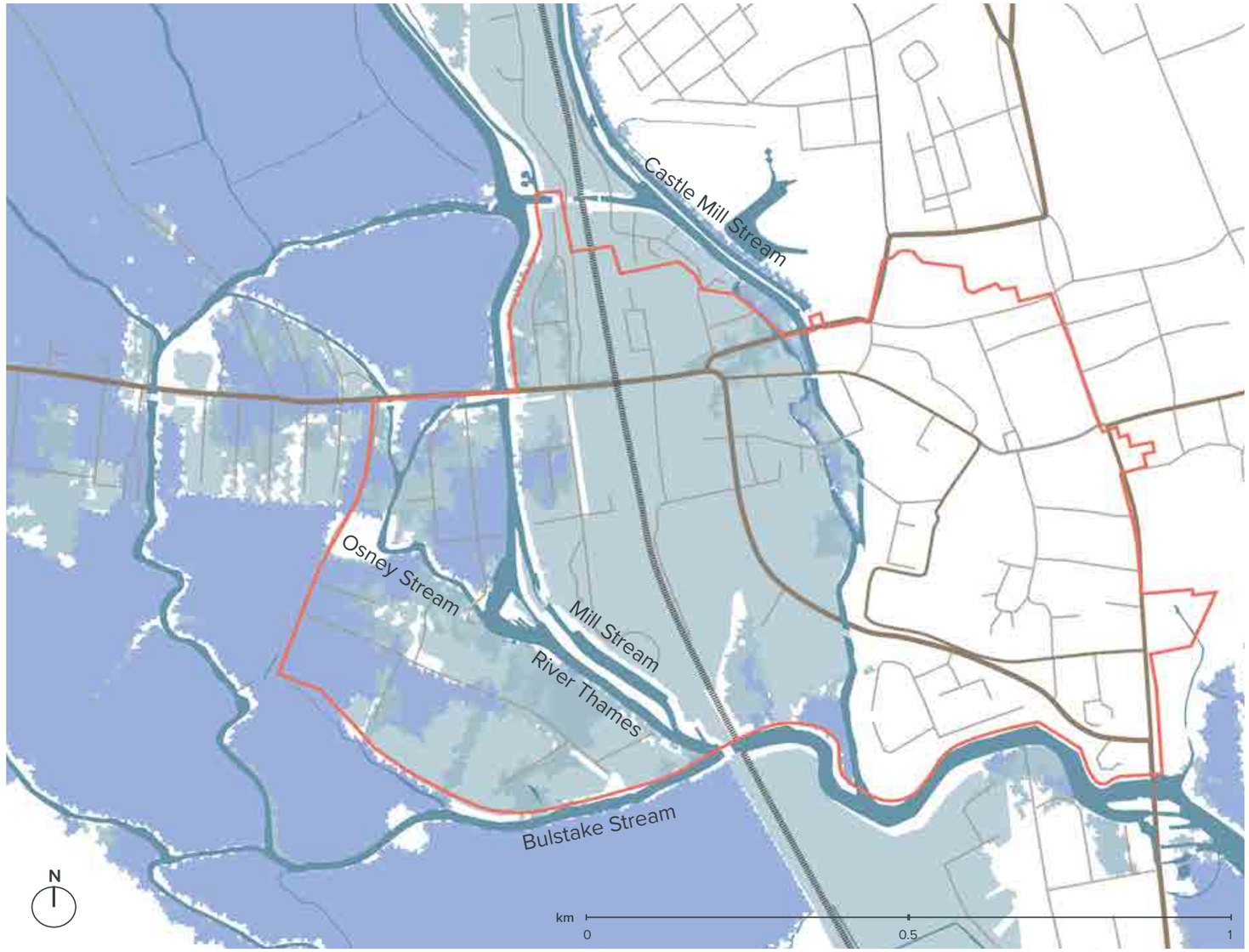
Flood risk is a major consideration on the site and with new sites coming forward for redevelopment it must be dealt with sensitively. This chapter assesses the existing flood risk and topography of the site; the role of Oxford's Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) and some preliminary conclusions for the Osney Mead Regeneration site.



EXISTING FLOOD RISK

Existing flood risk posed to the site prior to the implementation of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Most of the site is within flood zone 2 or 3a, with some of Osney and Osney Mead Industrial Estate in 3b.–



Flood zone 2
High probability of flooding: land has 1 in 1000 or greater annual probability of river flooding

Flood zone 3a
High probability of flooding: land has 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding

Flood zone 3b
Functional floodplain: zone compromises land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flooding

Watercourses

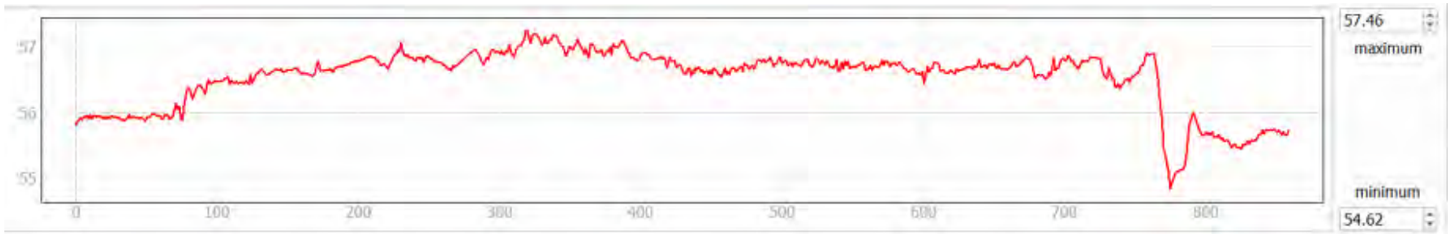
UNDERSTANDING TOPOGRAPHY

Flooding

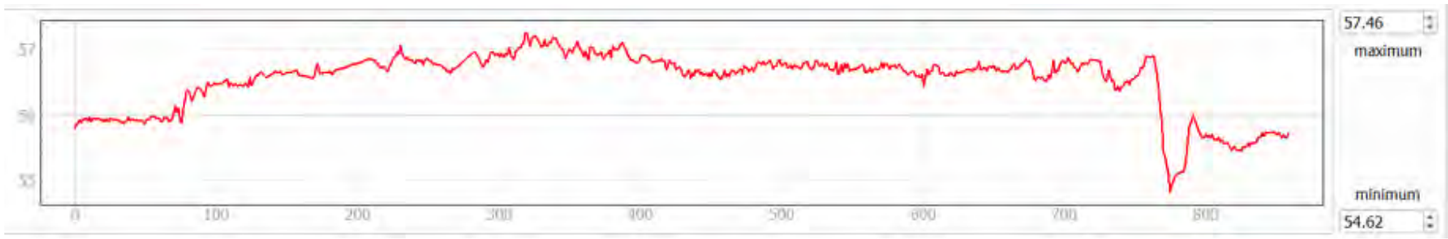
Osney Mead Industrial Estate is relatively flat sitting at approx. 57m above sea level. The adjacent green belt drops to around 55-56m and the level of watercourses drop further to 54m.

Section A illustrates how flat the Industrial Estate is varying by half a metre. At Bulstake Stream the topography suddenly drops to 54.6m.

Similarly, Section B illustrates how flat the Industrial Estate is and either side Bulstake Stream and the River Thames drop to under 55m.



Section A: north-west to south-east



Section B: north-east to south-west


SECTION A
SECTION B
Elevation (mAOD)
54
55
56
57
58

OXFORD FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME

Flooding

Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme

The Environment Agency is working in partnership on a major new scheme to reduce flood risk in Oxford. The Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme will cost around £150 million and is one of the biggest flood schemes in the country. Due for completion in 2025.

The scheme is approximately 5km long and begins north of Botley Road and ends south of the A423 near Kennington where the new stream joins the River Thames.

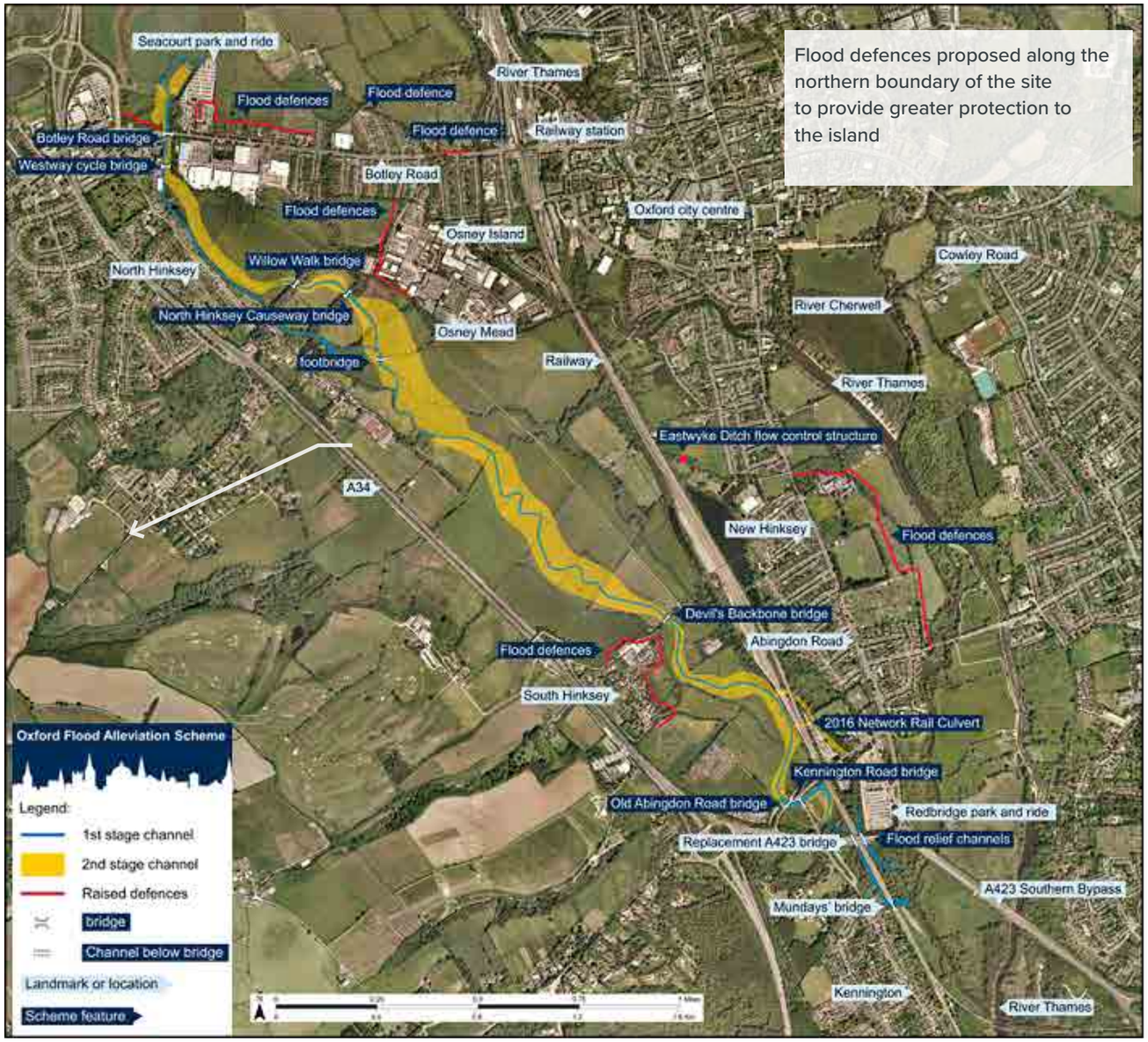
Creating a new wildlife corridor for Oxford

The scheme will create a new stream with wetland wildlife corridor, running through the existing floodplain to the west of Oxford. This will create more space for floodwater away from built-up areas, reducing flood risk in Oxford and surrounding areas for many decades to come.

Environmentally, the new scheme will create over 20ha of new wetland habitat and the lowered ground alongside the new stream will consist of wetland habitat, grazing meadow and seeded with wild-flowers which will encourage biodiversity of wetland and aquatic wildlife.

The Environment Agency has collaborated with Earth Trust to ensure the long term environmental benefits and legacy of the scheme and ensure habitat management and enhancement; and maintaining long term engagement with local communities.

When water levels in the River Thames are high, flood water will overtop the new stream and start to fill the lowered wetland around it. This will ensure that water flows away from built-up areas.

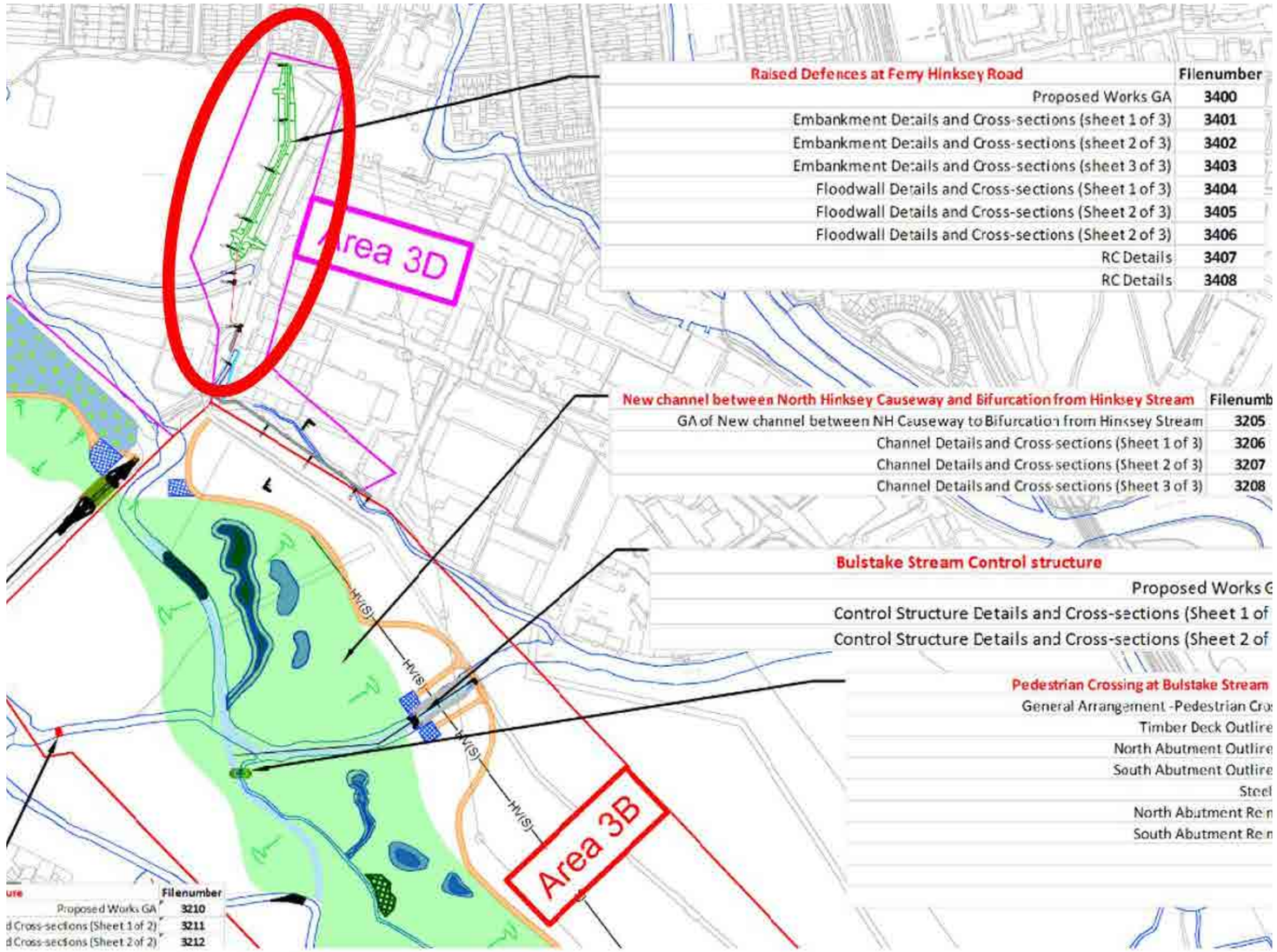


The height of the flood defences at this location (circled in red) is constrained by the surrounding topography. The (Above Ordnance Datum) design height of the proposed flood defences is 56.70m AOD , the 100 year flood event is 56.75m AOD.

Any water which overtops these defences in these storm events will need to be either pumped out or drained away by the on site drainage network.

Takeaway points

- Opportunity to connect into proposed wildlife corridor created by Flood Alleviation Scheme
- Opportunity for masterplan to respond to floodable landscapes through landscape/ public realm features and interesting typologies as part of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) solutions
- Consideration of how the quality of the raised defences at Ferry Hinksey Road will affect the interface between Osney Mead and Oatlands Road Recreation Ground.



FLOOD MODELLING

Flooding

The maps contain the flood modelling within the flood risk assessment for the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme. The maps compare the modelled flood outline of the scenario where minimal action is taken to mitigate flooding and where the flood alleviation scheme is implemented.

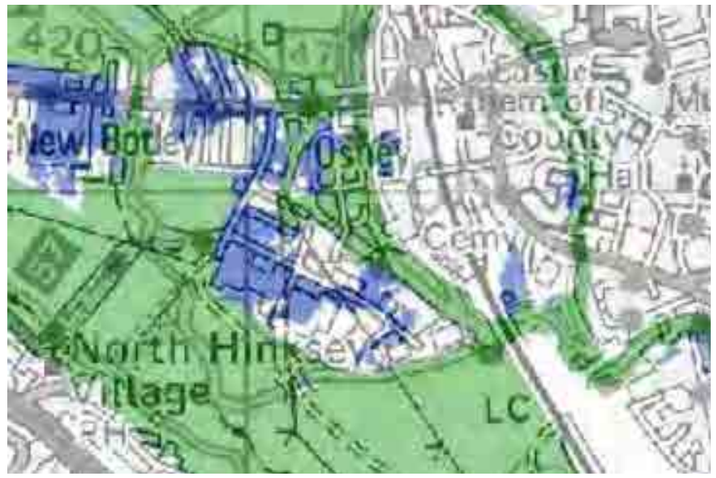
The green areas represent flooding after the implementation of the flood alleviation scheme, the blue are areas that would have flooded before but are now protected by the alleviation scheme.



1 in 5 year event



1 in 20 year event



1 in 50 year event



1 in 100 year event +35%

Do minimum

Flood Alleviation Scheme

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS FOR OSNEY MEAD DEVELOPMENT SITE

Summary points

- The site is currently very vulnerable to flooding. The existing flood maps suggest a flood event of 1 in 5 yrs will impact the north west corner of the site. This increases significantly for the 1 in 50yr and for the 1 in 100 year plus climate change much of the site is flooded.
- The Oxford Flood Alleviation scheme will improve the situation through the construction of a new by pass channel and flood defences to the north west of the site.
- The EA have confirmed that they have secured funding to protect the Osney Mead Industrial Park
- On completion of the flood alleviation scheme the site will be protected up to the 1 in 50yr event but will be exposed to flooding during the 1 in 100yr event plus Climate Change. This still leave the site in Flood Zone 3 (high risk) but the probability of flooding is reduced.
- In line with NPPF, commercial development in this area will be acceptable but residential would be subject to the Exception Test.
- The existing ground levels across the site are approximately between 56.5 to 56.9m AOD. Extreme water levels for the 1 in 100yr plus CC equate to approx. 57m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum). So roughly 0.5m of flood depth during this event.
- It is not clear whether new development will need to compensate for the loss of flood storage if land raising is undertaken. This will need to be discussed with the EA. It is possible that compensation may not be required for parts of the site because the Island is partially protected.
- Storm drainage across the site would be constrained by the river levels so use of SUDS across the site very important to keep water systems shallow.

Mitigation

- Based on the above safe threshold levels could be set at approximately 57.6m AOD (i.e. 0.5 to 1m above existing GL). This would give approx. 600mm freeboard above the 1 in 100yr plus CC water levels.
- Like for like flood storage compensation may need to be provided if land raising is undertake to make buildings safe. This needs to be discuss with the EA.
- Residential should be placed on the less vulnerable land to the south east and will be subject to the Exception Test. This is likely to involve making buildings flood resilient and having safe havens in upper floors because safe access and egress is challenging because access routes are generally flooded during the 1 in 100yr event.
- No basement dwellings will be allowed and any basements will need to be raised as above or protected
- Buildings that can't be raised as above will either need to be flood resistant or designed to be flood resilient (raising critical services and use of appropriate materials, safe havens in upper floors).
- Significant space will be needed to accommodate SUDS across the site due to the flood levels.
- A flood emergency plan will need to be developed for the site

Takeaway points

- Flood mitigation and resilience will need to underpin the design of the masterplan
- Residential to be placed on less vulnerable land and will be subject to an Exception Test.
- Water Sensitive Urban Design solutions and mitigation measures will be required as part of the green - blue infrastructure strategies
- Integration of flood defences, channels and crossings into masterplan.
- A comprehensive SUDS strategy will need to underpin the landscape and public realm strategy

ELECTRICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

There is significant electrical infrastructure across Osney Mead Industrial Estate. Pylons are very visible and two significant substations sit off of Ferry Hinksey Road.

The future of these pylons and cables will inform the masterplanning process.

Burying of the cables in underground trenches might be a solution to unlock the Osney Mead site for mixed use development. However heavy costs are associated with this change in electric grid infrastructure, and will need to be balanced at future delivery - viability stages of masterplan development. Further technical analysis needs to be undertaken.



The existing sub-station just east of Ferry Hinksey Road is the existing gateway to the site

Takeaway points

- The electrical infrastructure across the site and surroundings has a big visual impact when navigating the area by foot.
- The future of these pylons and cables will inform the masterplanning process.



The sites relationship with the existing substation will be vital to consider



Electricity pylons are a dominant feature within the view as you look south and west from Osney Mead



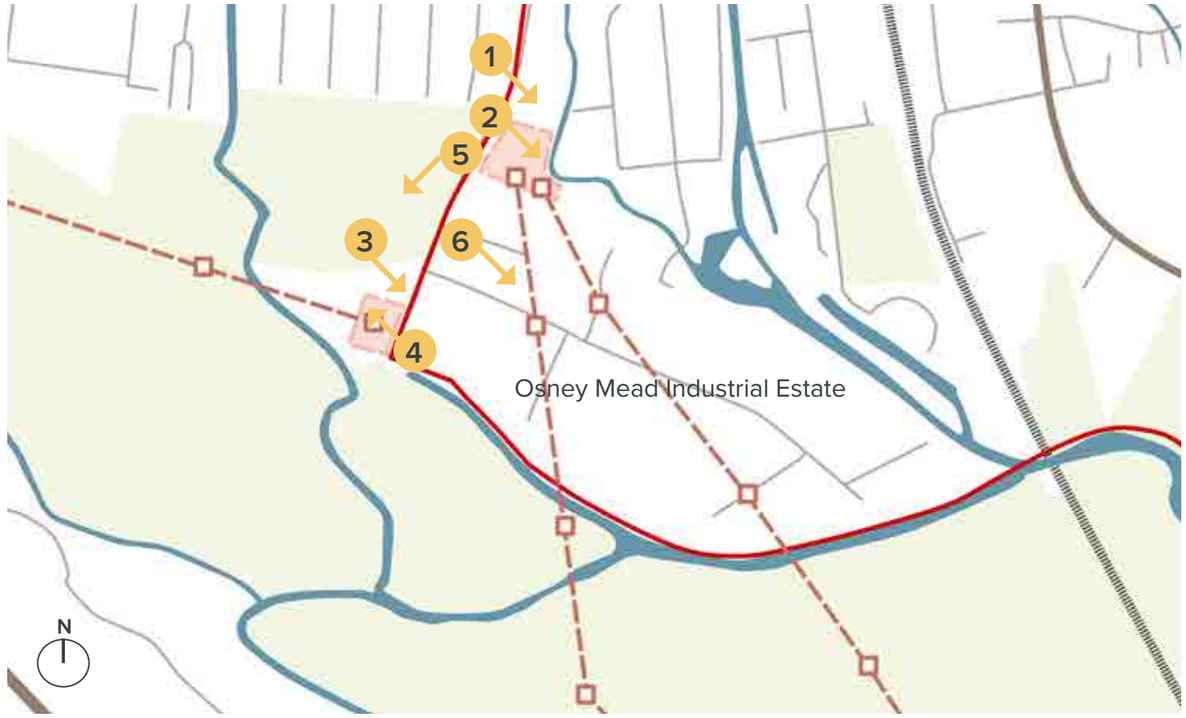
Electricity pylons are present in most of views within Osney Mead



Dense tree planting disguises some of the electricity pylons at street view



A 2nd substation lies to the south-west of the site



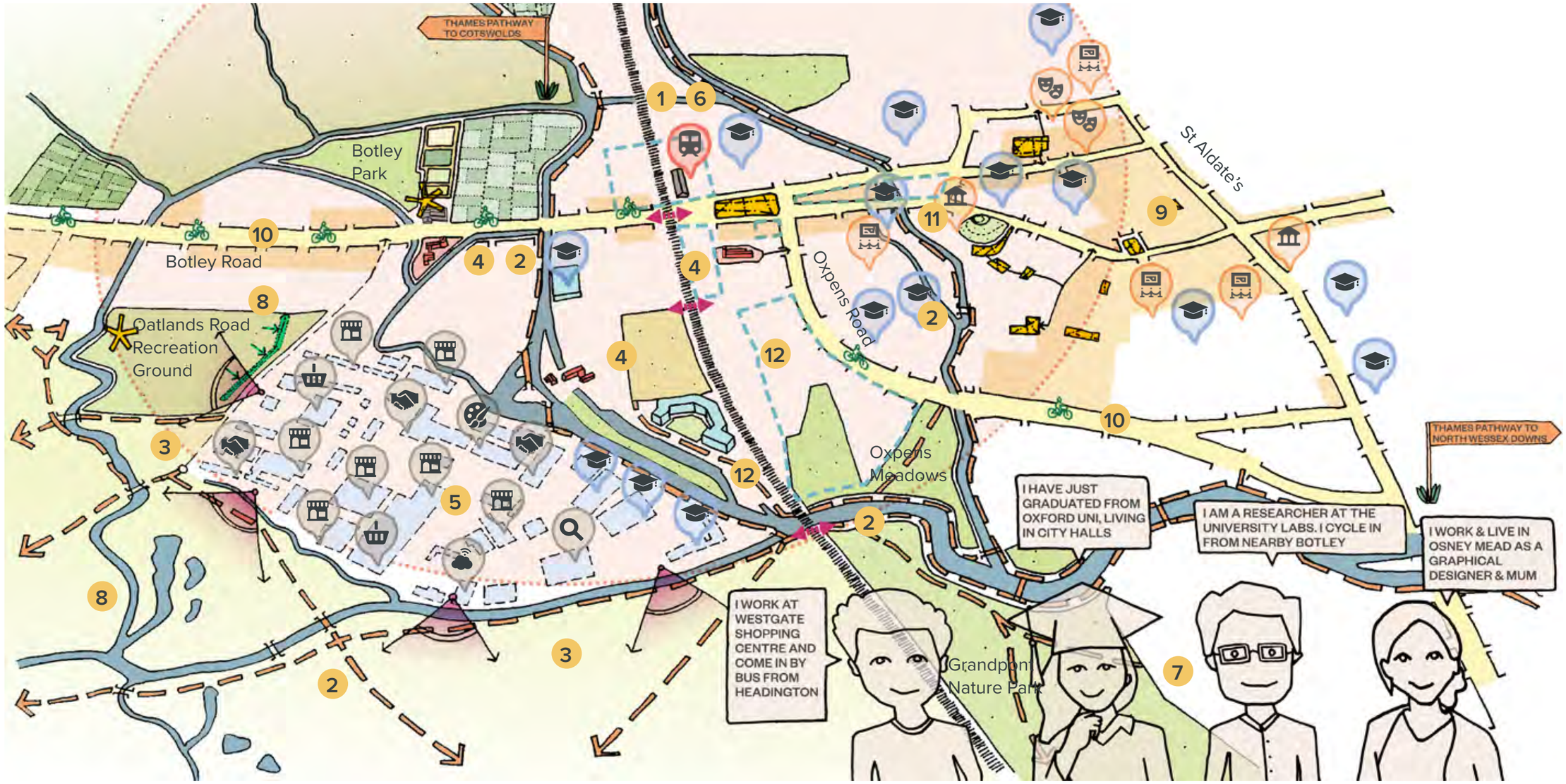
STRENGTHS

Conclusions

1. Close proximity to the train station (15 mins) and city centre (20 mins)
2. An extensive network of footpaths - along watercourses (incl. Thames Pathway); into the green belt; through parks
3. Proximity to the green belt and a number of important parks - natural beauty; views out; walking routes
4. Listed buildings and their settings (e.g St Thomas Church; Osney Abbey) have visual beauty; amenity benefits and historical importance Listed buildings and their settings (e.g St Thomas Church; Osney Abbey) have visual beauty; amenity benefits and historical importance
5. Existing valuable assets and uses which could contribute to the formation of a Global innovation District
6. Widely connected (physically and economically) regionally and internationally
7. Lots of young, highly educated, economically productive people living and working in the area
8. The Flood Alleviation Scheme will help to reduce risk of flooding; have a positive ecological impact; and provide new footpaths for the local community
9. A diversity of uses - culture, education, retail - which make the area vibrant and active for the local community
10. Existing cycle lanes on Botley and Oxpens Road - could be improved and these connections strengthened
11. Historic and heritage importance and its contribution to character of the area
12. A series of exciting development proposals are currently coming forward and will push for regeneration in the area.



- Green space
- Areas of retail and leisure
- Formal play spaces
- Allotments
- Footpaths
- Existing public squares
- Listed buildings and setting
- Consented development
- Proposed development
- Railway crossings
- Flood defence
- Views to Green
- University uses
- Railway Station
- Osney Mead Employment uses
- Cultural uses



WEAKNESSES

Conclusions

1. Watercourse footpaths lack capacity for increased footfall and can have a poor perception of safety due to thick vegetation and no street lighting
2. Poor vehicle connectivity into the site - Ferry Hinksey Road is constrained; the only route in; and lacks a sense of arrival
3. Poor quality pedestrian experience of crossings over/ under the railway line
4. Existing bus routes are disconnected from the site with most of Osney Mead Industrial Estate and Oxpens more than 5 minutes' walk from bus stops
5. Oxpens Road and Botley Road are both busy, congested roads with poor pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure
6. Lack of sense of arrival when coming into Osney Mead Industrial Estate via Ferry Hinksey Road; South Street; or the Thames towpath
7. A number of the employment units within Osney Mead Industrial Estate are unoccupied
8. EA depot site and SSE sites cut Osney Mead off from the Thames riverfront - also creating issues for connectivity along riverside
9. Overhead pylons run through Osney Mead sites - these pose as a major infrastructure cost for any future development here



Bus stop

5 min. walking radius

Unoccupied units

Poor permeability east-west

Poor quality rail crossings

Constrained Ferry Hinksey Road

Heavily vegetated; narrow; inactivated routes

Poor pedestrian experience

Poor sense of arrival

Botley Road and Oxpens road are car dominated

No Access



OPPORTUNITIES

Conclusions

1. Opportunity to utilise the river and improve access to it/ quality of experience
2. Opportunity to improve crossings over/under the railway line
3. Opportunity to create a positive edge to the greenbelt through built form and landscaping
4. Opportunity to improve existing public open squares
5. Opportunity to provide St Thomas Church a better setting and create a usable public space
6. Opportunity for masterplan to integrate with consented schemes
7. Opportunity to make improvements on Oxpens Road and Botley Road - downgrading carriageways; providing better active frontages; greening; improving walking and cycling
8. Opportunity to open up inaccessible parts of the watercourse system
9. Treatment of cemetery - potential improvements to the integration and frontage onto the cemetery
10. Opportunity to create a link to Botley Road Retail Park - potential for future redevelopment in further phases
11. Opportunity to integrate with the amenity and ecological benefits of the Flood Alleviation Scheme
12. Opportunity to create new public space and activity surrounding Osney Lock



Centre of potential Osney Mead Industrial Estate Regeneration

Play Area

Opportunity to improve connections

Opportunity to respond to edge of green belt with proposal

Opportunity to improve existing green connections

Opportunity to improve existing public spaces

Existing public open space

Consented development

Site allocations

Opportunity to downgrade; improve and activate Oxpens Road

Opportunity to use existing listed buildings as setting for good quality public realm

Concentrations of retail

Footpath

Consented flood alleviation channels

Proposed flood defence



Opportunity to create activity on the watercourses through sports/ recreation; food and drink offering; play; amenity space



Opportunity for infrastructure improvements on Botley Road and Oxpens Road



Opportunity to integrate with the amenity and ecological benefits of the Flood Alleviation Scheme

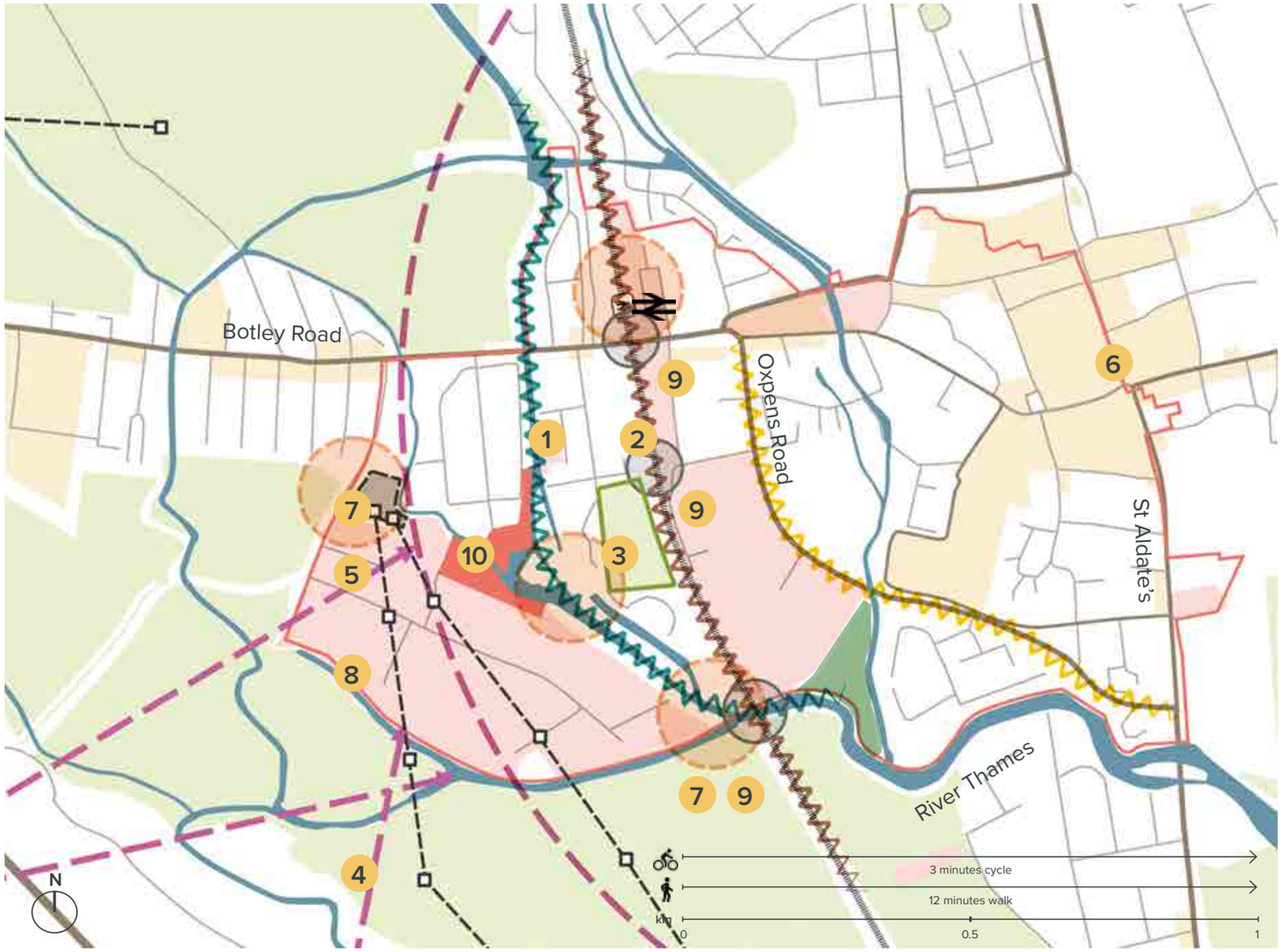


Opportunity to create a positive edge to the greenbelt through built form and landscaping

THREATS

Conclusions

1. River and the lack of good quality crossings is a barrier of permeability
2. Rail line and the lack of good quality crossings is a barrier of permeability
3. Sensitivity of cemetery with development overlooking
4. Designated viewing cones put height constraints on future development
5. In their current form, electrical pylons and substations provide a significant constraint on where redevelopment can happen
6. Retail within the city centre suffering with many empty shop units
7. Lack of a sense of arrival - in particular to Osney Mead from Ferry Hinksey Road; South Street; Thames towpath
8. Despite the Flood Alleviation Scheme, flood risk is still a constrain on future development plots
9. Poor quality bridge connections over the railway - pedestrian experience to be improved
10. Inaccessible EA depot restricts movement into Osney Mead regeneration site



- Oxpens Meadow only sizable green space within site boundary
- Environmental Agency Depot
- River as a barrier
- Rail line as a barrier
- A420 Road as a barrier
- Insufficient existing bridges/ underpasses
- Sensitivity of cemetery to development overlooking
- Height constraints from Viewing Cones
- Poor sense of arrival
- Areas of Retail and Leisure
- Site allocations
- Pylons
- Overhead electric cables
- Electrical substation



Lack of good quality crossings across the railway line - poor perception of safety; poor visually; not universally accessible to all



Oxpens Road (A420) is car dominated with poor frontages



Development and pedestrian thoroughfares surrounding the cemetery will need to consider its setting



An electrical substation sits in the current gateway to the Osney Mead site and pylons are a major constraint to any future development

EARLY THOUGHTS AND IDEAS

Summary

Early thoughts resulted in concept sketches which came as a result of our baseline analysis. These sketches allowed us to engage with stakeholders on our ideas to understand what constraints and opportunities we had missed. These have translated into the various strategies of the Spatial Framework.

Overall the comprehensive analysis into the site and surroundings has given us a strong basis to progress the Spatial Framework. It has allowed us to understand the importance and value of factors such as heritage, community and green space; and understand that the Spatial Framework must work hard in dealing with connectivity between the up and coming quarters of the West End, flood risk issues and public realm aspects for various sites.

Ultimately, Oxford's West End has many great assets and it's important that a holistic and sensitive framework is put in place to enrich these and design for the future.



1. Key east-west link across railway barrier – direct link between historic city centre core and Osney Mead
2. Key gateway into Osney Mead – pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles from Botley Road – other critical gateways are highlighted on Botley Road
3. Activating the green edge/ green belt edge along Osney Mead – overlooking and making edge safe
4. City of Oxford College and OxLEP campus to activate Oxpens Road – opportunity for mobility hubs along this edge – also downgrade Oxpens Road for vehicles, making it pedestrian-cyclist friendly
5. Station entrance concourse and improvements to arrival area on Botley Road to Oxford Station – both east and west
6. Island site and cluster of sites in this area to be reconsidered for refurbishment/infill to complement West End and city centre core uses – gateway sites
7. Make key junctions safe for pedestrians and cyclists – also where they meet green loop through the WE
8. Opportunity for open recreational areas- sports fields, flood-able landscapes on edge with access for Osney Mead into these areas – green fingers lead to Thames edge through Osney Mead Framework

EARLY THOUGHTS AND IDEAS

Green and Blue Infrastructure

After understanding the analysis of the West End, celebrating the existing green and blue landscape assets was a key design priority. Despite the extensive watercourse network, there is limited access and a poor quality pedestrian experience along watercourses. The recent works to Castle Mill Stream, just west of Westgate are an example of how the watercourses can be opened up.

The West End currently provides a lack of green spaces. Although there are a number adjacent to the site - e.g Grandpont Nature Park, Botley Park and Oatlands Road Recreation Ground.

The principle of improving access to these green spaces along with utilising the watercourses as good quality connections will be key to informing the Spatial Framework. This includes the following principles:

1. Celebrating and enhancing the setting of the Oxford's watercourses

- Waterside and water activities
- Improving capacity and experience of tow-paths
- Improved accessibility and connections
- Improved landscaping

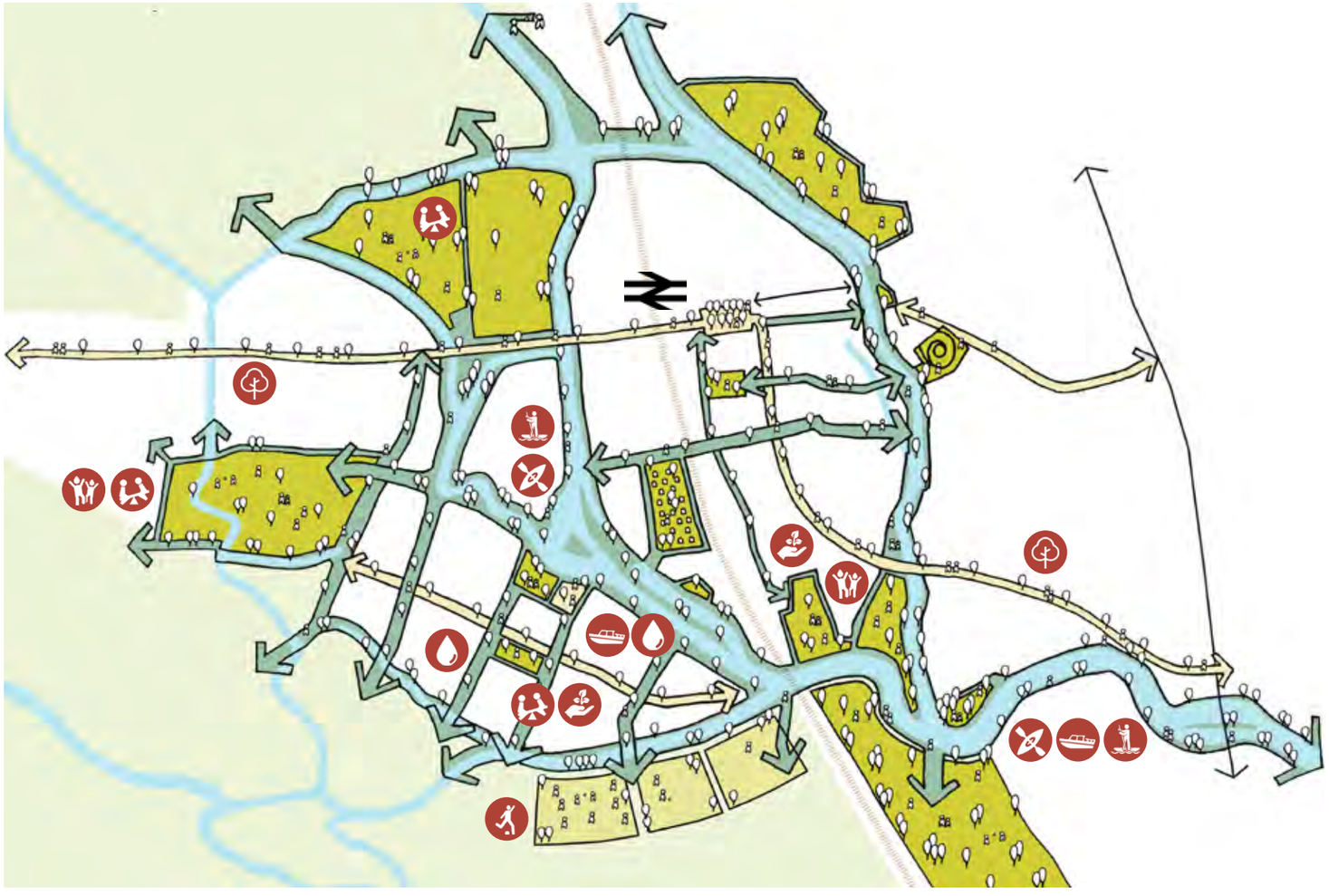
2. Water sensitive urban design at both a macro and micro scale

3. Improving and adding productive landscapes; play and sports and recreation

4. Creating stronger connections through greening routes and connecting to key green and public spaces

5. Greening streets with formal tree planting; and SuDS (e.g Oxpens Road)

6. Utilising the greenbelt for opportunities for walking; sports and recreation; and visual amenity

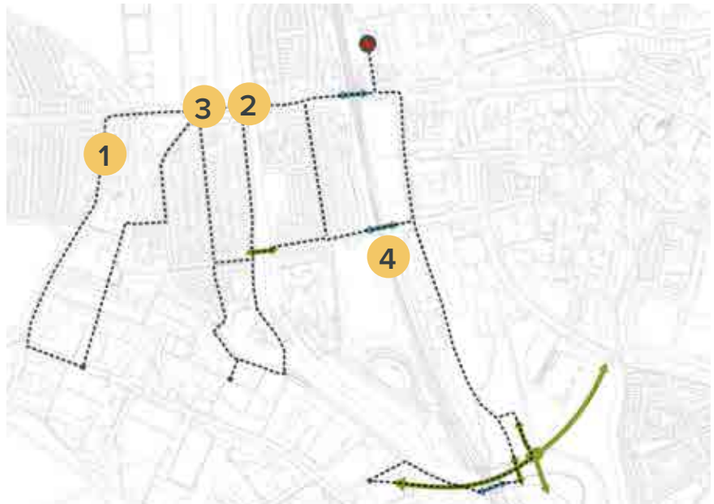


EARLY THOUGHTS AND IDEAS

Movement and wayfinding through the West End

Analysis of the quality of different routes and ideas to how they could be improved were looked at early on, and informed the development of the movement and public realms strategies.

Journey from Railway Station to Osney Mead





Lack of arrival on Ferry Hinksey Road



Bridge to East Street lacks capacity



Botley Road is busy with cars and bikes



Bridge connections are not wheelchair or cycle friendly and visually unattractive

Journey from Town to Osney Mead





The bridge connecting Osney Mead and Osney Lock



Once completed this route will take you to Oxpens and the proposed bridge connecting to Osney Mead



Woodins Way is a valuable east-west connection but lacks activation and interest



The eastern gateway of Woodins Way is uninviting and hinders legibility

Journey from Railway Station to Town





Park End Street is currently uninviting with a narrow footpath and vacant units



A more inviting public realm on New Road with wider pavements and tree planting



The eastern gateway of Woodins Way is uninviting and hinders legibility



St Thomas' Street

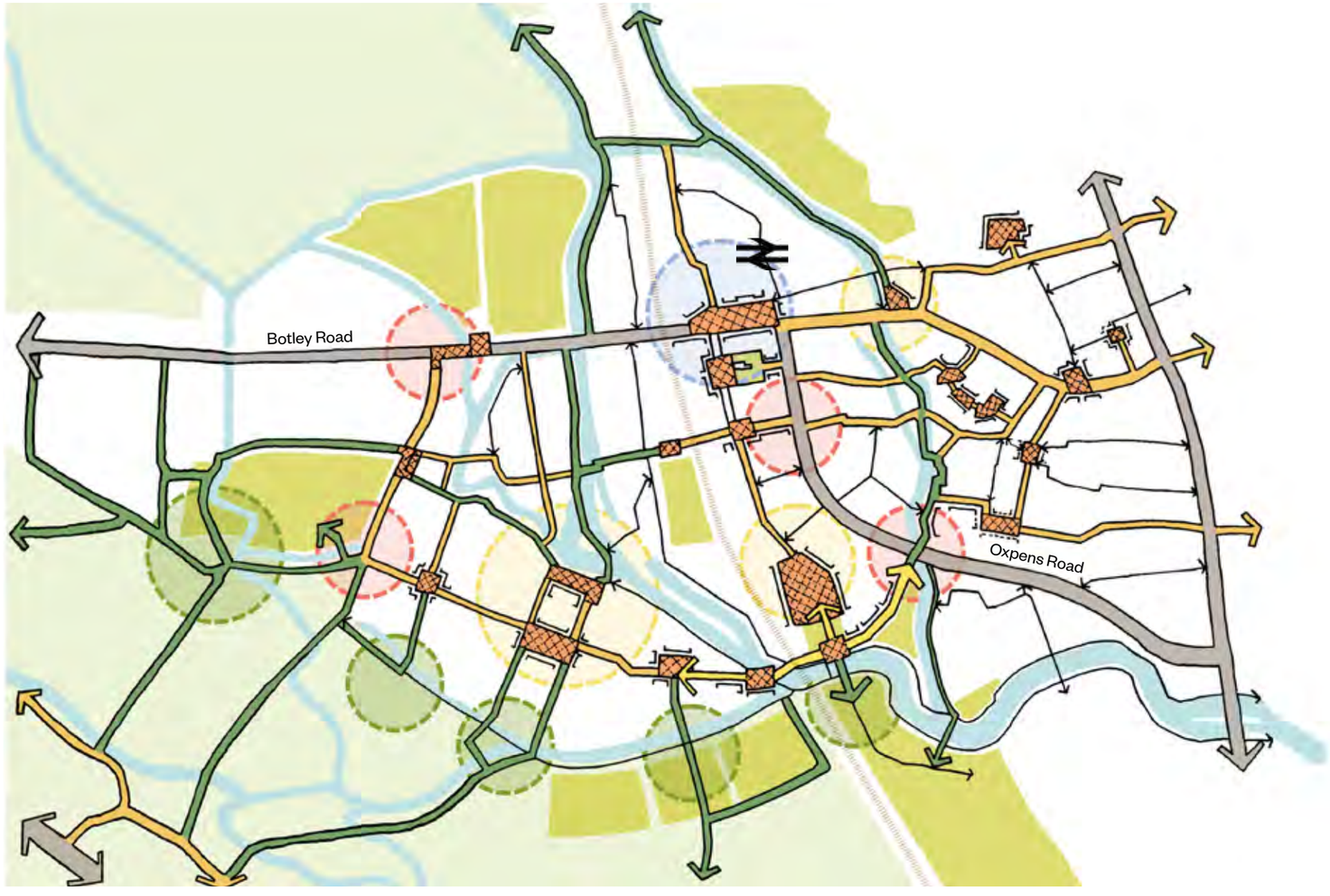
EARLY THOUGHTS AND SUMMARY

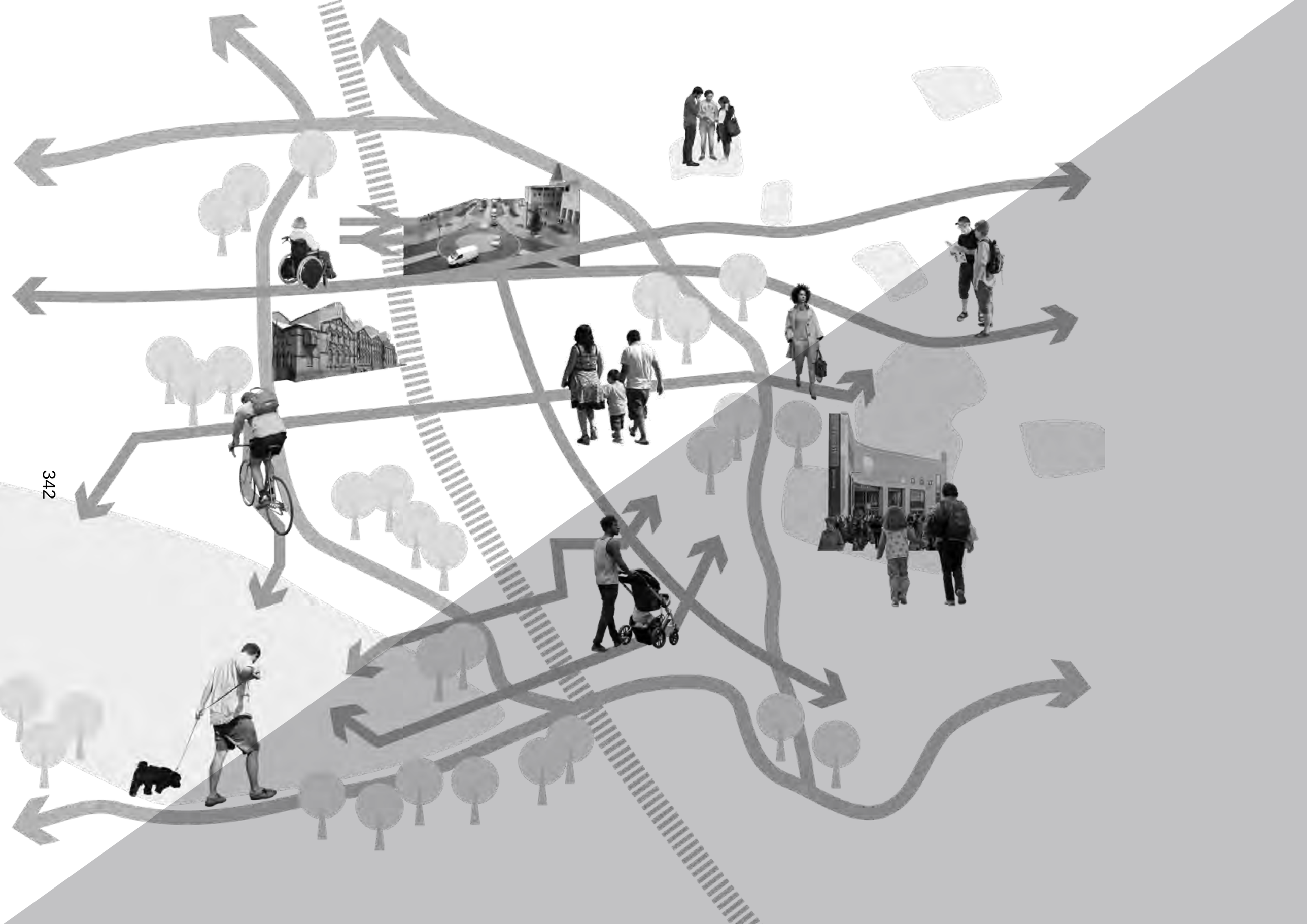
Movement and Public realm

The baseline analysis has shown us that improving movement within the West End is pivotal to unlocking the strategic sites. Currently east-west movement is poor, due to the severances created by the railway line, the watercourses and the congested roads.

Improving east-west connections across these severances is crucial and a series of interconnected high quality public spaces will establish destinations within the West End. This includes the following principles:

1. Improving connectivity throughout the site through:
   - Improving capacity of routes and bridges
   - Creating new routes and bridges - unlocking areas
2. Improving the pedestrian and cyclist experience on routes - lighting; capacity; resolving conflicts of different modes; planting
3. Creating routes into the site that have different characters
4. A series of interconnected pieces of public realm (squares; parks; waterside)
5. Animate routes with active uses; public art and planting
6. Creating car-free streets which are playful, green and inclusive
7. A strong wayfinding strategy





> *As an artificial world, the city should be so in the best sense: made by art, shaped for human purposes.*
>
> - Kevin Lynch

APPENDIX B
ENGAGEMENT

OVERVIEW OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Stakeholder engagement has underpinned the formation of the Vision for the West End. A comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy has ensured the appropriate stakeholders have been engaged at the right time. On top of meeting with different stakeholders, weekly meetings with the core client team has allowed for regular updates and the engagement strategy to evolve.

The following diagram sets out sequentially how engagement was done, to develop the Spatial Framework. Developing this project in a time where working has been affected by COVID-19 has created both limitations and opportunities. We have had to adapt to online methods of engagement - which have both challenges and benefits to them.

Predominately we have used video conferencing software which has allowed us to facilitate one-to-one sessions as well as larger sessions such as the Visioning workshop. Sessions have taken different forms - some more interactive which seek to gather information and discuss designs; and others that are more informative presentations - providing updates and overviews for stakeholders.

Due to the spatial nature of the project, we have used Miro to aid video conferencing. Miro is an online collaborative whiteboard platform which allows people to engage with drawings through commenting through sticky notes and drawing on plans. Using Miro within some of our engagement sessions has been very useful in:

- Allowing a large group of people to make multiple comments simultaneously
- Allowing participants to understand the process of work through a series of frames
- Allowing participants to draw on plans to illustrate a point
- Collecting preferences of positive and negative comments

Miro tutorials were provided to all participants prior to using them and multiple facilitators were at hand to assist. Those who were unable to engage with the software used the video conferencing software to speak or put their comments in the chat box; and a facilitator was able to type comments live onto the whiteboard.

Information and data sharing through email exchange has underpinned communication. This has been an accessible platform for people to engage with and share documents and plans. Telephone exchanges have also been useful.

The following pages will unpack each step of the engagement strategy.

APRIL



1 Stakeholder mapping

- Internal
- External
- Identify groups



2 Internal steering group

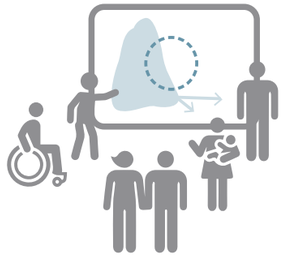
MAY / JUNE

- Agree tasks
- Agree engagement methods
- Set out schedule of meetings

MAY / JULY

3 Information sharing session(s)

- Gather data where there are gaps
- Update outdated information
- Agree any one-one meetings



4 Visioning workshop

JULY

- Agree themes - what makes a successful West End
- USP of the place
- Key ingredients for success
- How can we achieve success here?

AUGUST - NOVEMBER

- Present - collaborate
- One-one meetings
- Clear record of feedback and summaries

5 IDEAS workshops



6 Technical workshops

- Listen
- Record
- Inorporate
- Collaborate
- Feedback



DEC '21 / JAN '22

7 Final SF presentation

- Share Spatial Framework principles and design elements
- Final joint review and sign-off

STAGE 1: STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

Soon after the inception meeting and our initial desktop analysis, we mapped the internal and external stakeholders and reviewed with the Council. Many stakeholders were needed in order to cover the complexities of the West End and its geographic reach.

This included a core group of internal stakeholders - consisting of the consultant and client team; and the Internal Steering Group. And external stakeholders who were from a variety of backgrounds.

Due to the holistic and high level nature of this document, not all stakeholders involved in all projects were included - instead it was most effective to reach out to other high level thinkers. And this allowed us to understand how people move around the city; high level heritage considerations; how education at all levels is promoted in the city; and the needs and evolving designs for each development site.

Stakeholders were contacted and invited to a series of workshops and one-to-one sessions which helped develop the vision and include the detail.



Stakeholder Group

OxLEP
Oxford Strategic Partnership
Oxford Trust
Saïd Business School
Oxford County Council
Advanced Oxford
Oxford Bus Company
Thames Water
Oxford Preservation Trust
Environment Agency
Activate Learning
Stagecoach Oxfordshire
001 Taxis

SSE
Royal Cars
COLTA Taxicab Association
Oxford Civic Society
Cyclox
Oxfordshire Architectural and Historic Society
Homes England
Public Health England
Makespace Oxford
NHS Oxfordshire
Ward members

External

Landowner Group

Nuffield College Sites
Oxfordshire County Council
OxWED/Nuffield College Sites
OxWED/Oxpens
Network Rail
University of Oxford
University of Oxford - Osney Mead
Christ Church College
OxWED/Oxford City Council
City of Oxford College

Arup

Levitt Bernstein

Urban Delivery

Internal Steering Group

Oxford City Council

Internal

STAGE 2: INTERNAL STEERING GROUP

An Internal Steering Group was set up and led by Oxford City Council. This consisted of all key officers within the City and County Council concerned with key drivers including, planning, housing, employability, land uses, flood risk, infrastructure and transport.

Meeting the Internal Steering Group early on in the process allowed us to gather vital information, agree tasks and engagement methods and understand the intricacies of the project. Having regular progress meetings helped us monitor and manage the stakeholder process.

Members of the Internal Steering Group:

- Leisure and Performance Manager - Lucy Cherry
- Locality Coordinator (Central) - Azul Strong Corcoran
- Growth Manager (County Council) - Jo Fellowes
- Environmental Quality Teams Manager - Amanda Ford
- Green Space Development Manager - Chris Bell
- Regeneration Manager - Trudy Godfrey
- Regeneration Manager - Jenny Barker
- Affordable Housing Supply Senior Programme Officer - Deborah Wyatt
- Economic Development Manager - Matt Peachey
- Regeneration Manager - Jenny Barker
- Team Leader Planning Policy - Tom Morris
- Development Manager (Planning) - Andrew Murdoch
- Director of Development - Tom Bridgeman



STAGE 3: INFORMATION SHARING SESSIONS

Due to the complexity and scale of the West End, having multiple information sharing sessions was important to understand the evolving context and how a multitude of factors affect each other.

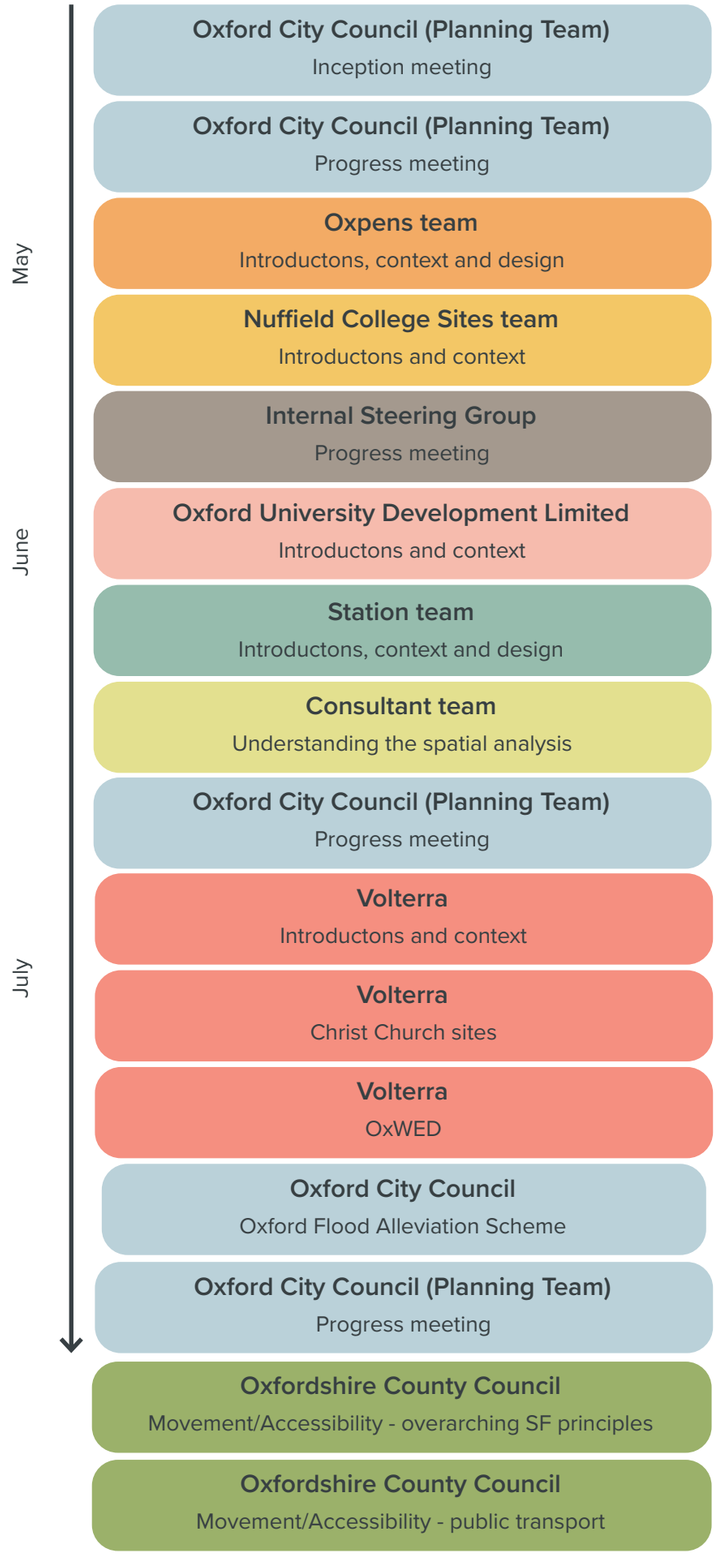
Sessions with a number of stakeholders were needed:

- Oxford City Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Development sites (Oxpens; Nuffield College Sites; Railway Station; Oxford University Development Limited)
- Volterra - Economic Consultants

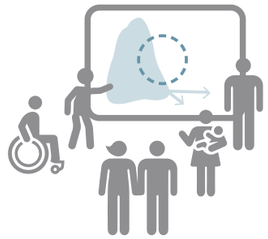
As a result of these sessions, a large amount of material was shared with us (see below).

Material shared:

- Evidence studies
- Policy documents
- OXWED Investment Prospectus
- West End SPD consultation statement
- Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme - design
- GIS layers and other spatial data
- Strategic and Economic Case for Oxford West End
- Oxford University Development Limited - Vision and design
- Nuffield College Sites - Vision and design
- Oxpens - Vision and design
- Oxford Railway Station - Vision and scenario options
- Updates from other Sites of Opportunity



STAGE 4: VISIONING WORKSHOP



The visioning workshop on the 28th July 2021 brought various stakeholders together to discuss the development of the vision through four key themes: **Place; People; Connectivity; and Enterprise**. Structuring the workshop around these themes gave the workshop a structure which allowed for stakeholders to provide invaluable insight.

Virtually aided with Miro boards, this workshop had an attendance of 60 people. The use of Miro allowed people to interact through writing notes, speaking and drawing their opinions and inputs.

The workshop consisted of three sessions. The first considering what people liked about the West End; what they felt was the greatest challenges; and what needs to improve or change.

The second session sought to understand what people's stake was in the area and how they might be affected either positively or negatively by changes in the West End. It allowed stakeholders an opportunity to voice concerns about changes in the West End and helped us shape the direction of the Spatial Framework.

Session 3 was the longest session and each of the group's was broken up into four sub-groups - each looking at a different topic - Place; People; Connectivity; and Enterprise. Facilitators from both the consultant and council team helped guide people through the complexities of each theme and asked people to voice ideas and opinions. With lots of useful input on the Miro broads, we came back together as a group and each sub-group shared their findings, which allowed for others to comment.

With so much useful content from the Visioning Workshop we were able to develop vignettes of each of the four themes, which highlighted stakeholders' priorities and desires for the future of the West End.

It was noted that many of the stakeholders engaged also were involved in the West End and Osney Mead SPD Scoping Consultation exercise ran by Oxford City Council between 19th March - 30th April 2021. This consultation included a questionnaire asking how respondents felt about the area; the scope and vision of the SPD; and identifying priorities for the area. Reviewing the output of this consultation was a useful part of information gathering.

Structure for Visioning Workshop

Introduction to the Visioning Workshop (25 min) - Introductions, what today is about, getting familiar with Miro.

Session 1 (33 min)

Overview

3 good things about the West End?

3 greatest challenges of the West End?

What do you think needs to change/ improve in the West End?

Feedback – summary from a stakeholder representative

Break (10 mins)

Session 2 (33 min)

Overview

What is your stake in the area?

How will you be affected (positive/ negative) by any changes in the West End?

What are your concerns about changes in WE – the spatial framework?

Feedback – summary from a stakeholder representative

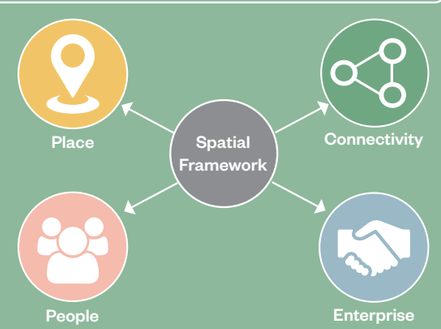
Break (20 mins)

Session 3 (1h 25 min)

Overview of four themes and elements that go under each theme.

Break-out rooms to discuss themes

Feedback – summary from a stakeholder representative and discussion



Summary and main conclusions debrief

Conclusions (10 min) Concluding statements, next steps and any further questions.

STAGE 4: VISIONING WORKSHOP

Attendance of Visioning Workshop

Attendance and Groupings

A CREATIVE PLACE

Debbie Dance: *Environment Agency*
Chris Bell: *Oxford Preservation Trust*
James Baughan: *Leisure, City Council*
Amanda Ford: *Environmental Quality/ City Council*
Jenny Barker: *Regeneration/ City Council*
Cllr Susanna Pressell: *Osney & Jericho Ward Member*
Laurie Dighton: *Oxford Preservation Trust*
David Crook: *Homes England*
Ceri Davies: *OxWED/Nuffield College Sites (AHMM)*
Dan Young: *Planning/ City Council*
David Clark: *Oxfordshire Architectural and Historic Society*
Clive Booth: *Oxford Civic Society*

A VIBRANT COMMUNITY

Paul Comerford: *Oxpens/OxWED (Priors & Partners)*
John Lee*: Public Health England*
Helen Whyman: *Planning/City Council*
Laura Warden: *Oxford Preservation Trust*
Azul Strong Corcoran: *Community Services/ County Council*
Deborah Wyatt: *Housing/County Council*
Cllr Alex Hollingsworth: *Carfax Ward Member/ Planning, Housing & Development Cabinet Member*
Cllr Colin Cook: *Osney & Jericho Ward Member Management - Uni of Oxford*
Carolyn Puddicombe: *Planning & Housing, Christ Church College*
Matt Peachey: *Regeneration/ City Council*
James Dodds: *OxWED/Nuffield College Sites (CBRE)*
Penny Lawrence: *Makespace Oxford*
Julie-Anne Howe: *Oxfordshire CCG*
Margaret Maden: *Oxford Civic Society*
Sarah Harrison: *Planning/ City Council*
Arome Agamah: *Planning/ City Council*

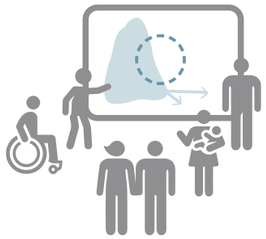
A CONNECTED and ACCESSIBLE PLACE

Darren Colley: *Oxford Bus Company*
Ben Smith: *Transport & Connectivity/ County Council*
Lynette Hughes: *Transport & Connectivity/County Council*
Jessica Jones: *Network Rail*
David Walker: *Endowment/ Nuffield College Sites*
Adrian Arnold: *Planning/ City Council*
Carolyn Ploszynski: *Regeneration & Economy/ City Council*
Michael Crofton-Briggs: *Planner/ University of Oxford*

A GLOBAL ENTERPRISE

Ian Downie: *Saïd Business School, University of Oxford*
Sarah Haywood-Price: *Advanced Oxford*
Steve Burgess: *Oxford Trust*
Iain Critchlow: *Asset & Space Management - Uni of Oxford*
Ahmed Goga: *OxLEP*
Paul Beerling: *University of Oxford*
Peter Nolan: *Economy, Oxford Strategic Partnership*
Tom Morris: *Planning/ City Council*
Trudy Godfrey: *Planning/ City Council*
Simon Webb: *Regeneration/ City Council*
Rob Linnell: *Christ Church*
Hannah Goodlad: *County Council*

STAGE 4: VISIONING WORKSHOP



Summary of Output

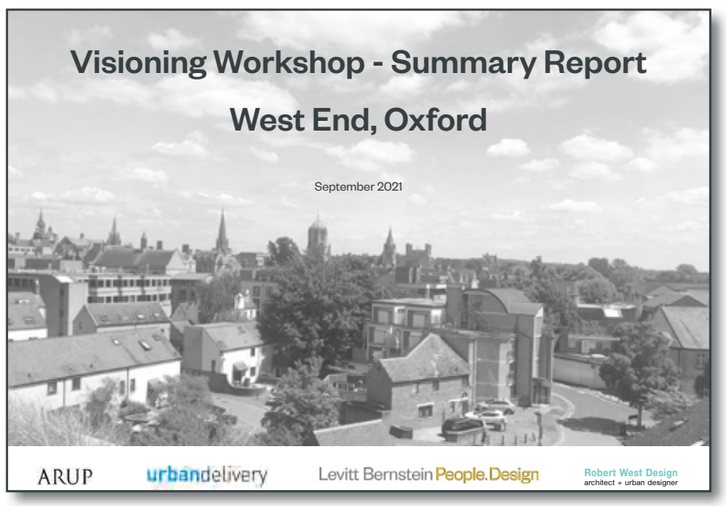
Lots of useful technical information, opinions and updates were shared within the Visioning Workshop. From this a Summary Report was drawn up (see Appendices) and circulated to all attendees and those invitees which weren't able to attend. Many stakeholders who weren't able to attend then provided feedback via email exchange, and the summary report was developed further.

Along with the baseline analysis work, the summary report then formed the basis for the vision and a vignette for each of the four themes was developed. The principles within these vignettes inform all the spatial framework strategies and are integral to the future of the West End.

The adjacent images show how group 1 and 2 used and interacted with the Miro board. Participants of the Visioning workshop all had access to the Miro board and could pin sticky notes up and draw on the plans. Chapter 2: A Vision for the West End provides a summary of the vignettes developed from the output of the Visioning Workshop.







Visioning Workshop - Summary Report (September 2021)

STAGE 5 AND 6: IDEAS AND TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS



To follow on from the information sharing sessions and the visioning workshop, a number of ideas and technical workshops happened. This provided the opportunity to discuss design development with emerging master-planners; understand ambitions from the City Council; and understand technical work of flooding and transport.

Having a holistic overview of all the projects within the West End allowed us to understand the area's interdependencies and patterns; and gave us the opportunity to scrutinise different projects in response to an overarching emerging vision.

All the emerging masterplans (Oxpens; Nuffield College Sites; OUD; Station) are working in parallel to the Spatial Framework's process and therefore discussions and updates from both parties could inform emerging designs.

Sessions with a number of stakeholders happened:

- Oxford City Council
- Oxford County Council
- Development sites (Oxpens; Nuffield College Sites; Railway Station; Oxford University Development Limited)
- Volterra - Economic Consultants
- Environment Agency
- Skyline Cableways

Lots of useful discussions and ideas were generated within this process.

August

- **Oxford City Council (Planning Team)** — Lessons learnt from Visioning Workshop
- **Nuffield College Sites team** — Design development
- **Oxpens team** — Design development
- **Oxford City Council (Regeneration Team)** — Understanding the ambition of regeneration
- **Oxford University Development Limited** — Design development
- **Oxford City Council (Planning Team)** — Progress meeting

September

- **County Council** — Movement and Accessibility
- **Station team** — Development of the Spatial Framework
- **Environment Agency** — Flood Risk
- **Oxford City Council** — Railway Station
- **Skyline Cableways** — Introduction and ideas
- **Oxford University Development Limited** — Relationship of Spatial Framework with OUD masterplan
- **County Council** — Sites of Opportunity

October

- **Oxford City Council (Regeneration Team)** — Railway Station
- **Oxford City Council (Regeneration Team)** — Oxpens bridge and towpath works
- **Oxford City Council (Planning Team)** — Progress meeting

November

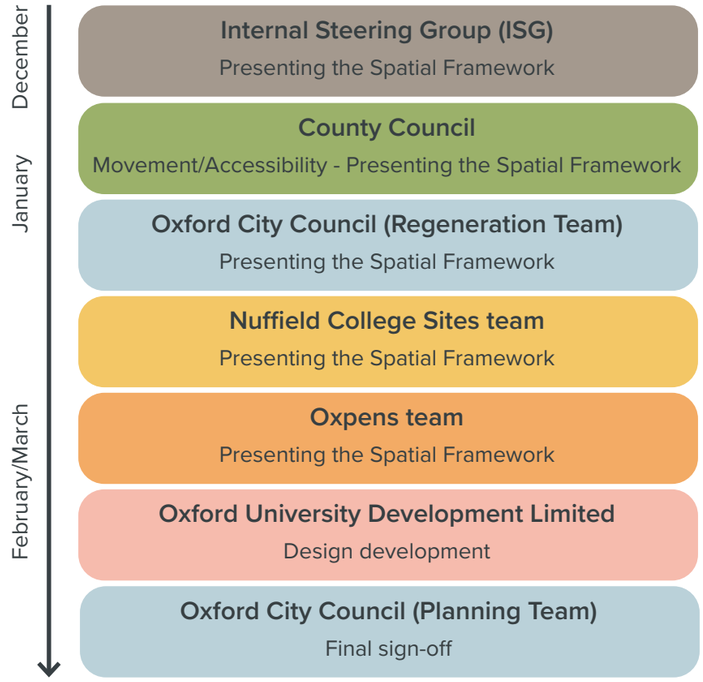
- **Oxford University Development Limited** — Design Principles
- **Nuffield College Sites team** — Design development
- **Oxpens team** — Design development
- **Canal and River Trust** — Introduction and ideas

STAGE 7: PRESENTING THE SF

Concluding meetings

A series of concluding meetings were undertaken to present the Spatial Framework to key stakeholders. This allowed stakeholders to feedback and revisions were made accordingly. This review process was undertaken with the Internal Steering Group, the Regeneration Team at Oxford City Council, the transport team at the County Council and the design and development teams at Oxpens and Nuffield.

We have worked with the client team at Oxford City Council (planning policy team) closely and have had weekly meetings and a concluding meeting for final sign-off. Oxford City Council will now take this forward and prepare an SPD.



355

OXFORD WEST END



London
Thane Studios
2-4 Thane Villas
London N7 7PA
+44 (0)20 7275 7676

levittbernstein.co.uk

Levitt Bernstein
People.Design

ARUP

urbandelivery

Robert West Design
architect + urban designer

Levitt Bernstein
People.Design

ARUP

urbandelivery
DELIVERY | VIABILITY | CAPACITY

Robert West Design
architect + urban designer

Oxford, West End

DESIGN GUIDE

Contents

INTRODUCTION 4

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF DESIGN GUIDE 4
SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS 6
VISION AND PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES FOR THE WEST END 7

CHARACTER AREAS 8

KEY CHARACTER AREAS 8
KEY CHARACTER AREAS OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE 9
AREAS OF CHANGING CHARACTER. 11

DESIGN GUIDANCE 14

1. MOVEMENT 14
2. PUBLIC REALM 21
3. NATURE. 30
4. BUILT FORM 34
5. ROUTE TO ZERO CARBON 41

SUMMARY 45

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF DESIGN GUIDE

Why a Design Guide?

Oxford's West End is a fast-growing area with a number of key development sites coming forward in the short, medium and long term. The West End Spatial Framework sets out high-level strategies which will help to deliver the vision for the West End. Alongside this framework, the Design Guide sets out strategic design principles which will help to protect, retain and enhance the existing character of the area, whilst also creating new opportunities for working, living and leisure. This document therefore sets out a number of design guidelines for future development.

Purpose of the West End Design Guide

This Design Guide takes a holistic approach, recognising that development sites are all at different stages. Its purpose is to set some guidance on how architecture, urban design and landscape architecture should come together within the West End. The role of this guide is not to regulate all built form but to enable designers and users to create high-level design standards for proposals coming forward.

All development proposals will need to respond to the principles established in this Design Guide. Larger masterplans, such as Oxpens, Osney Mead and Nuffield, will need to develop individual Design Codes which are aligned with the guidance set out within this document.

This guide is also an update to the West End Design Code (2007). It provides general design guidance, rather than specific detailed design coding. The updates provided are:

- It expands the geographic scope of the West End to include Osney Mead
- It takes into account the guidance set out within the National Design Guide (2019)
- It includes updates on key development sites
- It provides guidance rather than coding to allow for flexibility and changing needs for sites coming forward at different times.

The Design Guide is underpinned by the work set out within the Spatial Framework and should be read in parallel. While the Spatial Framework remains spatially high-level in its guidance, the Design Guide provides an opportunity to zoom into all scales of development.

Planning Context

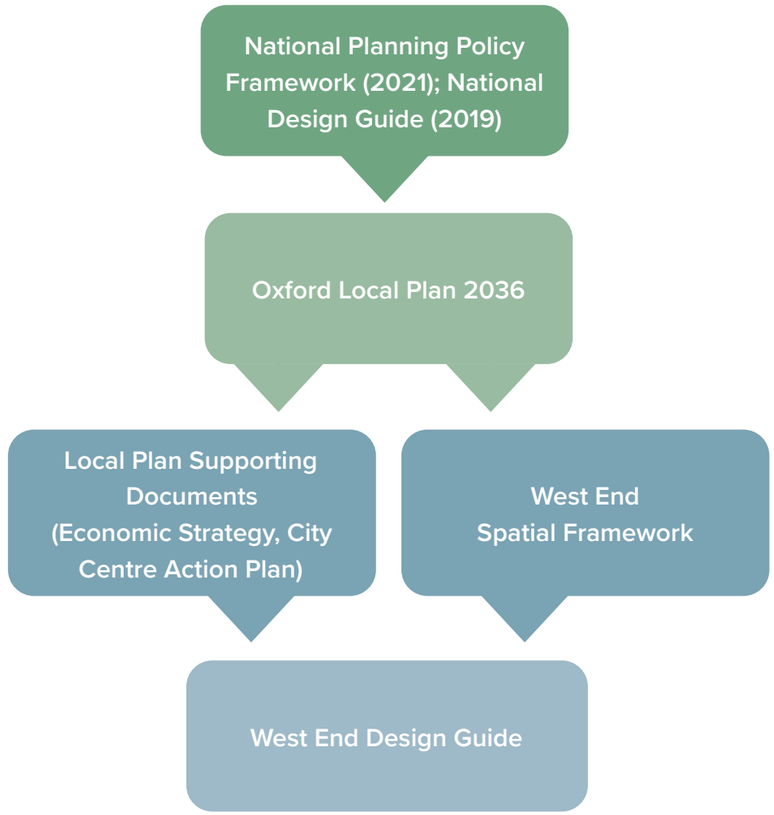
This guide is part of a wider planning policy structure that builds upon and supports documents at both city and national level. The structure of this document is taken from the relevant parts of the National Design Guide (2019) and responds to the ten characteristics of a well-designed place as outlined below.

The Ten Characteristics of Well-Designed Places

1. **Resources**: Efficient and Resilient
2. **Lifespan:** Made to last
3. **Context**: Enhances the surroundings
4. **Identity**: Attractive and distinctive
5. **Built form**: A coherent pattern of development
6. **Movement**: Accessible and easy to move around
7. **Nature**: Enhanced and optimised
8. **Public spaces**: Safe, social, and inclusive
9. **Uses**: Mixed and integrated
10. **Homes and buildings**: Functional, healthy and sustainable

One of the aims of this Design Guides is to build upon the ten characteristics set at the national level to provide more focused and appropriate guidance for the Oxford context.

Overarching and site specific policy guidance is provided by the Oxford Local Plan 2036, which sets out the ambitions for both the West End and wider Oxford. The Local Plan's supporting documents further inform the approaches taken in this Design Guide.



INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF DESIGN GUIDE

Scope of the Design Guide

The extent of Oxford's West End is defined by the Area of Change set out within Policy AOC1 in the Local Plan 2036. The surrounding context – in particular Osney, St Ebbes, the University Quarter and surrounding green belt and watercourses – are instrumental in informing developments coming forward within this Area of Change.

Application of the Design Guide

This Design Guide should be used to help inform the design of any emerging planning applications for development within Oxford's West End. It may be best utilised by planners, developers, local authorities, and design professionals in evaluating the quality of designs and how they best fit within the vision for the West End as set by the Local Plan 2036 and the Spatial Framework.

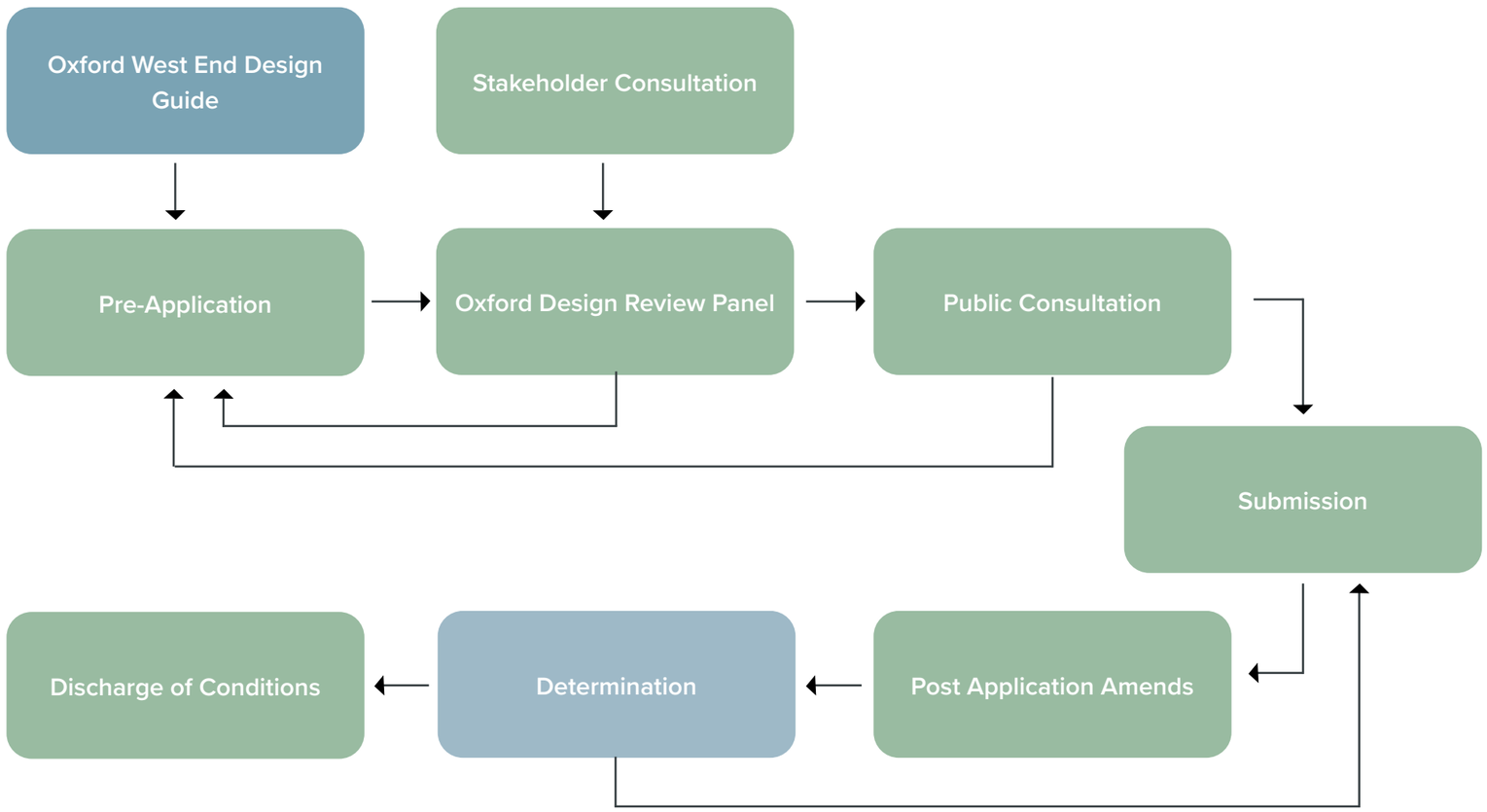
The Oxford Planning Process

The planning process in Oxford is robust and rigorous and requires applicants to go through several steps to ensure a proposal is of the highest quality and policy compliance. This Design Guide is intended to take an early and prominent position in this process. Stakeholder consultation should be an important element throughout.

A collaborative approach between the Council and applicants is encouraged from outset, starting at the pre-application stage. By this point, any proposed framework should have taken into account all relevant policy documents including this guide. The number of pre-application meetings required is dependent on the scale of a proposal. This stage is instrumental in building primary design appraisals which may be informed by some of the more broad-reaching principles outlined over the following pages.

The **Oxford Design Review Panel** is a critical piece of the process in which an application will undergo strenuous scrutiny and design advice. The Design Guide may be useful in steering this discussion and setting the standards from which the design review builds upon.

The Oxford Planning Process



During this stage, a development may be evaluated on the basis of this guidance to determine its compliance and assess the quality of design proposed. This document will be invaluable to councillors and applicants alike in guiding this step in the process.

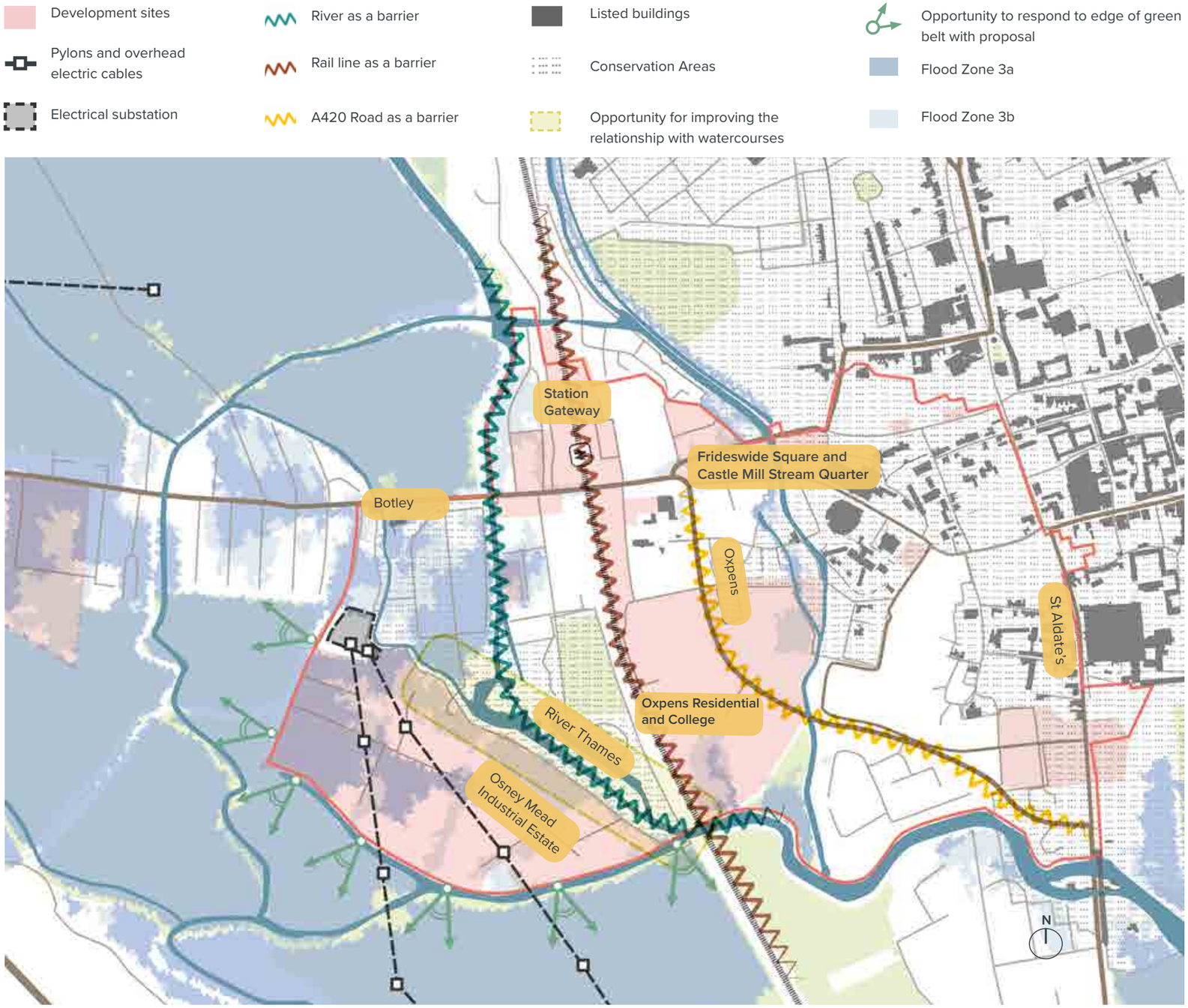
Upon submission of a planning application, the outcomes of the progression of a design throughout the preceding stages should be made evident. This includes the impact of any design reviews a scheme has undertaken.

Officers will then make a preliminary decision on the application. If the design guidance is adhered to and the pre-application process is followed thoroughly, there will be little need for major alterations following the submission.

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

As set out within the Spatial Framework, there are a multitude of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the West End. These must inform development proposals coming forward. Of particular importance are the following points:

- **Heritage** - the rich history of Oxford has manifested in lots of listed buildings, some important Conservation Areas and key views which must be protected. This requires proposals to be sensitive and contribute positively to the character of its surroundings.
- The large number of **development sites** coming forward, some of which are outlined within the Local Plan 2036, provide an exciting opportunity for new places for people to work, live and play.
- The West End has a huge opportunity to celebrate its large number of **watercourses and associated towpaths,** and improve connections across them. Development sites must respond to open up the watercourses with high quality public realm.
- A number of **roads are congested and offer a poor quality pedestrian experience** (e.g Botley Road, Oxpens Road). Proposals must improve streets and provide better frontages onto them, creating an active, pedestrian and cycle friendly environment.
- **Flood risk** is a major environmental concern, with much of Osney and Osney Mead Industrial Estate being in Flood Zone 3a or 3b. Proposals for any site within a flood risk area will need to be flood-resilient and ensure a sound evacuation plan is in place.
- **Proximity to the green belt** is a significant asset for the West End and development sites will have the opportunity to take advantage of good views and amenity space. Development proposals do need to be sensitive to its ecological and community value.
- **Overhead power lines and the associated substation** are a major constraint for the Osney Mead regeneration site. Undergrounding or relocating them will be a key enabler for proposals to come forward.



VISION AND PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES FOR THE WEST END

The Spatial Framework sets out the overarching vision for Oxford's West End. This is underpinned by four central themes, which all the spatial strategies stem from. The vision statement and its key drivers were defined through stakeholder engagement - these address the key aspirations, needs and requirements for the various sites within the West End. The four overarching themes are:

AN ACCESSIBLE AND CONNECTED PLACE

A 15-minute 'urban quarter' which has strong connections to ecology, community and movement, encouraging modes of active travel with good digital infrastructure networks in and around the city.

A CREATIVE PLACE

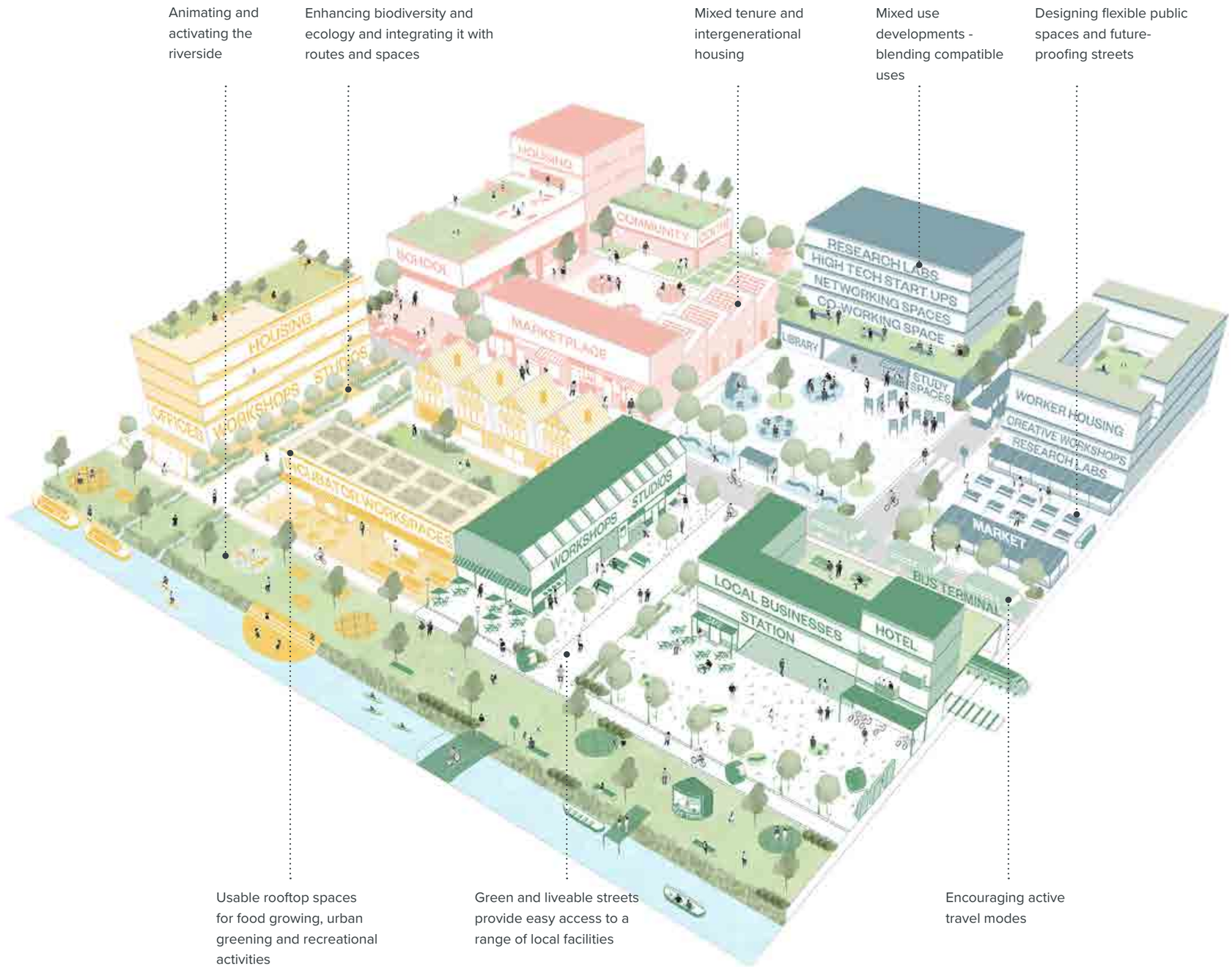
A place where the diverse mix of compatible land uses (including a mix of housing, research and innovation, arts and creative enterprises) encourages a 24-hour economy.

A VIBRANT COMMUNITY

A liveable, diverse and inclusive place that maximises land with mixed use destinations. A range of housing tenures and intergenerational living creates opportunities for local and global success.

A GLOBAL ENTERPRISE

A distinctive and unique setting that builds on the West End's economic strengths - it's innovation and creative industry mix - by connecting entrepreneurs and educational institutions, start-ups, medical innovations, bike sharing and more.



KEY CHARACTER AREAS

Oxford city centre comprises of a variety of different uses, buildings and street typologies which collectively contribute to its unique character. In the context of the West End, the importance of maintaining particular characters varies greatly and further analysis will need to be done to understand the social, economic and environmental value of different elements.

As outlined in the Spatial Framework, there is huge opportunity for enhancement within many of the **character areas**. This includes improvements to public realm, bringing in new development and uses and changing street functions and typologies. Proposals should take its cues from the existing context.

Outlined below are some character areas of particular importance. A more detailed and comprehensive character analysis can be found within the Spatial Framework.

1 Osney Mead Industrial Estate

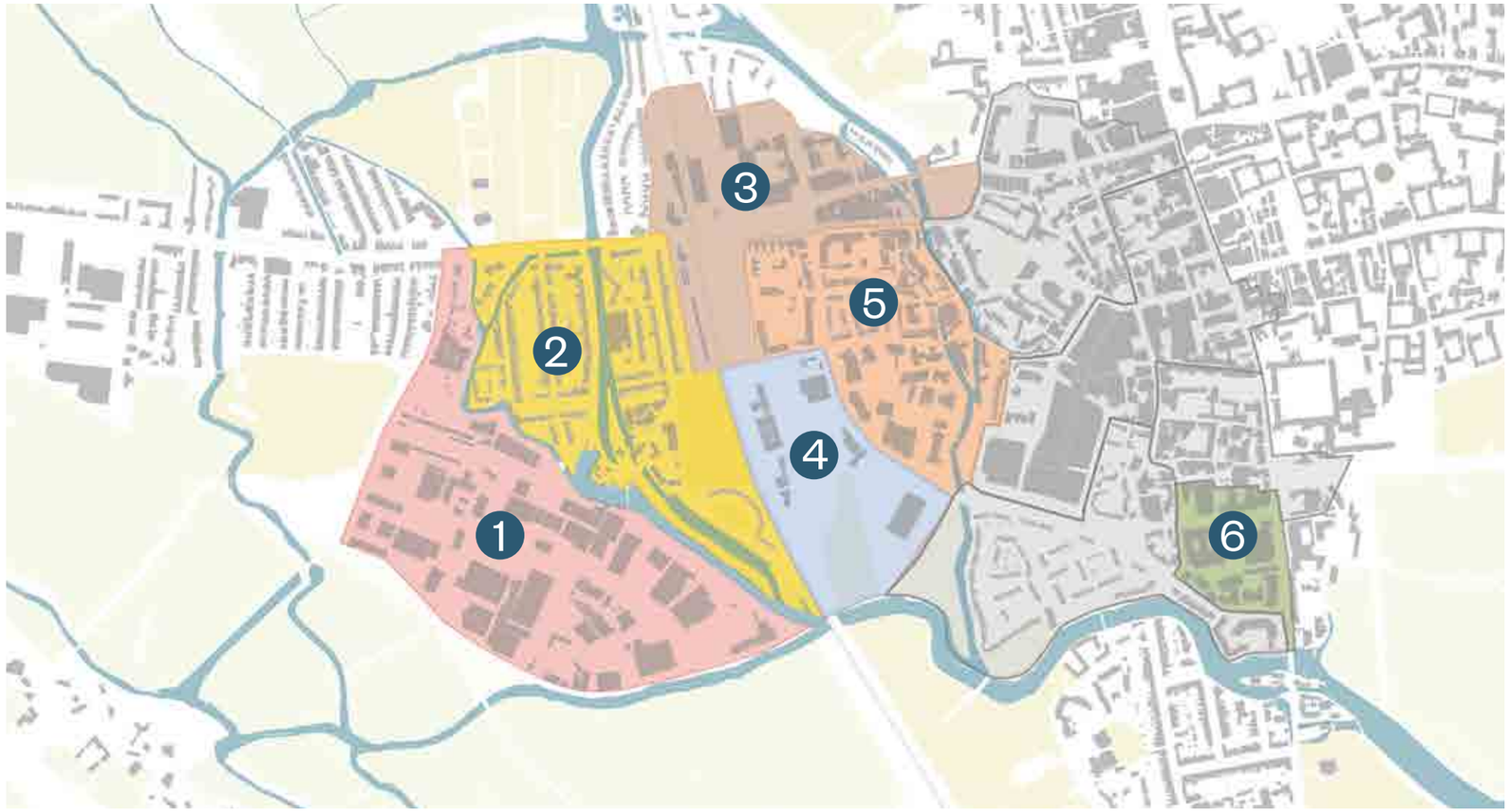
2 Osney

3 Station Gateway

4 Oxpens

5 Oxpens Residential and College

6 Administrative Quarter



1 Osney Mead Industrial Estate has a diverse and evolving character of commerce - both office and industrial uses. This area is subject to significant change and the Spatial Framework sets out the vision and spatial strategy for this area. Existing character inferences need to be considered in development proposals coming forward:

- Opportunity to improve frontage and access onto River Thames and associated towpath
- Opportunity to improve interface to Castle Mill Stream and green belt
- Opportunity to retain the vibrancy of existing businesses
- Sensitivity and celebration of heritage of neighbouring Osney
- Mitigate flood risk (categories 3a and 3b) by introducing SuDs, swales, rain gardens and floodable landscapes

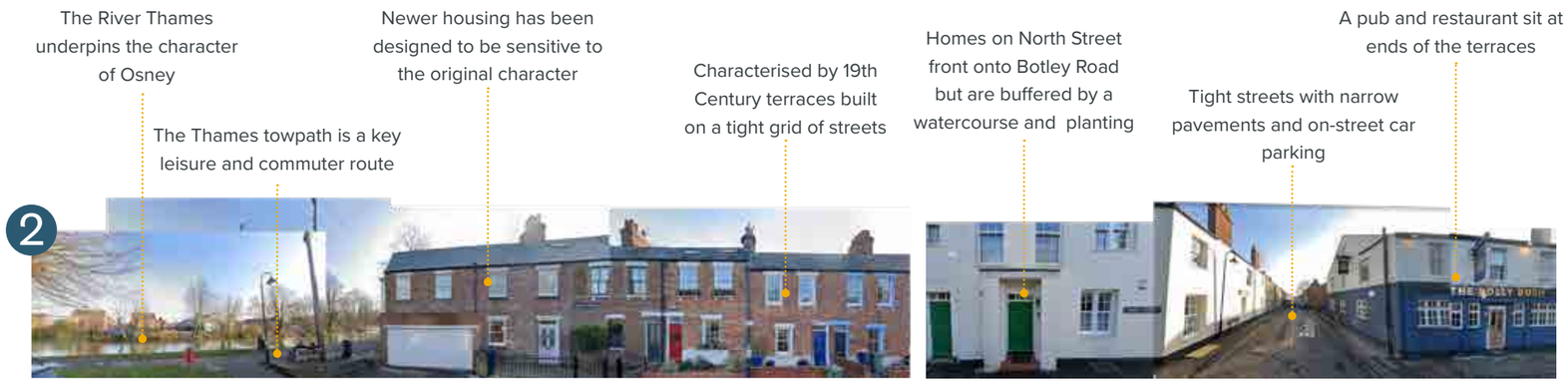
1



KEY CHARACTER AREAS OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE

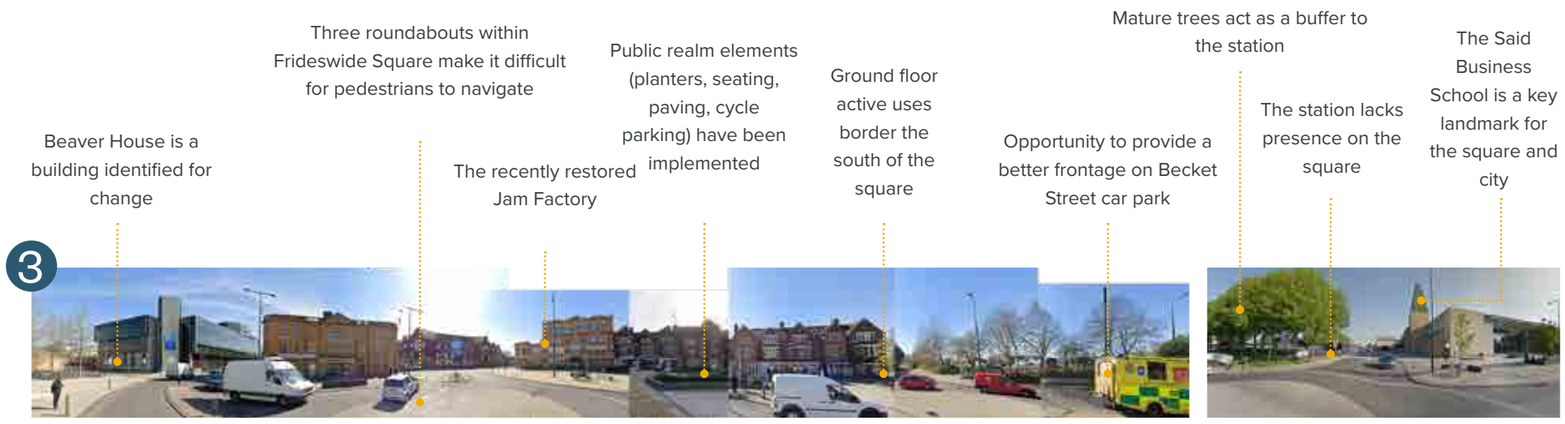
2 Osney's special historic character is set out in the **Osney Town Conservation Area**. It sits adjacent to the Area of Change and any changes to Osney Mead Industrial Estate, Oxpens and any strategic public realm improvements must sensitively deal with its proximity to sites of change. In particular, sensitivities to the following must be considered:

- The impacts of movement through already constrained streets and towpaths
- Impact on the character of the River Thames and other watercourses
- Connections and routes along/ through Osney Lock and Abbey



3 Station Gateway which combines Frideswide Square, Becket Street car park, the railway station and Nuffield sites. With lots of development sites, this area is subject for significant change. Existing characteristics need to be considered in proposals coming forward:

- Existing work on Frideswide Square
- Impact on a number of heritage assets including the Jam Factory and St Thomas Church
- Opportunity to give a bigger presence to the railway station
- Consideration of how the existing bus strategy is to be developed



4 Oxpens has a multitude of characters and consists of a number of differing uses. It is also subject to significant change with a masterplan being developed for it. Existing characteristics will need to be considered in future development proposals:

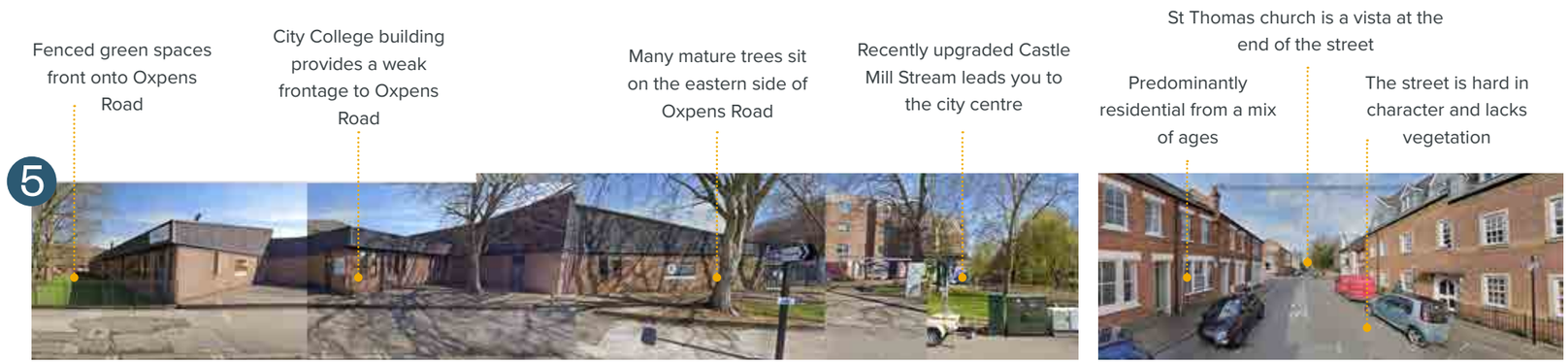
- Opportunity to provide a better interface to Oxpens Meadows and River Thames
- Opportunity to integrate and improve interface of the ice rink
- Opportunity to improve the character of Oxpens Road
- Opportunity to improve connections and links to Osney Mead Industrial Estate across River Thames (Oxpens Bridge)



KEY CHARACTER AREAS OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE

5 **Oxpens Residential and College** has a multitude of characters as it caters to a number of differing uses. It is also subject to significant change as various sites within this area have been identified for redevelopment. Existing character inferences will need to be considered in development proposals coming forward:

- Opportunity to improve east-west connectivity along Woodlins Way and Osney Lane for easier pedestrian and cyclist movement
- Opportunity to improve the character of Oxpens Road
- Opportunity for better permeability through the sites and linkages to Castle Mill Stream and into the city centre core



6 **Administrative Quarter** has a very civic character, as it is comprised of a series of court buildings, police station and government and other offices. It contains large footprint buildings with little quality in public realm. Change within this area is very much in the long term but will need to consider the following things:

- The value of these important civic uses within the city centre
- The importance of the intersection of St Aldate's with Speedwell Street and Thames Street as an important southern gateway into Oxford
- The relationship with Christ Church college and Christ Church Meadow in the east
- Opportunity for urban greening within wider sections of St Aldate's - particularly at the gateway junction



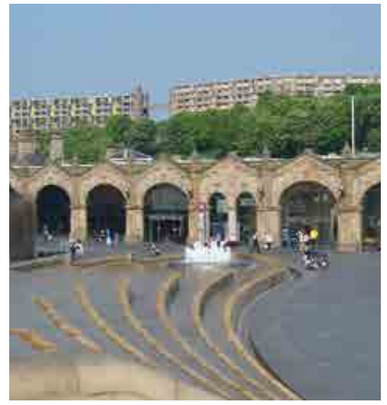
AREAS OF CHANGING CHARACTER

With many development sites set to come forward in the short, medium and long term, there will be areas within the West End that are subject to considerable change in use, capacity and character. Broadly there are four areas which are subject to significant change.



1. Station Gateway

With redevelopment of the station sites, as well as Becket Street car park, the Nuffield sites, Beaver House and Rewley Road Fire Station, this provides a huge opportunity for improvements to the gateway of Oxford. Improvements to Frideswide Square and the relationship between adjoining sites undergoing change (scale, mass and public street/ space enclosure) will be particularly important. Further analysis on this site can be found in the Emerging Masterplans section of the Spatial Framework.



An integrated transport approach which links walking, cycling, bus, train and car usage



Architecture and public realm which signifies a gateway into a city



Active ground floor uses which promote a safe, vibrant and inclusive space



Clear legibility, way-finding strategies and signage for people arriving into the city

AREAS OF CHANGING CHARACTER

2. Oxpens and College site

Oxpens and the City of Oxford College site are currently fairly inaccessible and are underutilised. Movement through the sites is challenging and Oxpens Road currently forms a major road barrier between the sites.

Development sites at Oxpens, College site, Richard Gray Court, Royal Mail Delivery Office and the ice rink should aim to re-stitch this area with its surroundings - providing a greater connection to the watercourses, the Oxpens Meadows and the city centre. There is huge opportunity to humanise Oxpens Road with new development opening onto this street and footpaths widened to encourage footfall.



Transformation of Oxpens Road with better frontages and improved street design



Opportunity to create destinations along watercourses and improve relationship with these



Active ground floor uses which promote a safe, vibrant and inclusive space



Encouraging mixed use developments - mixing various non-residential functions at ground level with homes above

3. Speedwell Street

Major interventions on Oxpens Road will drastically change the character of the area.

In the medium and long term, development sites should aim to create an activity node for Oxford which produces a distinct destination and gateway for people coming from the south-east.



Opportunity to widen footpaths, improve urban greening through tree planting and encourage active travel along Oxpens Road



Architecture and public realm which creates a destination and gateway into Oxford



Opportunity to activate and animate ground floors of retained/retrofitted buildings in key locations

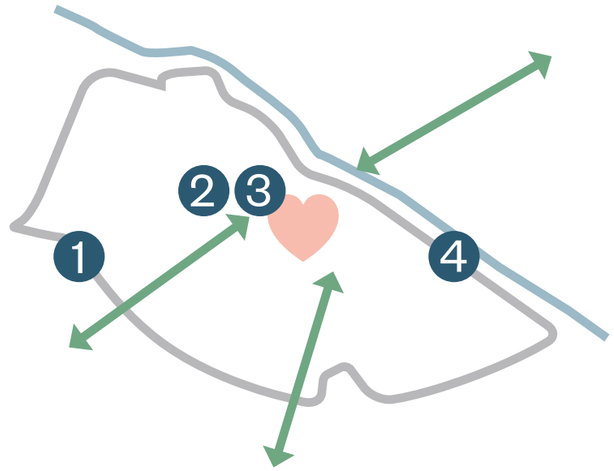


Clear legibility and signage for people arriving into the City - opportunities to promote the West End as an extension of the city centre

AREAS OF CHANGING CHARACTER

4. Osney Mead

Osney Mead Industrial Estate is an area subject to comprehensive development and significant change over the coming years. New residents, workers and visitors will be attracted to the culture and leisure offering. Meaningful public realm improvements will provide a character which is shaped by the surrounding area's blue and green assets. With a rich mix of uses, a vibrant quarter which fosters creativity, innovation and exchange of knowledge will be created. A detailed Spatial Strategy is set out in the Osney Mead section of the Spatial Framework.





1 Green belt interface

An interface with the green belt which is responsive to its context and high quality ecosystem - with an opportunity to create access to areas of the green belt for active and passive recreation.



2 Mix of uses and typologies

A rich mix of uses which are vertically and/ or horizontally mixed to create interest, collaboration and vibrancy. Presenting a compatible mix of housing and non-residential uses to maximise the site's potential as a world class innovation district.



3 Public spaces and active community heart

Public realm at the heart of a new community will drive activity and vibrancy. This will include playful and interesting meanwhile uses and art, active building frontages, and spaces for meeting and gathering.



4 Activation of riverside edge

A strong relationship with the River Thames, activating its banks as a site for public enjoyment. Opportunity for spill-out activities and encouraging walking and cycling along a well-overlooked riverfront.

1. DESIGN GUIDANCE: MOVEMENT

A strong movement network is pivotal to the future of the West End. Currently the West End is highly limited in connections, relying on constrained towpaths and streets which are poor in quality and connectivity. This strategy provides a real opportunity to bring the West End into the life of the bustling city centre - providing key activity hubs with high quality public realm which are interlinked with good walking and cycling routes.

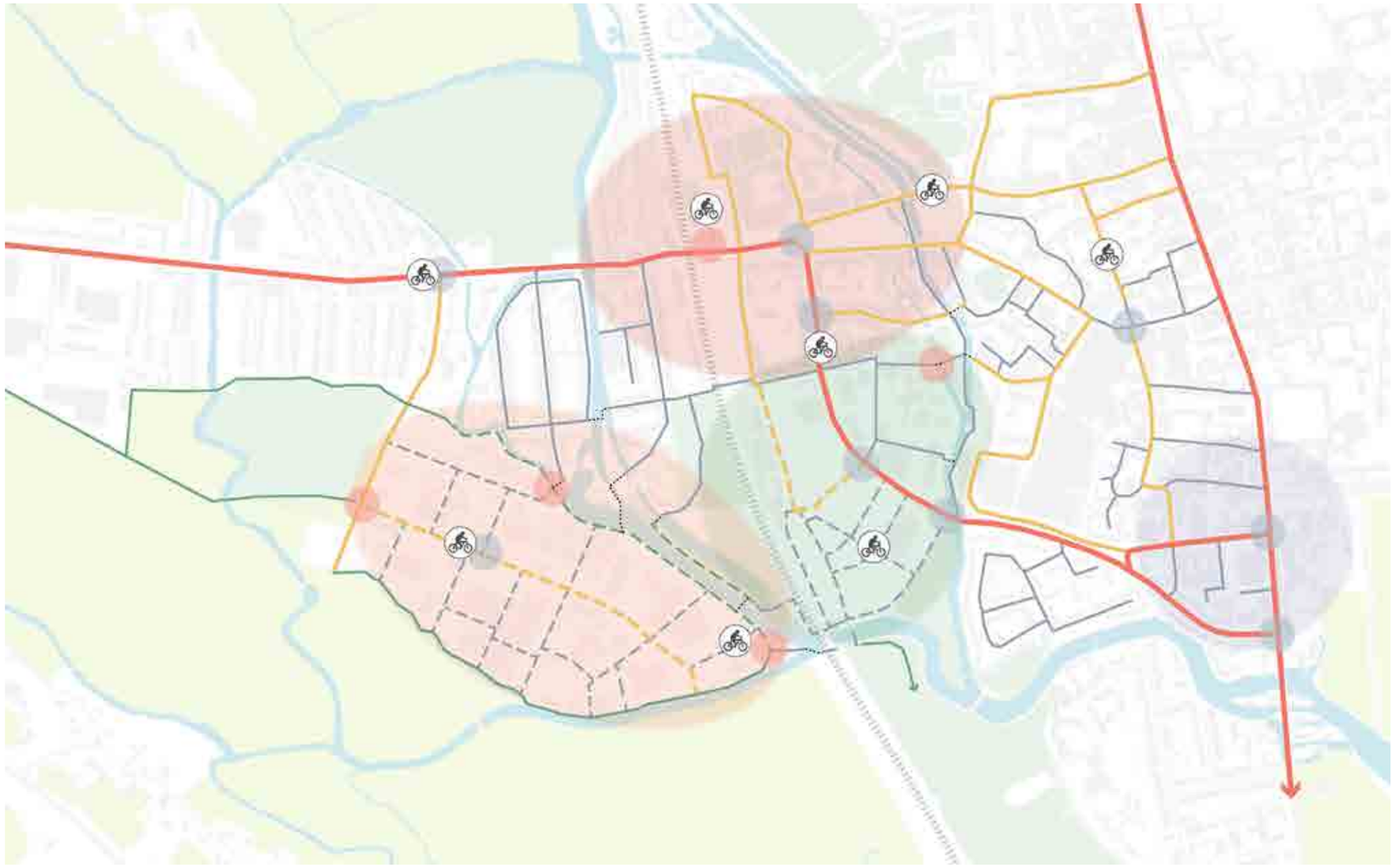
This guidance aims to shape development on both the West End's existing streets as well as new ones. Any intervention into the street scape should take care to define intended street hierarchies and the scale of movement it may sustain. This is key to developing the appropriate infrastructure and amenities of that route, as well as the public realm elements around it.

On routes of all sizes, pedestrian and cyclist friendliness should be maximised to ensure that all users are safe and comfortable throughout Oxford's movement network. New developments should provide permeable street to tie in with existing street networks and ensure improved connectivity from and through development sites.

The greening of existing and planned streets is an opportunity to build climate resilience into the West End's transport network and provide ecological benefits as well as general road improvement.

This diagram outlines broad parameters of the West End's existing streets, as well as potential new routes, alongside the demarcation of key junctions and gateways and areas suitable for mobility hubs.

Service, delivery and energy access routes should be planned to ensure they are efficient and do not impede on other movement networks. All streets should have some provision for emergency access, regardless of hierarchy. Solutions for otherwise pedestrian areas, such as designated delivery zones, may be useful.



- Primary routes
- Secondary routes
- Key junctions
- Potential location for multi-modal mobility hub
- Tertiary routes
- Potential gateway spaces

Any development should:

- Provide a comprehensive network of cycle routes which are designed in accordance with best practice guidance (LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design)
- Provide convenient, accessible and easy to use cycle parking, with reference to guidance set out in Oxfordshire Cycling Design Standards
- Create clear, inclusive and unobstructed pedestrian routes that complement best practice guidance set in Oxfordshire's Walking Design Guide
- Provide safe pedestrian crossing points at a reasonable frequency and closely aligned with desire lines
- Designate a clear hierarchy of routes and street types
- Promote mixed uses along streets and activate ground floor spaces
- Consider footpath width and ensure that it is able to accommodate movement flows projected along street and allow sufficient space for passing

1. DESIGN GUIDANCE: MOVEMENT

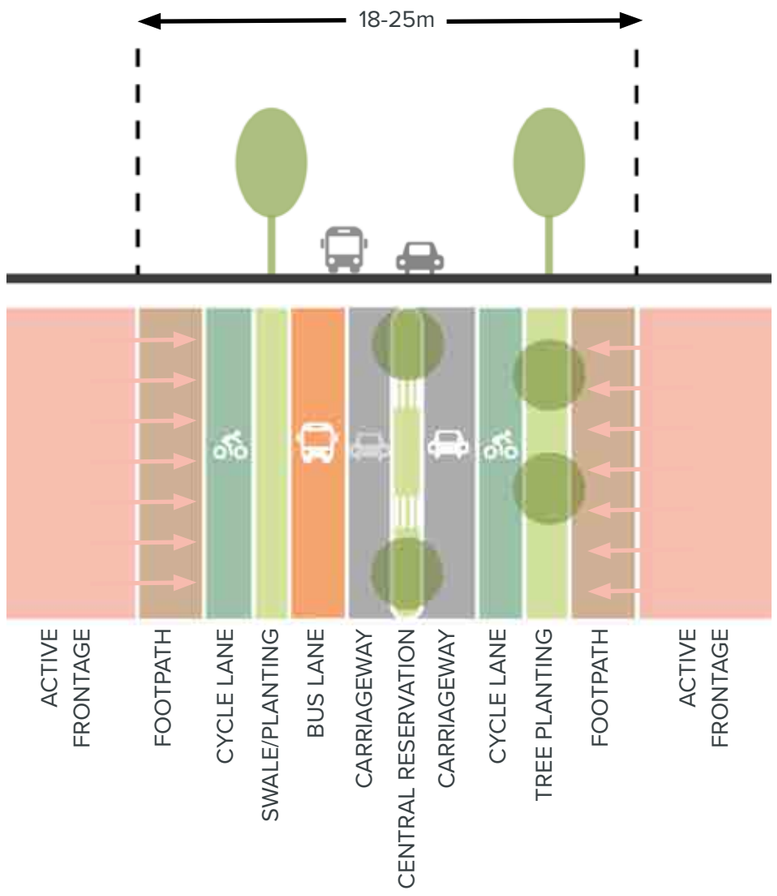
A. Primary Routes

The West End's primary routes form the key arteries of the city. These need to allow for significant vehicular flow as well as a good quality environment for cyclists and pedestrians. Streets such as **Oxpens Road** and **Botley Road** will need to be sensitively adapted and interventions listed below should transform them. Active street frontages are essential and will help to animate streets of this character.

Widths available for walking, cycling and carriageways on all routes should follow best practice guidance and reflect the context in which they are provided. Relevant guidance that can be referred to includes:

- Cycling: LTN 1/20 (Cycle Infrastructure Design) and Oxfordshire's Cycling Design Standards
- Walking: Oxfordshire's Walking Design Standards, Inclusive Mobility
- Tools such as Transport for London's Pedestrian Comfort Level calculator can also be used to determine appropriate footway and crossing widths
- Carriageways: Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2

Indicative cross section and plan for a primary route

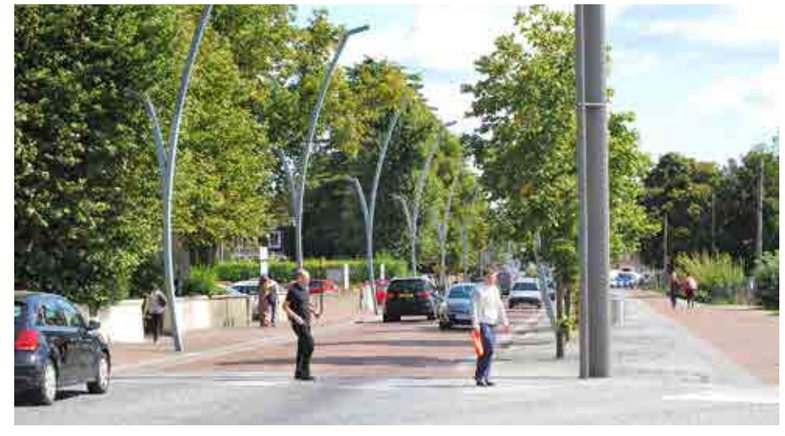












- Traffic calming measures
- Designated cycle lanes
- Integrated planting strategies
- Safe pedestrian crossings
- Opportunity for bus lanes
- Mix of uses which activate the street
- A good wayfinding strategy
- Allows for two way vehicle movement with servicing activity offline
- Sustainable urban drainage, rain garden, and other flood mitigation strategies integrated into gardens

- Overshadow the street with buildings with long spans of inactive frontages
- Propose large areas of parking perpendicular with street
- Harsh lighting which may cause glare

1. DESIGN GUIDANCE: MOVEMENT

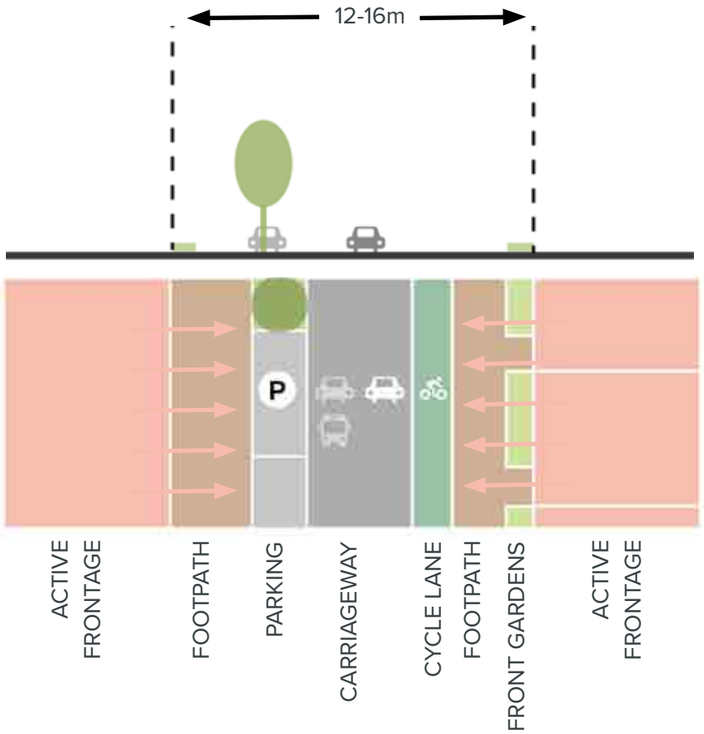
B. Secondary Routes

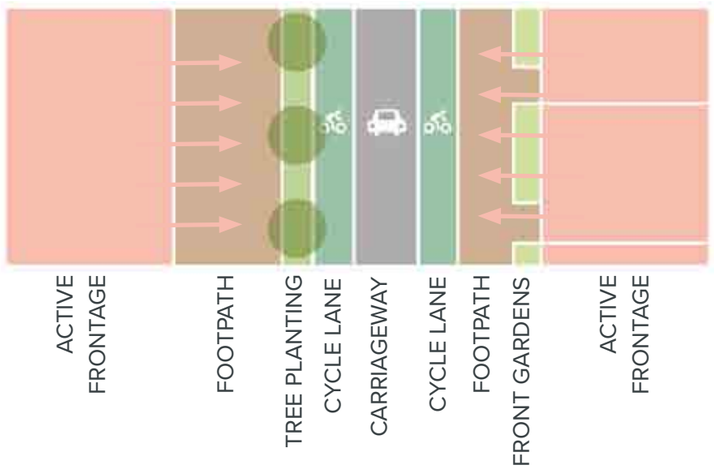
Secondary streets make up the majority of routes that people will use to move between and through the various development sites. They alter in need and character, requiring different provisions for bus routes, cycle routes and parking. Widths of secondary routes should reflect traffic volumes, and ensure vehicles can pass stationary servicing vehicles. All should prioritise pedestrians and cyclists and provide a safe, green and accessible interface between buildings and life on the street.

- Provide clear footpaths
- Safe pedestrian crossing points
- Buffer with front garden for ground floor homes
- Active street frontages with front doors or non-residential uses
- Provide traffic calming and speed reduction measures to reinforce the priority given to walking and cycling
- Sustainable urban drainage, rain garden, and other flood mitigation strategies integrated into gardens
- Opportunity for urban greening through tree planting in strategic locations

- Buildings disproportionate to the scale of the street
- Overuse of shared surfaces
- Overshadowing the street with buildings and long spans of inactive frontages

Indicative cross section and plan for a secondary route

















1. DESIGN GUIDANCE: MOVEMENT

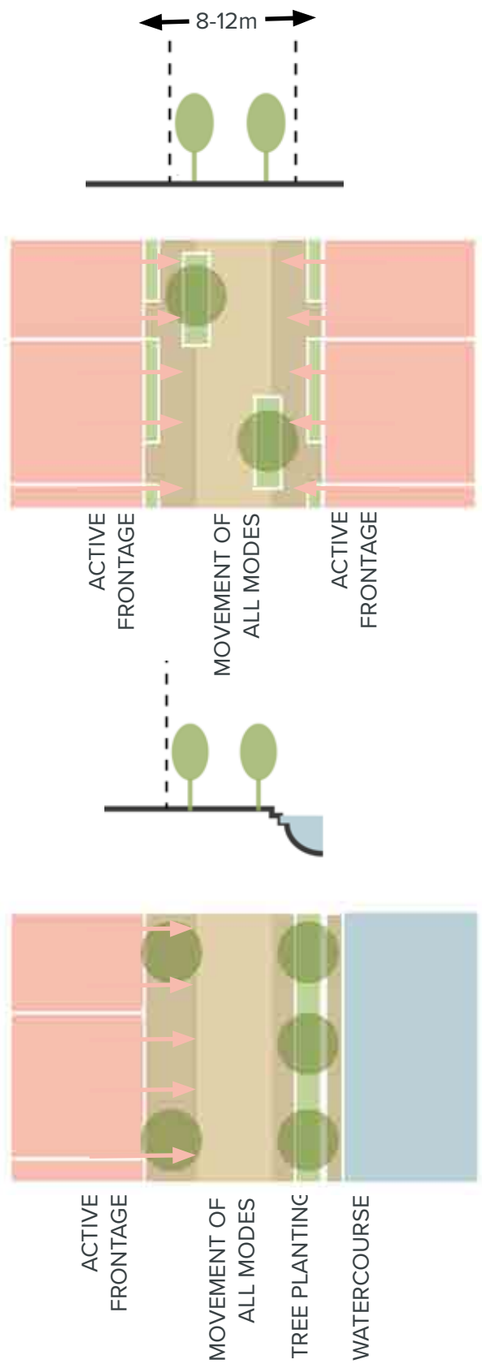
C. Tertiary Routes and Pedestrian and cyclists Only

Tertiary streets will take on a more intimate character and will put the pedestrian and cyclist first. Proposals should promote car-free streets, school streets and integrated natural play on the way. Careful consideration will need to be given to servicing locations, service frequency and alternative routes to determine whether passing of longer stay servicing vehicles is required.

- Create a narrow, intimate street (e.g.. Mews and Lanes)
- Pedestrians/ cyclists as the primary regular users
- Consider the use of a shared surface for streets with low usage and delineation of uses for more heavily trafficked routes
- Integration of landscaping
- Carefully consider building proportion
- Encourage play on the way (imaginative and incidental play areas)
- Sustainable urban drainage, rain garden, and other flood mitigation strategies integrated into gardens

- Propose large or tall trees
- Disproportionate buildings to scale of the street
- Allow vehicular carriageway to dominate the street
- Failing to ensure pavement is wide enough for wheelchair users

Indicative cross sections and plans for tertiary routes










1. DESIGN GUIDANCE: MOVEMENT

1.1 Delivery and Servicing

Accommodating delivery and servicing activity is a key consideration for new developments. A well-designed and well-managed strategy can mean that delivery and servicing activity can be carried out efficiently and safely, without creating negative impacts on the local highway network, residents, site users, and the environment or design of a site.



1. Given the number of large sites coming forward in the area, consideration should be given to consolidation of deliveries and last mile deliveries by bike/scooter.



2. Use of service yards may be necessary in certain circumstances (e.g. for retail land uses) where deliveries are made with larger vehicles that have longer dwell times and require more formal management.



3. In lightly trafficked environments, kerbside loading or on-carriageway loading can be appropriate. This allows vehicles to gain close access to building entrances and does not require substantial areas of hard landscaping given over to vehicles. When not in use, kerbside loading bays act as footway, allowing more space for pedestrians.



4. Facilities such as electronic parcel lockers can be used to help reduce repeat deliveries, thus helping to reduce traffic volumes within a site and on the local road network.



5. Last mile deliveries by bike/scooter offer a sustainable and smart solution to delivering goods and provision should be made for these in key locations within the public realm.

1. DESIGN GUIDANCE: MOVEMENT

1.2 Junctions and Crossings

A number of existing junctions are to be improved as part of development proposals. Furthermore, the creation of new connections and junctions will emerge as new movement routes are opened. Effort must be made to ensure that these spaces respect the priority of pedestrians and cyclists and create striking and effective gateway spaces. Connections and linkages between the various development sites of the West End would benefit through strategic interventions.





Top: New crossings can fulfil important infrastructural roles as well as creating new, visually interesting pieces of public realm. Bottom: Inventive paving strategies and traffic calming measures create safe street crossings

- Accessible paving strategies
- A safe and clear strategy for cyclists
- Dedicated cycle lanes
- Tree planting to break up long streets
- Animated with non-residential uses that create a sense of place
- A clear movement strategy
- Clear signage
- Built form which provides space for landmark buildings or new infrastructure
- Consider those with visual or hearing impairments when designing crossings

- Overshadow the street with buildings
- Harsh lighting which may cause glare

1.3 Cycle Parking

Secure and convenient cycle storage is essential in creating a public realm that supports cycling. These must be both simple to use and access, and secure from theft or damage. Placing of cycle storage in key public spaces and in close proximity to key movement routes will be needed to maximise their effectiveness. This will be particularly important to promote active travel in last mile trips from the railway station.







Top left: Secure and accessible bicycle storage. Top right: Clearly legible cycle parking. Bottom: Cycle parking can be integrated within developments, like this example located inside a building

- Cycle parking must be well supervised and visible
- Must be secure and well-lit
- Well-located for ease of use
- Be provided at a quantity which accords with Local Plan cycle parking standards

- Obstruct flow of pedestrian movement

1.4 Counter Terrorism

Built solutions to vehicle borne threats, either from targeted attacks or vehicle collisions, is key in creating a public realm which is secure for all users. Successful implementation of barriers will be effective forms of protection while minimising visual and physical impacts on the built environment.







Top left: Bollards may be integrated in landscaping and planting. Top right: Bollards may double as urban furniture or seating. Bottom: Making counter terrorism structures visually engaging is an important part of integrating them into the urban environment

- Landscape and urban design solutions to protect against vehicle borne attack and road traffic collisions involving pedestrians
- One that is visually attractive and can be used as a landmark for a space
- Barriers which are low impact and low profile
- Integration with public art and/ or meanwhile use

- Obstruct pavement or other pedestrian routes
- Visually detract from the character of the public realm

1. DESIGN GUIDANCE: MOVEMENT

1.5 Car Parking, Services, and Utilities

While car-free development is ideal, in areas where some cars are necessary, appropriate measures should be taken to lessen the impact that parking takes on the built environment. This may include integrating parking within development blocks to protect street priority and active frontages.



A. On-street parking



B. Podium parking



C. Courtyard parking

- Integrate parking into public realm design
- Podium parking with integrated tree planting and amenity space at upper level
- Courtyard parking well-overlooked by surrounding uses
- Breaking up parking with planting
- Flexibly designed parking so space can be transformed in the future
- Consider communally accessed energy monitoring points and a decentralised form of resident utility management
- Where infrastructure is necessary, install it in such a way that it may be easily replaced or changed
- Work towards increasing digital connectivity such as Wi-Fi access across public realm, interactive way finding terminals, and app based guidance and monitoring

The integration of utilities and services into urban design will help create a more efficient and user-friendly public realm. In the context of the global climate crisis, the nature, location and agency over utilities will become of increasing importance.





Left: Interactive information boards connected to public transport data can help people orient themselves and navigate space. Right: Ensuring digital connectivity, such as mobile network access and Wi-Fi can better allow individual mobility.

- Encourage cars to park in inappropriate locations
- Deck or multi-storey car parks which do not have ground floor uses activating the street
- Parking at the front of active buildings with limited path and create unattractive and poor pedestrian environment

1.6 Mobility Hubs

Multi-purpose transport hubs located in key locations throughout the built environment can facilitate and support diverse modes of transport. With the rise of electric vehicles, there will be increasing demand for well-located and accessible EV charging ports. Integrating these into mobility hubs in anticipation of these changes in transport infrastructure will be critical in ensuring developments in the West End are future-proofed.



Mobility hubs can facilitate different forms of travel in one space. (Photo from Future Mobility Hubs, Arup, 2021_

- Provide bicycle repair facilities
- Integration with other active uses (e.g. café)
- Accessible EV charging points
- Flexibility to accommodate emerging methods of transportation, such as scooters or e-bikes
- A holistic transport approach which makes it easy for people to change transportation methods between rail, bus, car, cycle and walking

- Be isolated from other uses
- Create a last mile problem for users
- Located in less accessible locations

2. DESIGN GUIDANCE: PUBLIC REALM

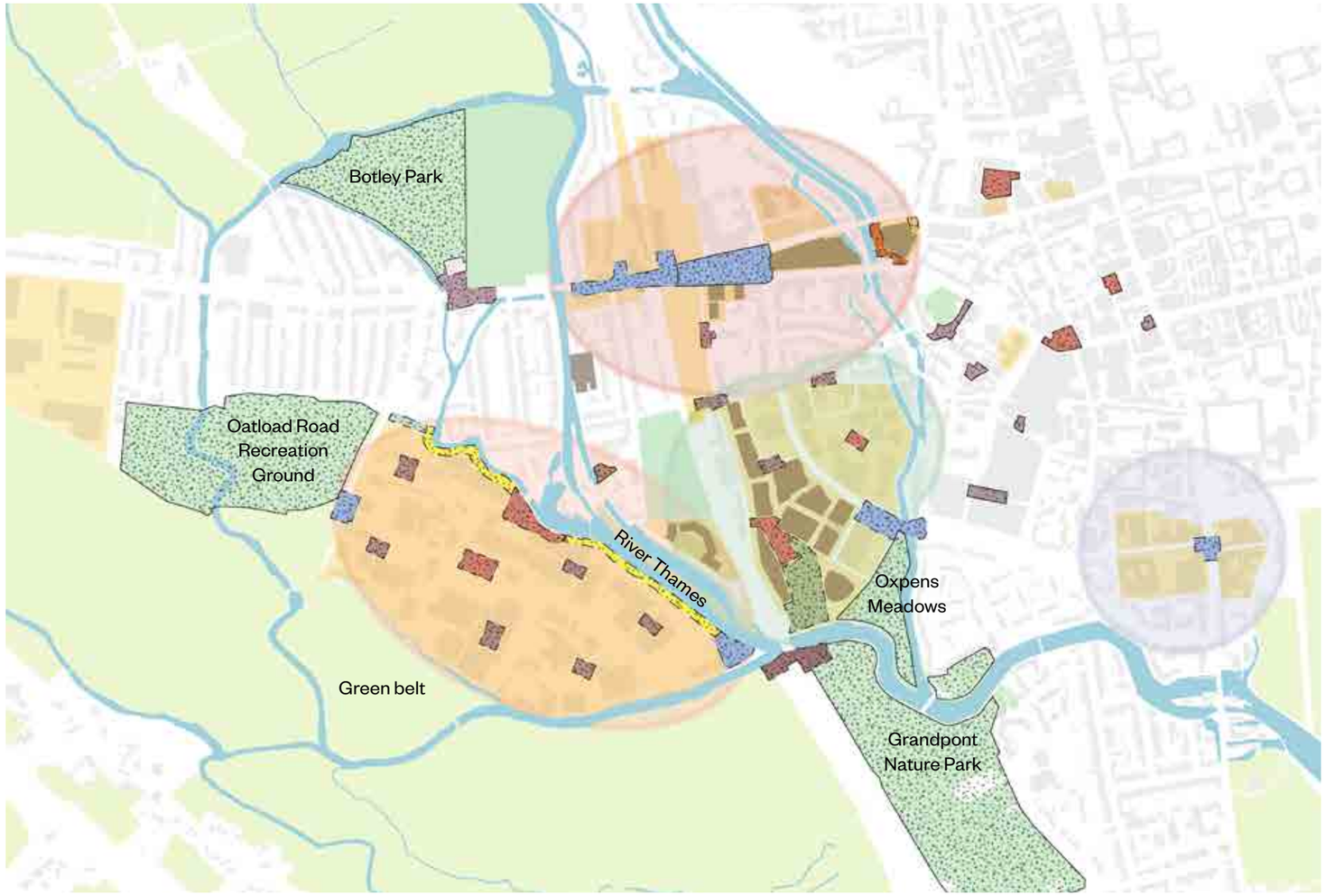
To develop a successful public realm strategy, a holistic and detailed approach is essential to create spaces which are liveable. The West End has very limited public spaces and all sizeable spaces are concentrated to the east of the railway line. Much of the following guidance is applicable to all public spaces, though some specific guidelines are given around the various typologies of public space. This should ensure that the West End's public realm is effective, enjoyable, long-lasting and ecologically resilient.

There are also numerous opportunities for new public spaces of varying sizes, from infill spaces, repurposing existing spaces to the creation of new spaces within the various developments. This guidance will outline broad, good practice principles in relation to public realm. Key guidance around the implementation of urban furniture, materials, lighting and more may be applied to public spaces of any type and character.

377

Any development should:

- Determine the type and character of the space and follow relevant guidance
- Be mindful of scale, proportion and use when designing new spaces
- Apply wayfinding and signage strategies to help promote legibility and put destinations within the West End on the map
- Encourage meanwhile uses and public art to make spaces more vibrant and interesting
- Make generous use of appropriate trees and planting where applicable to improve the urban greening factor within the area
- Encourage playfulness where appropriate and provide good quality spaces for play, sport and recreation



2. DESIGN GUIDANCE: PUBLIC REALM

2.1 Public Space Typologies

A. Gateway Spaces

Well-demarcated gateway spaces can create vibrant and welcoming arrivals into urban districts. These should draw people in through activity and strategically oriented views and sight lines. These spaces should be carefully considered alongside broader movement strategies and new connections. Major gateways to consider include the station gateway and Frideswide Square; and gateways to Osney Mead and Oxpens.



Gateway spaces should provide a welcoming and guiding experience into a place. This can be achieved through clever public realm design

- Ensure the space reflects the character of the place it connects in to
- Coordinate design with infrastructure development such as new bridges, connections and roads
- Integrate wayfinding strategies to guide people through the space and announce destinations
- Consider meanwhile uses for activation

- Design a gateway space that is disconnected from its surroundings or that does not match the character of the area with which it is linked
- Treat the gateway as solely a transient space in which people pass through

B. Public Plazas

Public plazas of varying scales should be the backbone of any hardscaped public realm design. These should be intimate yet broad and largely uncluttered and work well with surrounding urban fabric.



Providing a sense of enclosure to a space that is proportional to its surroundings is a key principle



Visual and material continuity and compatibility can be important in creating a cohesive urban scene

- Ensure the square is proportionate to its surroundings and location
- Carefully consider the orientation to ensure that the square gets sunlight
- Opportunity to integrate soft landscaping into public plazas
- Providing active uses, such as cafés and shops, which front onto plazas and spill out into these areas

- Propose a square which is too big and ignores human scale
- Frame small squares with tall buildings
- Frame squares with blank elevations
- Orientate square to the north
- Dominate the square with vehicular movement

C. Interstitial Spaces

Oxford's existing public realm is dominated by interstitial spaces. Spaces such as in the Castle quarter, in the Westgate shopping centre and adjacent to Carfax Tower.

Proposals will need to create spaces which are informed by the local character. Care must be taken to ensure that these spaces do not become spatially segregated or empty leftover spaces.



The public realm around Oxford Castle is a high quality public space which confirms to the geometries of the Castle Mound



Interstitial spaces may fill in and activate otherwise underutilised spaces between buildings

- Consider non-residential uses at the ground floor
- Carefully consider the orientation to ensure that the square gets sunlight
- Decide the level of access appropriate, whether public or semi-private
- Develop geometry based on the built development

- Provide no urban furniture or spaces for recreation, leaving spaces inactivated

2. DESIGN GUIDANCE: PUBLIC REALM

D. Park Spaces

Green parks provide good opportunities for people to escape the bustle of urban life. It is important that these spaces are integrated and well-connected to the various development sites. Oxford's West End has a number of good quality green park spaces; Grandpont Nature Park; Oxpens Meadows; Botley Park and Oatland Road Recreation Ground. Proposals should improve connections to these, as well as think about how developments can sensitively front onto and interface with these open spaces.



Providing high quality and accessible route for all users to access and equally appreciate surrounding nature



Low impact but effective sculptural pieces bring visual interest and enhance surrounding nature

- Utilise trees and landscaping to create natural insulation between built environment and greenscape
- Provide space for activities such as sport or children's play
- Follow desire lines when creating paths through open spaces
- Ensure management and maintenance aspects are carefully considered
- Orient benches and other urban furniture to maximise dwell time in spaces
- Consider strategies which encourage visitors to engage with nature

- Create planting that is dense and difficult to navigate
- Design fences around the space limiting permeability
- Not providing public amenities such as toilets or water fountains

E. Pocket Parks or Squares

Often in existing or new dense urban development, small, irregular, or undefined zones between buildings are created. By designing pocket parks in these spaces, urban areas may be made greener with better use of available space. While small in size, they can make a significant impact in bringing communities together.



Integrated spaces for games and play in street furniture bring vitality to spaces whose size may not allow more space-intensive activities



Spill-out space for food and drink establishments are an effective way of bringing activity out into the public realm

- Follow the geometry of the site in designing park the space
- Consider different types of pocket parks, including community gardens
- Relate pocket park to surrounding buildings, as the primary users will be the people from its immediate surroundings
- Survey existing urban areas to locate suitable sites for new pocket parks
- Ensure these spaces are well-overlooked with frontages and good access
- Ensure parks are low maintenance and encourage the community to take ownership over these spaces

- Create pocket parks and spaces that don't have a purpose and a community to serve
- Create dead end spaces which are difficult to access and cannot be easily animated

F. Riverside Edge

Oxford's West End has access to a number of different watercourses - the River Thames and Castle Mill Stream being two of the major ones. There is huge potential for development sites to positively contribute to making the watercourses more accessible and enjoyable to dwell and move through. Treatment of riverside edges must incorporate flood mitigation measures, whether through engineering solutions or effective use of green and blue infrastructure.



Providing high quality pedestrian walks along waterways and seating to allow users to, observe and rest



Opportunities to allow the public to access and engage with waterways, including boating and swimming

- Watercourses which are accessible to all
- Encourage proposals that overlook key spaces
- Lighting that improves safety whilst also mitigates ecological impacts
- Open up watercourses to river-based activities, such as kayaking, water taxis, houseboats etc.
- Retain good quality trees and sensitive planting strategies to encourage more greening
- Connect routes to new and improved bridges
- Provide spaces for seating and relaxing

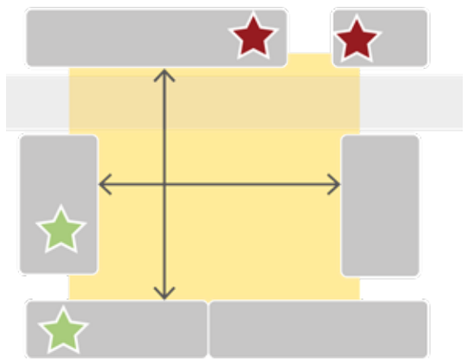
- Create activity that pollutes or clutters a riverside
- Failing to consider existing landscape character around riverside when designing public spaces along these edges

2. DESIGN GUIDANCE: PUBLIC REALM

2.2 Public Space Principles

A. Scale and Dimension

The dimensions of a square should be proportional to the buildings around it and consideration should be given to orientation, shape and size of the space. Lower rise buildings should be located to the south or south west to allow good levels of sunlight into the square.





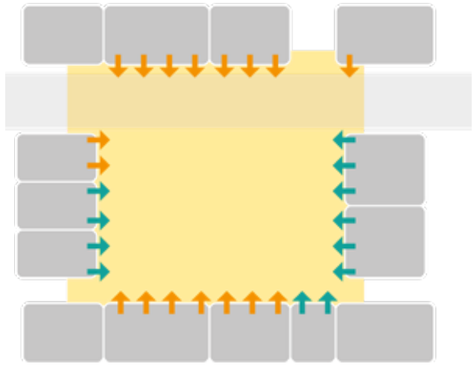
A public square which responds to the proportion and dimension of the surrounding built fabric

- Ensure the square is proportionate to its surroundings and location
- Carefully consider the orientation to ensure that the square gets enough daylight

- Propose a square which is too big and ignores human scale
- Frame small squares with tall buildings
- Frame squares with blank elevations
- Orientate square to the north
- Dominate the square with vehicular movement

B. Active Frontage

A square should be framed by buildings which front onto and have easy access off the square. Multiple uses are encouraged to activate a square and promote varying activities at all times of the day.





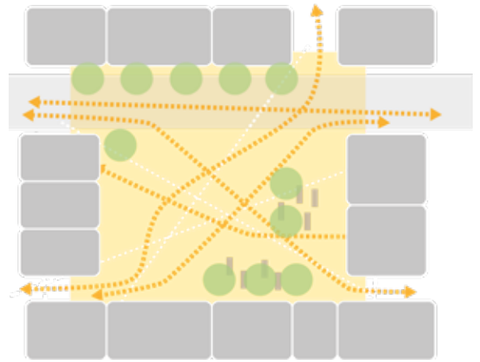
Diverse and interesting shop fronts can welcome in passers-by and work to make a space lively and active

- Diverse uses along squares
- Spill-out space for cafés and restaurants
- Non-residential uses on the ground floor, with homes above
- Diverse and interesting shop fronts
- Space must meet Secure by Design standards

- Street clutter with shop front signage
- Ground floor residential uses along squares

C. Movement

A study of the needs, orientation and pedestrian movement is important to understand the desire lines and opportunity to draw people through a space. Public realm elements such as lighting, seating and soft landscaping should be carefully considered to encourage routes through and create dwell time spaces.





Public spaces should respond to the movement patterns of its users, through desire lines and relationships with surrounding streets and public transport

- Traffic calming measures
- Designated cycle lanes
- Respect pedestrian desire lines across space
- Consider soft landscaping elements and tree planting to create through routes and pleasant spaces to linger

- Prioritising vehicle movement over pedestrians

2. DESIGN GUIDANCE: PUBLIC REALM

2.3 Urban Furniture

While urban clutter should be avoided, a holistic urban street furniture strategy should be developed for the wider West End. Clear and concise wayfinding may help integrate schemes into the wider city, especially around emerging developments in the West End. High quality and appropriate street furniture such as benches, tables and other amenities can be cost effective methods of animating public space. Urban furniture should be designed to be accessible for all users, including the elderly and those with disabilities.



Public seating that facilitates socialisation and interaction between users



Seating that seamlessly blends into landscape design

- Strategically align street furniture to reduce clutter and maintain clear routes
- Use a constrained palette with elements that sit within a ‘family’ of products
- Provide seating areas at regular intervals along key routes
- Use high quality materials
- Provide seating located in close proximity to other amenities
- Provide flexible urban furniture for outdoor working, games and communal activities
- Integrate street furniture with meanwhile use strategies
- Refer to the street furniture material palette found in the Oxford Street Scene Manual (2010)
- Orientate seating to maximise sunlight at different times of day and season

- Bespoke forms which may fail or be hard to replace/repair
- Over-provide street furniture
- Place furniture so that partially-sighted people may find them an obstacle or vehicles damage them

2.4 Lighting

A comprehensive lighting strategy can make spaces more vibrant and interesting, as well as improve safety and help sustain night-time activity. This is key in establishing a night-time economy and ensuring spaces are successful at all times of day. However, lighting must not disrupt surrounding wildlife.



String lighting can animate streets and spaces in a playful way

- Ensure consistency of lighting approach in adjacent areas
- Consider lighting as part of wider wayfinding strategy
- Consider use of special lighting in key locations
- Ensure safe and appropriate levels of light
- Playful statement light fixtures where appropriate, such as pavement or fountain lights
- Lighting along watercourses and ecological areas which are sensitive to habitats

- Create structures for lighting that compete or overbear other public realm elements
- Introduce harsh lighting which may cause glare or visual discomfort

2.5 Tree Planting

Tree planting can provide natural shelter and contribute to regulating urban micro-climates. For this reason, the inclusion of a tree planting scheme as a means of breaking up hardscape is recommended in all developments.

Proposed tree planting will need to respond to the capacity of the space. For example, Oxpens Road has the dimensions to introduce new trees. Improvements to the public realm around watercourses should seek to retain tree planting, even if constrained.



Tree planting can provide natural cover over spaces and help regulate urban micro-climates

- Retain existing trees where possible, especially those of good ecological and amenity value
- Consider the need for permeable surfaces around existing trees
- New trees need to consider the appropriate character and species with local ecosystems
- Consider planting of hedges, shrubs and other kinds of plants where appropriate

- Forget that trees are alive and need air as well as reasonable levels of water
- Ignore that trees need sufficient below ground space
- Design tree pits without adequate rooting space
- Plant trees too close to buildings without consulting a structural engineer
- Fail to consider how planting will change with seasons and the effect this will have on space

2. DESIGN GUIDANCE: PUBLIC REALM

2.6 Materiality

Hardscape materials used throughout the public realm should be kept at the highest quality in line with surrounding context to ensure long term effectiveness and cohesiveness. Paving material solutions may work to make spaces more accessible for those with mobility issues. Principal public spaces, such as Frideswide Square and the emerging areas around Osney Mead and Oxpens, may make use of feature paving to create distinct hardscape.



Feature paving can be integrated into wayfinding strategies and help demarcate key destinations



Varied use of permeable paving surfaces with flow control creates visual interest

- Hard landscape should be durable and contextual
- Change in material should help to demarcate spaces
- Consistent approach to finish and colour
- Feature paving limited to key open spaces
- Paving options to be accessible for the elderly and disabled
- Safety surfaces in play areas
- Refer to the ground surface material palette found in the Oxford Street Scene Manual (2010)
- Use materials which are sustainably sourced

2.7 Signage and Wayfinding

A holistic wayfinding and signage strategy is needed for the wider West End. Clear and concise wayfinding may help integrate schemes into the wider city, especially around emerging developments. Strategic moments of increased building height to create landmark buildings may also be a key tool in wayfinding. A strong wayfinding strategy may announce and promote the West End as a destination. This will be particularly important in connecting Osney Mead and Oxpens with the railway station and the rest of the city centre.



Clear and unobtrusive signage which avoids urban clutter whilst conveying guidance information



Signage and wayfinding may be integrated into urban furniture and seating.

- Clear and concise signage in appropriate locations
- Use of building heights and landmark buildings for wayfinding
- Integration with digital connectivity and the Internet of Things
- Consider wayfinding elements as urban furniture
- Use wayfinding in key locations

- Wayfinding or signage that overwhelms or detracts from the character of the space
- Overcomplicate wayfinding
- Confuse wayfinding with forms of advertising

2. DESIGN GUIDANCE: PUBLIC REALM

2.8 Sport and Play

Colourful, light-hearted and well-designed sport and play facilities do not only benefit young people, but are a positive addition to any scale of public space. These uses can enliven the public realm and give people more access to varied and exciting forms of recreation, offering greater agency for children in urban spaces and providing opportunities to improve health and well-being for all.



Child friendly paving and playful design can create spaces that can be well-utilised by children and parents alike



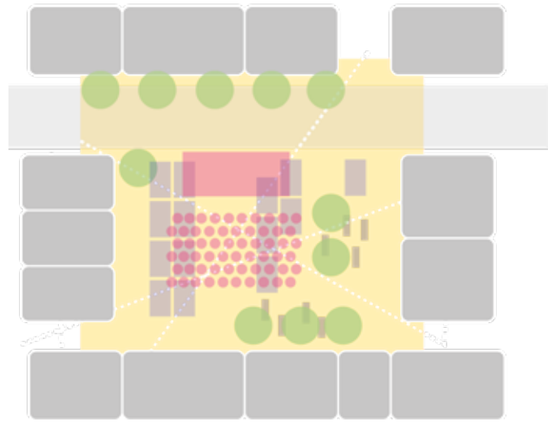
Well-designed and maintained multi-functional sports courts can be used for many different recreational uses

- Mix informal playable space and formal equipped playable space
- Consider providing diverse kinds of play spaces, such as playgrounds, playing fields and skate parks
- Encourage child mobility by providing streets and spaces safe from vehicles
- Consider the integration of incidental or imaginative play into pedestrian streets
- Consider noise pollution when designating areas for play or sport
- A design must benefit everyone, regardless of age group

- Locate play or sport facilities close to busy, car-oriented streets
- Fail to consider the movement and occupation of parents and the movement of pushchairs
- Design spaces that are hard to access or removed from activity

2.9 Flexible Space and Meanwhile Use

A successful square is one that allows for multiple activities to happen. Urban furniture and trees should be located to allow flexibility of use and meanwhile uses. This can take many diverse forms and can bring spontaneity, dynamism and activity into public spaces. Meanwhile uses will be particularly useful in Oxpens and Osney Mead, which will help to animate targeted spaces.



- Traffic calming measures
- Integrated planting strategies
- Parking integrated into urban design
- Mix of uses along street
- Materials of space should be designed to be for multi-purpose users
- Meanwhile uses should be designed and implemented with or by community members

- Overshadow the street with buildings
- Propose large areas of parking perpendicular with street
- Harsh lighting which may cause glare
- Servicing and management plans not considered for curation of events in these spaces









Meanwhile uses can be integrated into a range of spaces and can unlock activity in less visited or underutilised areas

2. DESIGN GUIDANCE: PUBLIC REALM

2.10 Public Art

When thoughtfully implemented, public art can make spaces more vibrant and interesting. Public art should be undertaken by local artists whenever possible and pieces which celebrate local interests are preferable. Public art may accomplish functions other than just aesthetics, from creating new urban landscapes, to light features and seating.



Public art can be integrated into wider lighting strategies



Multi-purpose public art that doubles as a form of wayfinding and seating alongside being an artistic piece

- Integrate public art within the form and fabric of public realm spaces
- Collaborate with local artists and involve the community
- Public art should encourage interaction to improve sense of ownership with visitors and locals
- Respect scale of surroundings
- Public art as a wayfinding strategy
- Public art through lighting as a dynamic temporary or permanent installation
- Pieces which invite playful interaction from passers-by

- Public art which is disrespectful of the scale and character of its surroundings
- Incoherent public art that could become a maintenance burden
- Overload the street with public art
- Introduce sculptural pieces with no significance to Oxford or the West End

2.11 Inclusive Space

Design should allow for under-represented or minority groups, such as the LGBTQ+ community, to feel at home in all spaces. This should be the result of comprehensive engagement and research into local communities. Making all residents feel represented, comfortable and safe in a space is essential.



Public art can help communities feel more represented in the public realm. Subtle actions can make a great difference for resident groups

- Ensure public consultation and engagement phases of the planning process are representative and inclusive
- Highlight and celebrate local history of under-represented groups
- Community-guided arts and meanwhile uses allow users to claim ownership over spaces
- Encourage community members to take part in curation of public spaces – from schools to particular interest groups

- Disregard community engagement or ending the engagement process after the planning phase

2.12 Accessible Space

Everyone engages with space in a unique way, suiting needs of those with disabilities, the elderly, and others is critical in planning for a successful space. 12% of Oxford's population has a disability of some kind (Local Plan 2036), whether visible or invisible, making the built environment suitable for these users will ensure spaces are easily accessed and feel equitable.

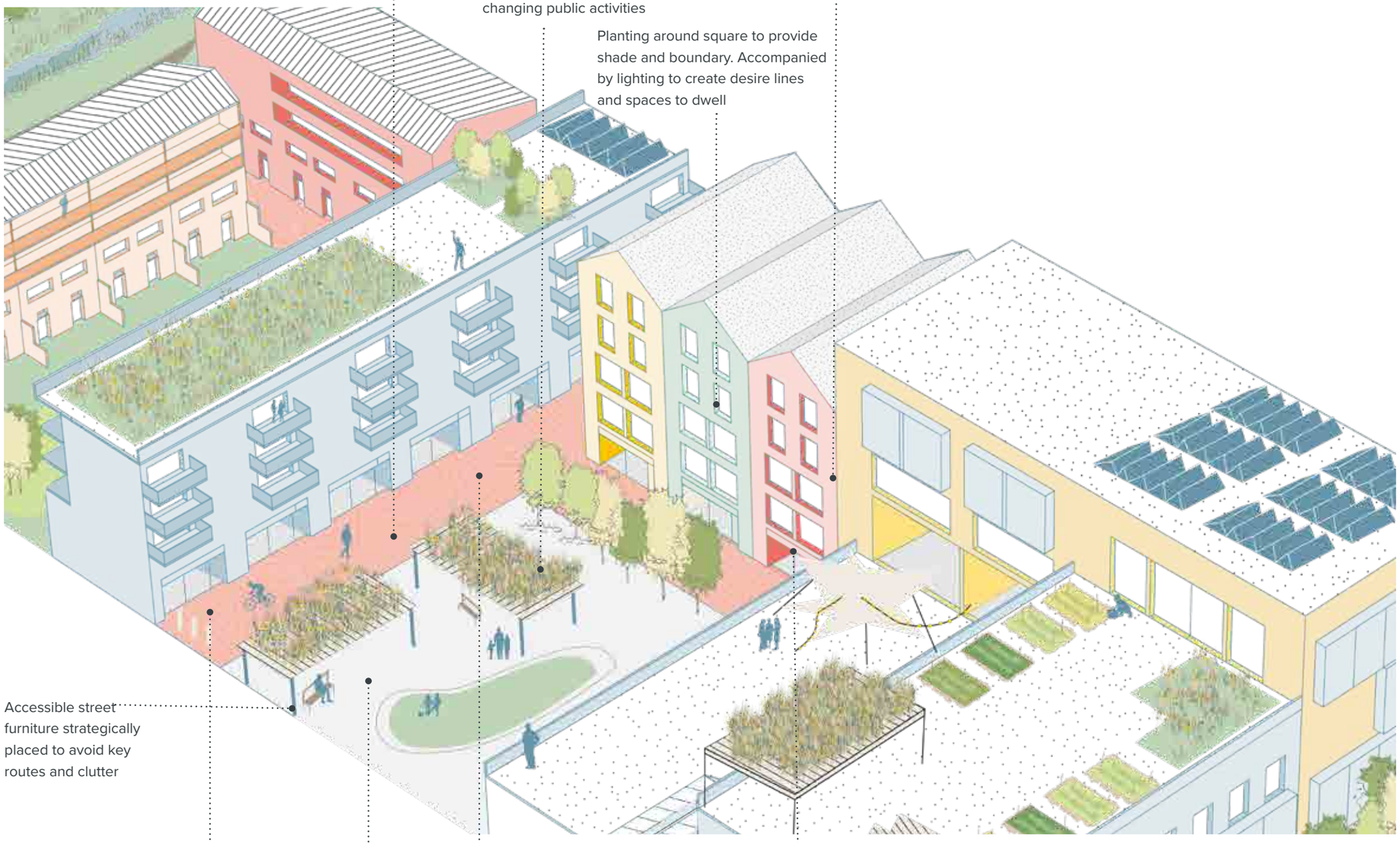


Accessible design can be integrated into effective and visually appealing forms

- Consider subtle but effective active pavement for the visually-impaired
- Ensure public consultation and engagement phases of the planning process are representative and inclusive
- Ensure all pavements are wide enough for wheelchair users
- Well-positioned and frequent seating and urban furniture
- Offer some vehicle access even in otherwise pedestrian priority spaces for disabled parking

- Clutter or make spaces hard to navigate
- Cobbled or uneven paving that makes it difficult for people with disabilities to access
- Disregarding community engagement or ending the engagement process after the planning phase

2. DESIGN GUIDANCE: PUBLIC REALM



3. DESIGN GUIDANCE: NATURE

This guidance details the importance of natural spaces. Nature and the city are not opposing forces; good design must integrate nature within urban environments to maximise the positive qualities of both.

Creating high quality natural spaces is more than an aesthetic consideration. Nature serves important functions and can offer tangible benefits, including the reduction of the urban heat island effect, better mental health for local people and flood mitigation. Protecting the West End's ecosystem will make it more resilient in the face of changing temperatures, weather events and other effects of the climate crisis.

Nature should be present in any design and this guidance will outline will outline the different forms which it may take and good practice suggestions for implementation.

Nurturing and expanding biodiversity is essential in creating sustainable urban quarters. This involves the promotion of local species and natural growth over manicured planting. Maximising space for planting in urban settings, such as the installation of green, blue and brown roofs, is key.

3.1 Biodiversity and Local Ecology

The West End holds great ecological value with the River Thames running through the site and the green belt to the west. It is critical to preserve the special natural character and living ecosystems of the West End to ensure a healthy, resilient and biodiverse environment. This is especially relevant with potential development options emerging for Osney Mead which present an opportunity to create an urban environment which elevates the invaluable natural assets of the West End.





A habitat box provides shelter for insects pollinating surrounding flora



Green roofs can boost biodiversity by hosting native plants

Any development should:

- Consider how the sustainable treatment of water can enhance and complement public realm design
- Consult biodiversity and sustainability specialists in early stages

- Maximise the use of native tree and plant species in conditions that allow them to grow naturally
- Consider context when designing around the waterfront
- Support living ecosystems
- Protect plants and trees from harsh light or vehicular traffic

- Consider designing for wildlife within public realm, landscape and architecture
- Consult biodiversity specialists to aid design
- Consider employing strategies such as insect or bat boxes to support living ecosystems
- Maximise use of native species
- Utilise vertical spaces utilised through incorporation of native climber species
- Directional lighting and protection from light spill; no light sources positioned near artificial roost entrances
- Utilise rooftop spaces for green, blue and brown roofs where ecology can flourish

- Overlook opportunities to introduce planting diversity
- Assume habitat enhancement cannot be achieved in urban areas
- Underestimate the benefit of small-scale interventions
- Assume interventions have to be high cost or high maintenance

3. DESIGN GUIDANCE: NATURE

3.2 Sustainable Drainage and Flood Mitigation

Flood mitigation is a critical factor to be considered in any development in the West End. Increasing inclement weather will make the Thames increasingly prone to flooding in the future, exposing much of the West End's existing and future development assets. Osney Mead and Oxpens are particularly affected by flooding, and both public realm and the built form, will need to work hard to mitigate flood risk.

A green approach to flood mitigation through SuDs schemes has the potential to dramatically increase the West End's flood resilience while simultaneously creating striking new landscape elements. Integration of flood mitigation strategies may also work to reduce flood risk to the point that a greater amount of land is developable.

Floodable landscapes could accommodate sports and recreation grounds and locating non-residential uses at ground floor (non-habitable rooms/spaces) will ensure minimised impact at times of severe flooding.



Sustainable drainage can be integrated into transport networks and existing streets in low impact ways

- Consider how the sustainable treatment of water can enhance and complement public realm design
- Consider contemporary approaches to green, blue and brown roofs
- Complement appropriate planting palettes with areas of water attenuation to create biodiverse, attractive landscapes
- Undergo comprehensive analysis with engineers to understand the best approaches to design
- Integrate SuDs into wider landscape vision for sites
- Extensive green roofs should be incorporated where possible
- Underground storage tanks should be arranged as to not impact ability for future planting



SuDs can be made visually attractive and add to existing landscaping strategies

- Forget the appropriateness of interventions against their context
- Features which may offer danger through unexpected trip or fall hazards
- Forget the role trees and tree pits can play in attenuating water

3.3 Community Urban Farming

Activities which draw people closer to nature are effective in instilling long lasting environmental stewardship, raising interest in the preservation of the natural environment. Urban farming can be instrumental in initiating sustainable methods of food growing and can be undertaken on roofs and other excess spaces.



Community farming is a popular activity that can be undertaken in a variety of urban spaces such as parks (left) and roofs (right)

- Signposting and information points informing of local ecosystem and species
- A community driven process
- Facilities for the communal storage, access and maintenance of resources, such as work sheds and water hoses
- Utilise rooftop spaces for food growing
- Consider contamination risks when choosing land for urban farming
- Consider solutions such as raised planters and fresh soil where contamination is detected

- Fencing or barriers prevent public access to gardens
- Fail to consider access to reliable sunlight and water

3. DESIGN GUIDANCE: NATURE

3.4 Greener Streets

Tree planting is an effective tool for creating greener streets. This increases the overall green footprint of an area, making it more visually attractive and introducing resilience in the face of the climate crisis. When designing planting strategies, care must be taken to ensure that trees fit within the broader ecological profile of the area and that they are given sufficient space to grow. Greening strategies may be most effective on existing streets which deal with issues of pollution and poor pedestrian interface, such as Oxpens or Botley Road. Tree planting may also indicate different street hierarchies, from boulevards to mews.



Shady and protected pavements align with trees and street furniture



Residential amenity space with a focus on planting

- Ensure that street trees are well-integrated into design
- Consider tree pit details which allow trees water and air
- Discuss proposals with tree officer or other suitable expert to understand how trees can best work for your site
- Give adequate room for trees to grow above and below ground
- Protect trees and tree pits from vehicular movements
- Consider the benefits of planting large species trees
- Undertake arboricultural surveys to identify and retain good quality trees

- Forget that trees are alive and need air as well as reasonable levels of water
- Ignore that trees need sufficient below ground space
- Design tree pits without adequate rooting space
- Plant trees too close to buildings without consulting a structural engineer

3.5 River and Green Belt Interface

As the green belt and River Thames are key assets, their design treatment requires special attention, especially development sites which back on to or lie in close proximity to them. New developments would benefit immensely if designs consider positive and active interface along these edge conditions.

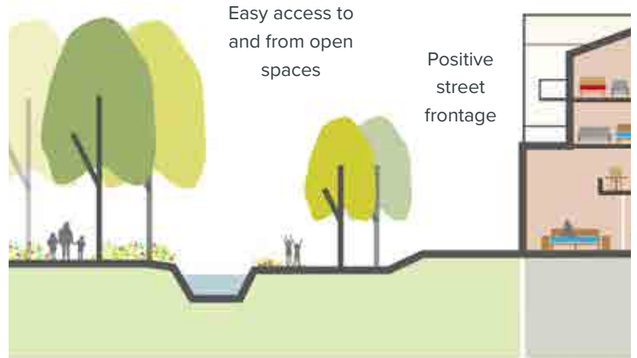


River frontage

- Decide appropriate treatment based on level of activity
- Consider activation of waterfronts through pedestrian and cyclist pathways and active frontages
- Allow for spaces to easily moor and store watercraft
- Sensitivity to green belt and other green spaces being of a different character to the urban environment

- Produce excess light, noise or activity onto green belt or other natural landscapes
- Concrete or other non-porous embankments that inhibit natural growth and limit biodiversity
- Design traffic heavy roads in close proximity

The riverfront holds fewer special protections than the green belt and provides opportunities for public realm activation, though the protection of natural ecosystems remains of great importance. The statutory regulations protecting the green belt's special character require a much less animated treatment in comparison.



Green belt edge



Even former industrial sites with little biodiversity may be transformed into green and vibrant places through planting and rewilding strategies. Through careful design, river-fronts may be returned to their former states

3. DESIGN GUIDANCE: NATURE

Swales align with roads to provide enjoyable walking experience and to double as a movement route

Green, blue and brown roofs maximise planted space and increase biodiversity

Integration of floodable landscapes and SuDs into public realm design. Naturally planted parks with reed ponds are visually attractive and offer natural flood defence alongside other biodiversity benefits



Natural reed planting along swale provides natural interface and water absorbency

Communal roof gardens allow for sustainable food growing and food self-dependence

Integration of recreation and play infrastructure on rooftop spaces

Planting of native tree species in appropriate locations with sufficient room for healthy root growth to increase urban greening and resilience

4. DESIGN GUIDANCE: BUILT FORM

Buildings should be of the highest quality and this section provides guidance on appropriate scale, massing, roofscapes, the mixing of uses, densities and frontages in the context of the Changing Areas of Character.

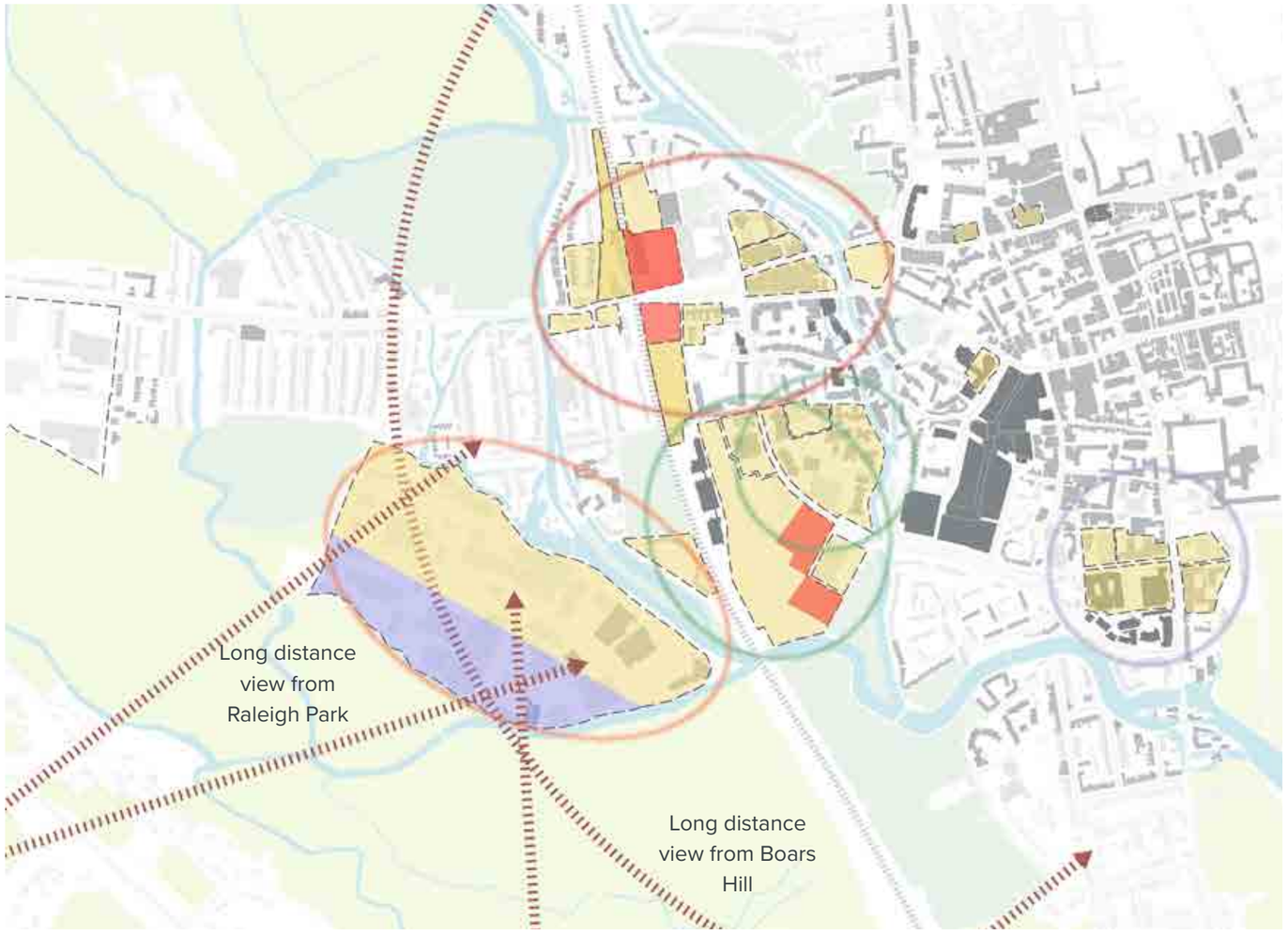
4.1 Heights

Oxford is particularly renown for its spires and iconic skyline. Development within the West End must protect the character of existing views and enhance them. Policy DH2 (Local Plan 2036) sets out requirements that developments need to achieve.

Of particular relevance the Local Plan states that within 1,200m of Carfax Tower all buildings should not exceed 18.2m except if justified as required by Policy DH2; and that proposals within the viewing cone of Raleigh Park need to be sensitively considered. If development is above this height, it must be limited in bulk and of good design quality. The Oxford High Buildings Study (2018) specifies more contextual height parameters based on location; these specifications should be followed closely.

The West End offers several opportunities for sensitive yet statement moments of built height to add fresh additions to Oxford's 'dreaming spires.' Any application must make every effort to understand the visual impacts of a scheme and determine if the impact to the skyline is net positive or negative. This will require in-depth technical guidance from heritage experts. Further detail on heritage concerns in Oxford can be found in the Local Plan and the Heritage section of the Spatial Framework.

Key strategically chosen moments of height within Osney Mead and Oxpens may help to signify it as a vibrant mixed use neighbourhood. Well chosen height within the Station Gateway character area and Speedwell Street character area could also help to signify them as a proper gateways







Strategic use of building height can add interest to an urban block and mark prominent areas of public realm and aid in wayfinding through neighbourhoods

- Use building height as a wayfinding strategy and to signify a moment of activity or gateway
- Propose massing that positively contributes to Oxford's 'dreaming spires' and the city's long distance views
- Use height sparingly and consider using height to break up massing in buildings and urban blocks
- Maintain roof outline details in character with surrounding context
- Develop verified views for new designs and schemes to test how they respond to constraints and context

- Overshadow the public realm and fail to consider impact on sunlight of buildings
- Propose heights that are out of character with Oxford
- Building height that disrupts the sense of human scale for an observer on the ground
- Propose building heights that long and short distance views which are important to Oxford's unique skyline and overall character

4. DESIGN GUIDANCE: BUILT FORM

4.2 Densities

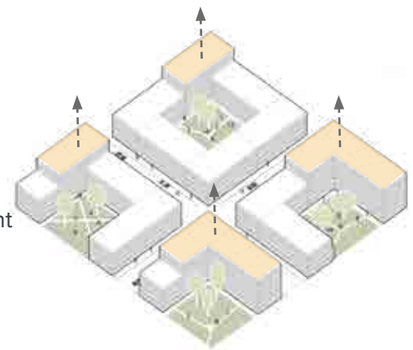
Policy AOC1 (Local Plan 2036) envisions the West End and Osney Mead as high-density urban living quarters that make efficient use of land. A range of densities, design approaches and urban typologies will need to be considered for the various Character Areas of Change.

Three levels of density have been identified.

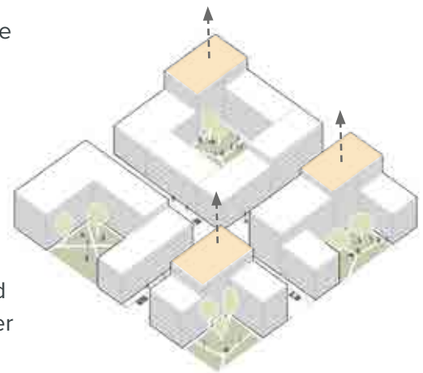
Medium: urban block parameters which are 2-4 storeys with larger external spaces. Larger floor plates can be incorporated within these blocks, depending on the uses which need to be accommodated.



High: tighter urban blocks which are approximately 4-6 storeys high. There are multiple examples of newly consented schemes in Oxford city centre - redevelopment of the Clarendon Centre, Northgate, redevelopment of Gibbs Crescent and Premier Inn.



Maximum: blocks which maximise development potential and are at key moments. These could potentially be over 5 storeys tall. No existing precedents found in Oxford City Centre. Careful design and sensitive planning for the location of these taller moments is essential. They could be developed as part of the wider West End wayfinding strategy.





Medium density living with town houses and maisonettes



Commercial units at ground floor with employment above



Northgate: a tight perimeter block creates high density student flats, teaching space and commercial units



Gibbs Crescent significantly increases the density of the site



Upper floors increase density whilst minimising impact on street



Marker buildings could be bespoke single use buildings, such as this Energy Hub, whilst also aiding wayfinding

Medium density will be appropriate for many development sites, especially locations which sit adjacent to heritage and existing low rise buildings. For example, the redevelopment of Speedwell House in the Speedwell Street character area will need to be sensitive to the adjacent buildings on St Aldate's.

Osney Mead may need to accommodate non-residential functions that use more space, with possible opportunities for housing at upper levels. This could be situated adjacent to the green belt, providing a sensitive urban-rural edge. Consideration of impact on viewing cones is also essential and may require lowering of heights and density in key areas.

High density blocks will make up the bulk of the development sites coming forward. Fulfilling the need for different uses and limiting height under the 18.2m set out within the Local Plan 2036 allows for tight perimeter blocks which accommodate a multitude of uses. Existing examples of these are the redevelopment of Northgate and Clarendon Centre.

This level of density at Osney Mead, Oxpens, the Nuffield sites and Beckett Street car park is expected to be in this region and will help deliver the vision set out within Policy AOC1 (Local Plan 2036).

Maximum densities will only be considered in certain locations and will need to be justified for place-making. As the Local Plan (2020) states, development exceeding the 18.2m limit will need to be limited in bulk and of high design quality and justified as set out in Policy DH2. Extensive justification of blocks higher will be required and all relevant guidance for listed or other heritage buildings must be followed.

This level of density will need to be in very limited locations. Proposals will need to demonstrate impact on existing buildings and spaces; need for density and height for legibility and fulfilment of Local Plan requirements.

4. DESIGN GUIDANCE: BUILT FORM

4.3 Urban Block Typologies

Different block typologies and innovative configurations of uses will be needed to satisfy the varying needs of development sites within the West End. These typologies respond to and distribute massing in different ways. The applicability of these typologies is dependent on site context, existing built morphology and urban grain.



Individual blocks are more applicable for constrained sites and may include infill development. Individual buildings stand alone but should be integrated into the surrounding context with careful consideration given to the spaces between buildings. This typology offers no dedicated interior amenity space, such as courtyards, and relies more heavily on the public realm as its primary setting. Individual buildings could also be placed in strategic locations where height or marker buildings are permissible. However, the relationship to context and surrounding buildings should be carefully considered when designing these.



Individual block typology



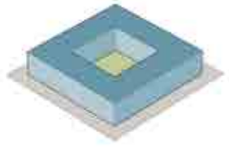


Courtyard or perimeter blocks create a continuous building line around the boundaries of an urban block and contain shared space within. Courtyard blocks can vary in size and shape, and careful consideration is needed to ensure good levels of sunlight are achieved within the interior courtyard. Should the urban block be completed developed at ground level with larger non-residential functions, raised courtyards in the form of podiums are possible.

The courtyard block creates a clearly defined distinction between the public realm of the street and the private realm of the courtyard. The dynamics of these spaces must be closely refined to avoid an inward-facing building or an inactive interior space which cannot be accessed or used effectively by residents.



Courtyard (perimeter) block typology



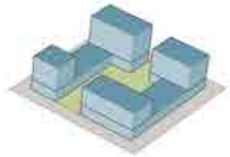


Hybrid blocks combine the characteristics of courtyard and individual block typologies; they offer more plot flexibility as they are not made up by a continuous block. Hybrid blocks offer opportunities to introduce height at prominent points. This creates a building that is both visually interesting and capable of meeting ambitious floor space targets while minimising its footprint at ground level. The hybrid block can also provide secondary access routes through the site. Therefore, ground floor uses should be carefully designed to create active and animated frontages along the external perimeter and the internal route.

The more open nature of the block means that its amenity space will be more outward-facing than that of the courtyard block. This offers opportunities to integrate this semi-private amenity space within the broader public realm. Hybrid blocks are generally the preferred option for development in Oxford,



Hybrid block typology



4. DESIGN GUIDANCE: BUILT FORM

4.4 Massing

Massing of buildings will need to vary considerably across the West End, depending on the land uses needed. How different scales and uses sit together and how these interface with the public realm will be particularly important.

The Osney Mead and Oxpens character areas will need to accommodate some ‘big box’ typologies for labs, university buildings and light industry. These buildings will need to be sensitively designed to ensure a good street frontage. Considerations of how different scales of buildings (for example, large floor plates for non-residential uses like labs or research spaces, with smaller footprints of residential and/or offices above) sit together will also be crucial.



Ensuring buildings retain scale of streets around them

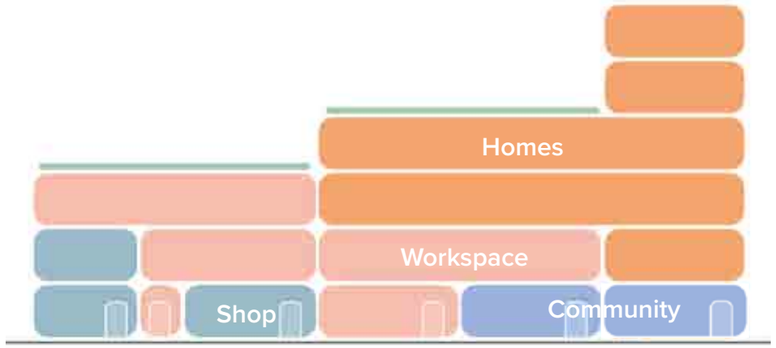


Softening large buildings with active frontages and façades broken up by windows

- Ensure the bigger buildings have as active a frontage as possible, alongside some signature elements that enliven the street scene. This could be an active use, such as a café, shop or entrance point, or could be windows which allow the internal activity to spill out onto the street scene.
- Make internal uses visible to public realm to add interest
- Create a more intimate scale to the public realm by using urban street trees
- Relative consistency of vertical scale, with only selective moments of height which have a purpose

- Avoid large, blank façades on main walking routes
- Massing doesn’t consider scale of street and level of enclosure needed

4.5 Mixing of Uses



In order to fulfil the ambitions of the West End to be a Global Innovation District, a wide range of viable and compatible mix of uses are needed. These need to be mixed both vertically and horizontally where possible.

A compatible mix of land uses is desired in most buildings to maximise the efficiency of land usage and to create vibrant and multi-functional spaces. However, care must be taken to ensure uses do not conflict with considerations of noise, activity and infrastructure needs. Existing and new uses should be identified to properly plan for the nearby and efficient provision of services for the community. The types of uses employed at ground floor level should be designed in close alignment with the intended character of the public realm around it.

Despite large amounts of employment use the Osney Mead and Oxpens character areas will need to work hard to mix uses appropriately - it will need to strategically inject food and drink, shops, leisure and community facilities, as well as mix employment types. Also, with large amounts of residential being delivered within the West End, the juxtaposition of homes with other uses will need to be carefully designed.



Spill-out space for cafés and restaurants



Community workspace below homes



Repurposing buildings to expand uses can revitalise former industrial areas



Integrate retail and other non-residential uses into neighbourhoods

- Create non-residential uses at the ground floor with residential or employment above
- Consider the surrounding character when determining the applicability of different uses
- Allow for space for ground floor uses to spill out into the public realm such as café seating
- Integrate residential entrances into commercial frontage
- Deal with servicing sensitively as to not negatively impact public realm
- Architectural detailing provides a strong relationship between different uses
- Ensure the mix of uses creates a 24-hour place, with some busy in the day and others in the evening

- Strategically design to avoid negative externalities of different uses affecting each other (e.g noise, smells, anti-social behaviour)
- Avoid a monoculture of uses which feels like a ‘campus style’ of development
- Fully understand needs and requirements of individual uses - not duplicating areas of use which could be shared between compatible functions

4. DESIGN GUIDANCE: BUILT FORM

4.6 Active Street Frontage

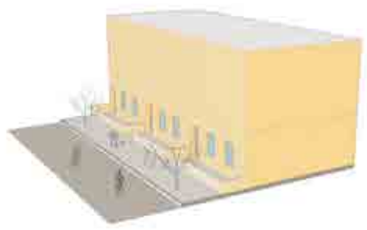
Having an active building street frontage does not necessarily have to do with the land use at ground floor level. A poorly designed building with retail at the ground floor may nonetheless have inactive street interfaces and, inversely, a building that has office space at ground level may contribute positively to the street interface thanks to good design.

Buildings with façades that are obscured through a lack of windows or advertisements, breaking street character, are in effect dead frontages. Buildings which offer either visual or physical permeability through the design of human scaled, welcoming ground flood façade design can contribute to vibrant street life.

Residential building frontages can also become active through good design. Positioning residential entrances along the street invites activity and establishes the street as the first point of contact between the public and private realm. Residential entrances off major streets should have thresholds such as front gardens. On narrower streets, front doors could directly open onto the street front.



Active street frontage at the ground level with entrances and animated façades



Residential street frontage with entrances and front gardens to street edge

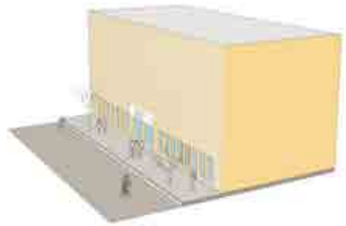


Street frontages that project activity from within the building onto the street



Individual residential entrances activate the street scape

- Frontages that retain a human scale, maintain the rhythm and align with the architectural style of existing buildings and their ground floor treatments
- Large windows allowing view from outside of activity within buildings - creating interaction between the street and interior worlds
- Offer a range of different sized commercial units - varying in depth and width with flexibility to combine or break down units
- Given the flood risk issues in the West End, create opportunities for residential uses above non-residential uses at ground and lower storeys



Inactive façades at the ground level with long spans of blank walls



This retail unit presents a blank façade at ground level



This multi-storey retail unit visually overwhelms the street scape and offers little interaction with the street

- Multi-storey shop frontages which do not interact with the street scene
- Frontages (including their signage) that detract from the existing rhythm of shop frontages or use materials and styles that are out of character with existing development
- Obscure ground floor windows through advertisement
- Repeat the same elevation along a continuous street or public space
- No consideration for servicing entrances and/or areas such as bins storage, energy centres etc, which can create blank walls along key movement routes

4. DESIGN GUIDANCE: BUILT FORM

4.7 Roofscape

Utilisation of rooftops is essential in an urban area such as Oxford where land is limited. Roof spaces provide a real opportunity to support biodiversity, mitigate flood risk, improve building insulation and thermal efficiency, and provide amenity space for communities.

Furthermore, with Oxford having many long distanced views into the city - Raleigh Park and Boars Hill being of particular relevance - the appearance of the roofscape from afar is important. Policy DH2 in the Local Plan 2036 asks proposals to ensure a positive contribution to the roofscape. The Assessment of the Oxford View Cones (2015) highlights the opportunity to improve long distance views from the west. It suggests that the existing industrial estate's roof surfaces could be amended, using darker or less reflective material, and tree planting could be used to break up the area.









Top left: Roofs may be utilised for community gardening and other activities for residents. Bottom left: High quality children's play equipment on the roof of a residential building. Top right: A blue (floodable) roof helps to mitigate flood risk. Bottom right: There are opportunities to construct structures on rooftops to support community activities such as farming

- Consider the use of rooftops as communal areas or private amenity space
- Consider promoting biodiversity, ecology and rainwater harvesting on roofspaces
- Roof-mounted photovoltaics (PVs) can be integrated with green or biodiverse/brown roofs
- Variety in the roofscape through a mixture of flat and articulated roofs
- For any green or blue roof, provide safe and convenient access for maintenance from the building

- Consider homogeneous sedum roofs as high quality solutions to green roof opportunities
- Underestimate the impact of overlooking unsightly ballast cover roof spaces
- Homogenous roofscape design which does not provide variety and is jarring in relation to surrounding context

4. DESIGN GUIDANCE: BUILT FORM

4.8 Affordability and Tenure Mix

As set out in the Local Plan 2036 (Policy H2 and H3), affordable housing is a key priority and as most development sites will be providing above 10 new homes, 50% of 'truly affordable' homes need to be achieved. Affordable workspace and commercial units will also be required to attract the right mix of start-ups to long established bigger businesses.

Proposals will also be expected to deliver the right mix of housing and will need to demonstrate how the mix has regard for local housing demand (Policy H4, Local plan 2036). As site-specific policies suggest this can be a mix of market housing, employer linked housing and student housing. A diverse mix of housing sizes, types and tenures will be essential in promoting communities which are mixed and vibrant.



Tenure blind housing must maintain high quality design regardless of ownership or tenancy type. Integrating housing into existing contexts is important in promoting mixed and cohesive communities

- The development must appear 'tenure blind' from the public realm. This includes location and style of homes and communal entrances, and elevation treatment.
- As set out within Policy H15 (Local Plan 2036) and the Nationally Described Space Standards, proposals for market and affordable housing must comply with space and quality standards.

4.9 Residential Amenity Space

As set out within Policy H16, high quality amenity spaces of different sizes and characters should be included in any new build. Each home should be allocated a balcony, garden or roof terrace, depending on size and building typology. There is a great opportunity within many of the West End development sites to take advantage of long views from balconies and terraces over the green belt, Oxpens Meadows, waterfronts and Christ Church Meadows.





Left: Interior courtyard space which provides high quality landscaping, opportunities for play and rest, and good sunlight access for residents. Right: Creating a cohesive balcony strategy which combines types of balconies and responds to façade designs

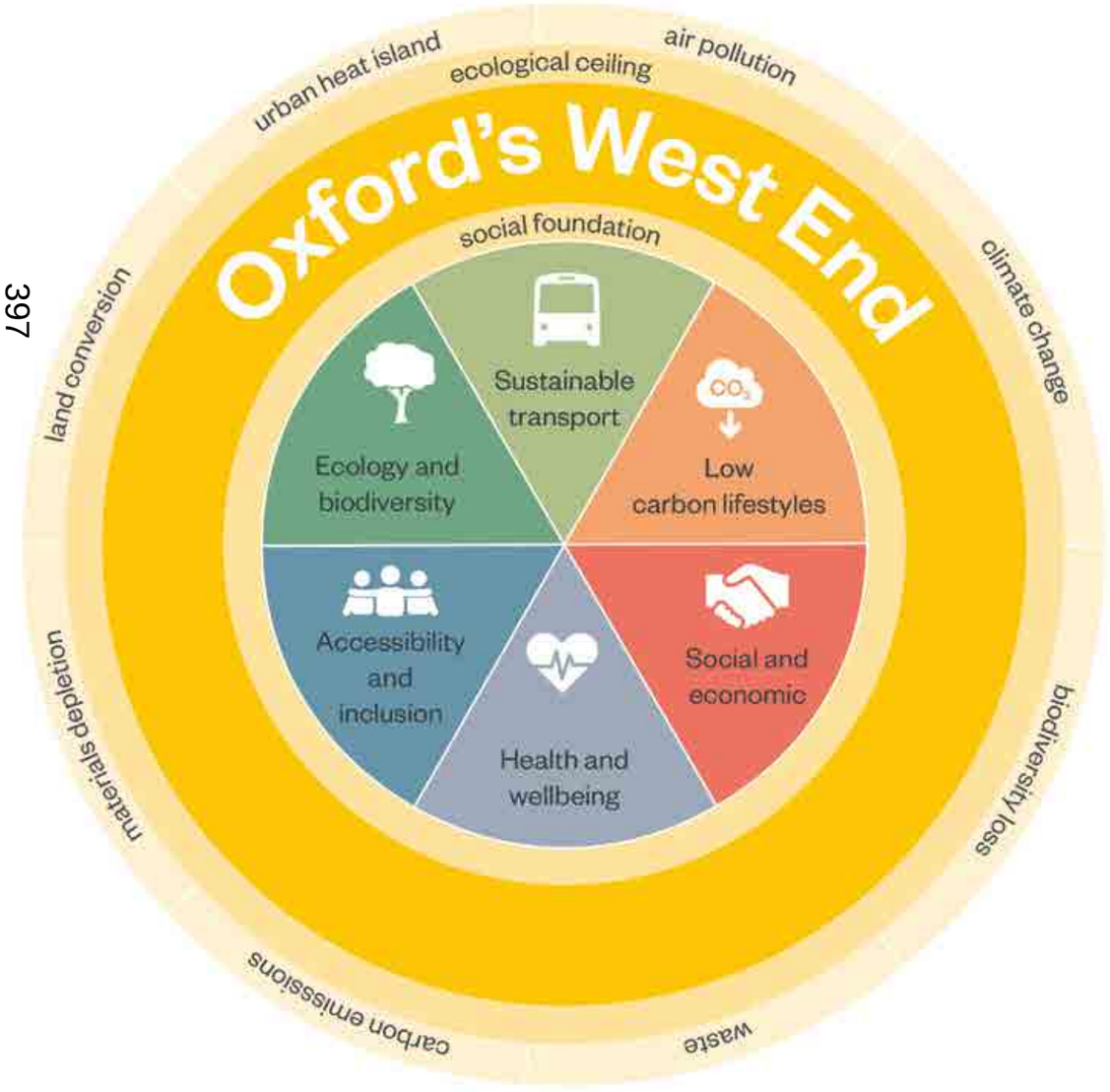
- Ensure size of private amenity space meets policy requirements based on typology
- Consider the provision of communal amenity space that is secure and well-overlooked
- The balcony strategy should consider context, character and typology
- Carefully consider sunlight when designing amenity spaces
- Space must meet Secure by Design standards

- Fail to provide appropriate boundary treatment for homes at ground floor level
- Balconies which detract from the overall character of the building
- Amenity spaces which are often in shade or do not receive sufficient natural sunlight

5. DESIGN GUIDANCE: ROUTE TO ZERO CARBON

5.1 Strategic Scale

At the start of 2019, Oxford City Council declared a climate emergency and became the first city council to hold a citizens' assembly on the issue. This ambitious approach has meant creating an action plan and roadmap for Oxford to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2040. This objective must be integrated into all elements of the built and natural environment, and at all stages of work - from setting the brief to construction. At a strategic scale the themes highlighted here unpick the essential ingredients every proposal must consider from early inception stages of the design and delivery process.



Ecology and Biodiversity

Ecology and biodiversity are critical elements of a city and help to tackle climate change. Oxford's West End has a number of opportunities to mitigate the significant flood risk, attract particular habitats and beautify the city.

- Integrating ecology and biodiversity at a range of scales - from landscape-led masterplans to the design of streets and public realm
- Creating multi-purpose urban greening which provide spaces for biodiversity, amenity for communities, play and flood mitigation
- Retain and plant street trees
- Use rooftop spaces for green, blue or brown roofs
- Integrating SuDs, swales, rain gardens and rills to address flood risk and enhance local ecology

Sustainable Transport

Shifting to sustainable travel will be essential in reaching net zero. Development proposals must contribute the wider Spatial Frameworks vision for sustainable movement and encourage active travel.

- Proposals must put in place good quality walking and cycling routes that link up with wider networks
- Minimise car parking and creating car-free streets to de-incentivise people from owning a car
- Realise the opportunity to enhance access to the bus network and accommodating future changes in mobility
- Create a rich mix of uses within 15-minute neighbourhoods
- Maximise density of development and mix of uses to minimise the need to travel outside the local area



The Mobility Pyramd, SHARE North project

5. DESIGN GUIDANCE: ROUTE TO ZERO CARBON

5.2 Low Carbon Lifestyles

Changing daily behaviours of communities and mindsets at multiple scales, from the home to a wider neighbourhood scale.

- Design buildings which have a strong sustainable agenda (e.g Passivhaus design) to reduce embodied and operational carbon
- Encourage of local independent shops and services which have a local supply chain
- Put the infrastructure in place to shift to sustainable transport - promoting walking, cycling and public transport
- Proposals that promote a circular economy: reuse, recycle and renew
- Harvest rainwater - from individual buildings to wider neighbourhoods
  Create developments with a density mix of uses which minimises the need to travel outside the local area

5.3 Health and Well-being

Promoting restorative places which support and promote mental health and well-being is imperative to our cities. This requires thought at both macro and micro scales into how we can make places more inclusive, green, blue, playable, active, neighbourly and sensory.

- Ensure routes and spaces are legible, safe and minimise stress
- Promote places for physical activity
- Design spaces for arranged and spontaneous social interactions
- Consider culture and social norms of users within design of spaces
- Create spaces and buildings which have a strong contact with nature - green spaces, food growing, planting, good daylight levels
- Consider the soundscapes of the space: minimise noise with negative impacts on health and promote positive sounds
- Easy access to local facilities and health services

5.4 Social and Economic

Understanding the social and economic networks of an area is essential for growing places and proposing the right mix of land uses, their location, how they are mixed and relate to the public realm.

- Utilise meanwhile uses which bring activation to a space, engage the community and help to change perceptions of a place
- Promote community-led arts and culture
- Meaningfully engage with key local community and business leaders
- Relocate businesses to appropriate locations or repurpose existing buildings for suitable new uses
- Promoting community stewardship

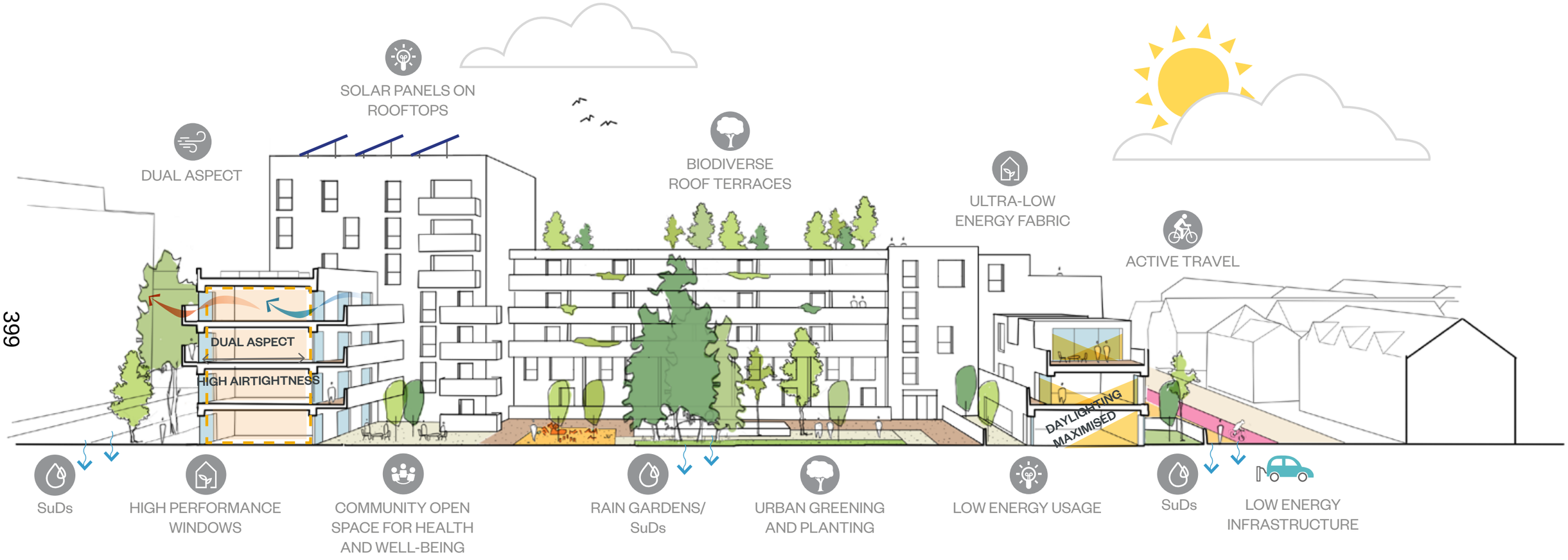
5.5 Accessibility and Inclusion

Designing a place truly for all, demands that the processes, tangible and intangible parts of a place are inclusive and accessible. This means thinking about how to authentically involve different demographics.

- The need to understand the users' needs and preferences
- Genuine stakeholder and resident engagement is essential
- Promote mixed and tenure blind housing
- Ensure the provision of mixed and diverse neighbourhoods
- Easy access to all play, recreational and public spaces
- A diversity of public spaces to cater for all preferences



5. DESIGN GUIDANCE: ROUTE TO ZERO CARBON



The development will encourage low and zero carbon lifestyles through ultra-low energy fabric, water-saving devices, efficient low carbon heating systems and increased biodiversity.

The development will introduce dual aspect units wherever possible to establish natural cross ventilation and daylight.

Renewable energy generation and low carbon energy supply, such as mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) and air source heat pumps (ASHP), will result in a lower impact on the environment.

The building form, dwelling orientation and window sizes will be optimised. The fabric will have high levels of insulation and high air tightness to target low running costs for the life of the building.

Careful consideration of the buildings orientation will promote good levels of daylight, natural cross ventilation, reduction in overheating and views for the resident.

By taking a whole life approach, the carbon impact of all building life stages will be evaluated and reduced, embedding low-carbon, local materials and creating buildings that are robust, adaptable and designed for deconstruction and reuse.

5. DESIGN GUIDANCE: ROUTE TO ZERO CARBON

Three Steps to Zero Carbon Buildings

1. 

Target ultra-low energy fabric and passive design

2. 
Add a heat pump

3. 
Add solar panels on site

Low Energy Design



Free heat in winter from solar gains with predominant façades facing south and limited overshadowing


Simple building form for the warm spaces with a low exposed surface area


Sustainable materials which produce less carbon or sequester carbon emissions


High levels of insulation

Policy Context

- The Oxford Local Plan 2036 aims to reach net zero carbon by 2030 and lays out clear steps to reach this goal
- Currently, any new development is required to meet a 40% reduction in present emissions. This requirement will increase to 50% in 2026 and by 2030 only net zero development applications will be accepted (Policy RE1)
- New development is expected to incorporate sustainable design and construction principles to reduce carbon emissions and undergo regular monitoring for carbon performance

Fabric - First Approach

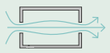

An extremely airtight building fabric


Significantly reduced thermal bridges


High performance triple-glazed windows with proportions that are based on orientation

Heat Recovery and Ventilation


Openable windows for natural purge ventilation, with the ability to cross ventilate


Dual aspect interiors where possible to establish natural cross ventilation.


Efficient background mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR)

Renewable Energy


A net zero energy balance is achieved when the amount of renewable energy generated matches the energy used


Roof design that maximises energy generation, for example: having a south-facing array on asymmetric pitched roofs


If flat roofs are used, having an east-west concertina array captures maximum sunlight as the sun moves across the sky

SUMMARY

Oxford’s West End is expected to undergo significant change over the next decades. A coordinated effort between the council, developers and other stakeholders is necessary to maximise the areas great potential. High quality design of spaces and buildings within the West End will be essential to realise the overarching vision for this extended quarter of the city. While much of the West End’s spatial change will be undertaken through several separate, key developments, a unifying baseline of design principles as set in this Design Guide are recommended as a good starting point for developing individual designs and site-specific strategies.

Sites such as Osney Mead, Oxpens and others must follow the guidance within this document which pertains to all relevant aspects of good design - including movement, public realm, built form and sustainability. It is important that this guide is read alongside all other relevant policy documents, including the Local Plan. This Design Guide is intended to be read in conjunction with the West End Spatial Framework, which expands on many of the overarching themes presented in this guide.





Levitt Bernstein
People.Design

ARUP

urbandelivery
DELIVERY | VIABILITY | CAPACITY

Robert West Design
architect + urban designer