Agenda

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Scrutiny Committee

Extraordinary Informal Remote Meeting

This is an informal meeting of the members of the Scrutiny Committee to enable remote attendance. It is not being held as a committee meeting under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972.

This meeting will be held on:

Date: **Monday 16 October 2023**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Place: **Zoom - Remote meeting**

For further information please contact:

Lucy Brown, Committee and Member Services Officer, Committee Services Officer

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- may register in advance to speak to the committee in accordance with the committee's rules
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Committee Membership

Councillors: Membership 12: Quorum 4 substitutes are permitted.

Councillor Lucy Pegg (Chair)

Councillor Mike Rowley (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan

Councillor Lubna Arshad

Councillor Tiago Corais

Councillor Lizzy Diggins

Councillor Dr Sandy Douglas

Councillor James Fry

Councillor Chris Jarvis

Councillor Mark Lygo

Councillor Edward Mundy

Councillor Dr Christopher Smowton

Apologies and notification of substitutes received before the publication are shown under *Apologies for absence* in the agenda. Those sent after publication will be reported at the meeting. Substitutes for the Chair and Vice-chair do not take on these roles.

Agenda

		Pages
1	**Apologies for absence**	
2	**Declarations of interest**	
3	**Chair's Announcements**	
4	**Oxford Local Plan 2040 Regulation 19 Consultation Document** Cabinet, at its meeting on 18 October 2023, will consider a report from the Head of Planning Services seeking approval of the Oxford Local Plan 2040 Proposed Submission document and recommendation to Council that it go out to public consultation. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, if no matters are raised that materially impact upon the Plan strategy, the report seeks authority for the Proposed Submission to be submitted to the Secretary of State for formal examination. Cllr Louise Upton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Healthier Communities, David Butler, Head of Planning Services, Rachel Williams, Planning Policy and Place Manager and Sarah Harrison, Team Leader (Planning Policy) have been invited to present the report and answer questions. The Committee is asked to consider the report and agree any recommendations.	7 - 584
5	**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule Partial Review for Consultation** Cabinet, at its meeting on 18 October 2023, will consider a report from the Head of Planning Services seeking approval for the draft Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule to be published for public consultation. Cllr Louise Upton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Healthier Communities, David Butler, Head of Planning Services and Lan Nguyen, Senior Data Analyst have been invited to present the report and answer questions. The Committee is asked to consider the report and agree any recommendations.	585 - 600
6	**Dates of future meetings** **Scrutiny Committee** • 06 November 2023	

- 04 December 2023
- 16 January 2024
- 06 February 2024
- 04 March 2024
- 11 April 2024

Standing Panels

Housing & Homelessness: 05 December 2023; 07 March 2024

Finance & Performance: 06 December 2023; 22 January 2024; 26 March 2024

Climate & Environment: 29 November 2023; 27 February 2024; 20 March 2024

Companies Scrutiny Panel will meet on the same dates as the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group (SJVG): 25 October 2023; 01 November 2023; 07 December 2023; 27 March 2024; 24 April 2024

All meetings start at 6.00 pm.

Information for those attending

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- To avoid recording members of the public present, even inadvertently, unless they are addressing the meeting.

Please be aware that you may be recorded during your speech and any follow-up. If you are attending please be aware that recording may take place and that you may be inadvertently included in these.

The Chair of the meeting has absolute discretion to suspend or terminate any activities that in his or her opinion are disruptive.

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". The matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

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To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	**18 October 2023**
Report of:	**Head of Planning & Regulatory Services**
Title of Report:	**Proposed Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2040**

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	That Cabinet consider the Oxford Local Plan 2040 Proposed Submission Document for public consultation and recommend to Council its approval for consultation and, subject to the outcome of the consultation, if no matters are raised that materially impact upon the Plan strategy, submit the Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2040 to the Secretary of State for formal examination.
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Louise Upton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Healthier Communities
Corporate Priority:	Enable an inclusive economy; deliver more affordable housing; support thriving communities; pursue a zero-carbon Oxford
Policy Framework:	Development Plan Document.

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to recommend to Council that it:

1. Approve the Oxford Local Plan 2040 Proposed Submission Document for consultation;
2. approve the following supporting statutory documentation: the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulation Assessment, Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) and Equalities Impact Assessment;
3. authorise the Head of Planning & Regulatory Services, after consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member, to make any necessary minor typographical changes and modifications to the document, IDP, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment, and to agree the final publication style of the draft version before publication;
4. following publication, authorise the Head of Planning & Regulatory Services, after consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member, to make any minor changes to the document deemed necessary as a result of the consultation, and then to formally submit the Oxford Local Plan 2040 to the Secretary of State for examination. In the event that significant issues are raised that suggest the Plan is not sound

and major amendments are required, the Plan will need to be re-drafted and brought back to Council to approve another public consultation before submission.

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan 2040
Appendix 2	Sustainability Appraisal
Appendix 3	Habitat Regulations Assessment
Appendix 4	Infrastructure Development Plan
Appendix 5	Policies Map
Appendix 6	Risk Assessment
Appendix 7	Equalities Impact Assessment

Introduction and background

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Proposed Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2040 (Appendix 1) for consultation. The Proposed Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2040 has been prepared for the final consultation stage that will take place before the Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. From 10th November 2023 to 3rd January 2024, it is intended that a public consultation will be undertaken that will meet the requirements set out in Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Plan is supported by the Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix 2), the Habitat Regulations Assessment (Appendix 3) and the Infrastructure Development Plan (Appendix 4) and the Policies Map (Appendix 5)
2. The Issues and Options Consultation took place in June / July 2021. This represented the first stage of the plan-making process, when several specific issues were identified that the Local Plan needed to address, together with a proposed vision and a set of objectives for the Plan. These were collated to form an Issues Paper which was then put out for public consultation. Responses were received from individuals, local communities, businesses and other organisations. A consultation report has been prepared that summarises the responses and findings.

3. Following careful consideration of the feedback from the public consultation, and a growing evidence base, a number of proposed policy approaches were developed. These approaches were presented as a range of options in the Preferred Options document. This contained a series of proposed policy approaches or options that covered a range of topics including housing, economy, communities, and design and heritage. It included a development sites and infrastructure chapter, which set out proposed sites that it was considered would benefit from having a specific site allocation policy.

4. The Preferred Options document went out for public consultation (Regulation 18 Part 1 Consultation) for a six-week period between Monday 3rd October 2022 and Monday 14th November 2022. A summary report of the comments received is set out in this link https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/8454/preferred_options_regulation_18_part_1_consultation_report. A Housing Need Consultation (Regulation 18 Part 2) was also undertaken which ran for a supplementary 6 week consultation period from Monday 13th February 2023 to Monday 27th March 2023. A summary report:: https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/8563/preferred_options_regulation_18_part_2_consultation_report has been published.

5. The purpose of these previous stages of consultation was firstly to understand the issues identified by the public which they thought the Plan should cover and then in 2022 to get views on a range of options for policies, called 'preferred options' and in part 2 to consult on the housing need assessment. These consultations informed the development of the draft policies in the Proposed Submission Draft.

6. This consultation on the Draft Submission Version of the Plan, to run for over seven weeks from 10th November 2023 until the 3rd January 2024, will ask for views on whether the Plan meets the tests of soundness set out in paragraph 35 of the NPPF. The Proposed Submission Draft Plan is intended to then proceed straight to submission to the Secretary of State unless anything material arises from the consultation, although minor changes that would not constitute 'main modifications' may be made prior to submission. Comments received in response to this Regulation 19 consultation are submitted alongside the Plan to be considered by the Inspector as part of the examination of the Plan.

The Draft Local Plan

7. The Submission Draft Local Plan offers a range of policies with supporting text. These range from strategic policies to more detailed policies to be used in development management decisions. The Plan is comprehensive and will replace the Local Plan 2036. The Northern Gateway Area Action Plan (AAP) is due to expire in 2026 so the site allocation policy will replace it. Any adopted Neighbourhood Plans will be the only other documents containing statutory planning policies.

8. During the preparation of the Local Plan 2040 there have been some significant national and local changes that have influenced the approach we have taken in drafting the detail of the site allocation policies. The

key proposed change from national government has been the concept of introducing “the permission in principle consent route”. This proposed approach although not progressed at the time of writing has encouraged us to write more detailed policies than we have done in previous Plans.

9. This increased level of detail ensures that policies are drafted as comprehensively as possible to provide more certainty to both developers and local residents about the proposals and the considerations for a site. The site allocation policies have been produced by a thorough process informed by detailed urban design appraisals. The structure of the Plan 2040 provides supporting text but with a more detailed policy content for the individual themed policies together with those for Areas of Focus and Development Sites. The sections below briefly summarise the key points from each chapter of the Plan.

Introduction, vision and strategy

10. A range of sources of data and background information have been used in Chapter 1 to describe Oxford’s strengths and role and the challenges it faces over the next 20 years, which have fed into the vision and informed the strategy. The vision for Oxford is summarised as:
    - A healthy and inclusive city to live in
    - A fair and prosperous city with a globally important role in learning, knowledge and innovation
    - A green and biodiverse city that is resilient to climate change
    - A city that utilises its resources with care, protects the air, water and soil and aims for net zero carbon
    - A city that respects its heritage and fosters design of the highest quality
    - A liveable city with strong communities and opportunities for all

11. Four strategic policies are set out in Chapter 1. Policy S1: sets out the overarching approach to locating new development and for sustainable growth with a priority to deliver affordable homes, focus employment on existing sites, and protect green and blue infrastructure networks . Policy S2: sets out the importance of good design. Policy S3 Says the City Council will work with infrastructure providers, developers and other key stakeholders to support the delivery of the infrastructure necessary to enable the development set out in the Local Plan and sets out delivery mechanisms. Policy S4 focuses on viability. It sets out when viability evidence may be accepted it specifies the order in which changes to a proposed scheme should take place until the proposed scheme becomes viable. The approach prioritises social rented housing, as that is the last adjustment that should be made to achieve viability, only after adjustments to parking levels and carbon offsetting costs (if there are any) have been made.

A healthy and inclusive city to live in

12. Chapter 2 is concerned with the delivery of housing. There is an urgent need for new homes in Oxford, but a limited and constrained supply of land available for development in the city. Policy H1 sets out the housing requirement over the Plan period 2020-2040. The level of housing need reflects the exceptional circumstances of the Oxfordshire economy, its performance and its significant contribution to the regional and national economy, which acts as a key driver of housing need that impacts on current and future demographic trends and market signals. If lower levels of housing were pursued then there would be greater in-commuting, a worsening of affordability and constraints placed on Oxford's economy.
13. The policy approach to help meet the housing need, has been to maximise capacity in the city. The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA), jointly commissioned with Cherwell District Council, objectively assessed the housing need for Oxford. This looked at four scenarios. Due to exceptional circumstances, a method other than the Government's Standard Method is used to determine Oxford's housing need. The most appropriate scenario to represent Oxford's housing need is based on an independent assessment of expected economic growth in Oxfordshire. The HELAA and site allocations policies in this Plan aim to prioritise residential development over other uses, including employment land.
14. This policy approach has sought to maximise the site allocations for housing, promote the efficient use and development of land and sites, including highest densities and building heights in appropriate locations, and allow an element of housing on all employment sites, where suitable. However, the identified capacity of housing land is below the identified housing need, and therefore a capacity-based housing requirement has been set in Policy H1.
15. One of the biggest issues facing residents in Oxford is the unaffordability of homes, to rent or to buy. Oxford is one of the least affordable places in the country. The high need for new housing in the city means that general market house prices are expensive both to buy and rent. Policy H2 seeks to deliver affordable housing. On large residential sites of 10 or more units a proportion of affordable housing units will be sought. In the case of student accommodation or retirement homes a financial contribution will be sought instead. In Oxford, social rent (the most discounted form of affordable housing to rent) is the only option for many people. Social rented housing is therefore the priority tenure of affordable housing in Oxford, and of the 40% affordable housing requirement on qualifying developments, the majority is expected to be social rented housing. The remainder may be provided as intermediate forms of affordable housing. The current Oxford Local Plan (2036) requires 50% affordable housing. The whole-plan viability report demonstrates that this would not be viable for many developments. The requirement is set at a level that should ensure the majority of developments are viable, which will limit the amount of viability evidence that will need to be assessed at the planning

application stage. The policy requires 80% of affordable homes to be social rented.

16. The policy does not set a requirement for First Homes. This is a Government initiative and the requirement overrides existing policies. 25% of affordable homes should be First Homes, which means they are available to buy for first-time purchasers at a discounted rate and for no more than £250,000. However, the approach does not work well in Oxford, given the city's affordability issues and profile of its sites. The argument will be made through the examination process that First Homes should not be a requirement in Oxford.

17. Policy H5 seeks to provide employer-linked housing which recognises the challenges that employers face in both recruiting and retaining staff in Oxford given the shortage of housing and its affordability. This acute staffing issue impacts on the operation and provision of key services such as schools and hospitals. Employer-linked housing involves the development of housing on their own specified sites, by specified key employers in the city to provide a means of delivering affordable housing for their own staff. For example, the NHS provide staff accommodation within the hospital sites.

18. The large number of students resident in Oxford has an impact on the availability of general market housing. Policy H9 aims to ensure new student accommodation is built only in suitable locations and is limited to those on courses of a year or more who are receiving the greatest and longest-term educational benefit. It prioritises students of the two universities to assist with the economic aims of the Plan in supporting the universities. Policy H10 ensures that where new academic and teaching facilities are proposed that support additional students, that these students' accommodation needs can be met. In the case of the universities this will be measured by the set threshold of students living outside of university accommodation such as student halls.

A prosperous city with a globally important role in learning, knowledge and innovation

19. Chapter 3 is concerned with Oxford's economy. Policy E1 encourages the intensification and modernisation of key employment sites within the city and recognises the important role played by category 1 (national and regional) sites in contributing significantly to the national and regional economy. Category 2 (local) sites are well performing and provide key supporting services for Oxford's economy to function properly. Category 3 employment sites mainly comprise smaller, poorly located sites that do not perform such an important economic function or are likely to be able to do so in the future. The policy approach supports sustainable development and seeks to make the best and most efficient use of existing employment sites but does not allow for new

employment sites except in the city centre and district centres where there is expected to be a range of uses.

20. In recognition of the acute housing shortage in the city the new employment strategy approach makes it clear that an element of residential development will in principle be supported on employment sites. This includes both category 1 and 2 sites where this would not prejudice the site's present or future continued use as an employment site and would result in well-located, and well-designed homes being provided. In addition, Category 3 sites would be allowed in principle to change their use and/or be redeveloped for residential development subject to criteria to ensure that Oxford maximises the delivery of homes within the city and that homes are appropriate on the site.
21. The Employment Land Needs Assessment (ELNA) Update for Oxford prepared by Lichfields states that some 296,000 sqm of employment floorspace is required to meet the city's employment needs over the plan period. A high proportion of this need is attributed to office; research and development; and laboratory space which reflects the market demand profile for the city and to build on Oxford's key economic strengths.
22. Warehousing and storage uses can play an important role in the operation of some key employers and contribute to the supply chain. However generally they do occupy a considerable land area, do not generate many jobs and compete for a limited supply of land. So in these circumstances Policy E2 will only support new and or expanded warehouse uses on existing employment sites where it can be shown that they are required for operational reasons by a Category 1 employment site.
23. The Oxford Economic Strategy includes a policy which promotes 'an inclusive economy' which can include the delivery of affordable workspace. To that end the Policy E3 requires that development proposals delivering commercial developments on named sites, to produce an affordable workspace strategy detailing how affordable workspace can be delivered as part of their masterplan. Community Employment and Procurement Plans (CEPPs) can play a significant role in improving job opportunities for local people and support both the local labour market and the businesses that operate in Oxford or wish to move to the city. Policy E4 therefore seeks to secure a CEPP for developments of 50 or more homes or over 1,000sqm non-residential floorspace.
24. Policy E5 is concerned with tourism and short-stay accommodation. The policy directs new holiday and short-stay accommodation to sustainable locations, including the city and district centres and main arterial roads. The expansion and or refurbishment of existing accommodation is supported in principle subject to criteria. Whilst larger accommodation of 10 beds or more in sustainable locations is sought to be retained, unless evidence of non-viability can be demonstrated.

A green biodiverse city that is resilient to climate change

25. Chapter 4 is concerned with protecting and enhancing green and blue infrastructure, delivering net gains in biodiversity and building in resilience to flooding and promoting sustainable drainage and resilient construction methods. The policy approach in the Local Plan recognises the multi-functional benefits of our GI network and seeks to ensure that we protect (Policy G1) a range of spaces and features for the benefit of the city now and into the future, where possible enhancing (Policy G2) these and providing new features to strengthen that network. Policy G3 includes more specific requirements around providing green, natural surface cover on specific types of development through the use of the Council's Urban Greening Factor policy tool.

26. All new planning applications will be required to deliver biodiversity net gain, in accordance with the Environment Act 2021, with an initial requirement of 10% introduced for large sites in November 2023 and small sites in April 2024. Policy G4 sets out the expectation that biodiversity net gain is delivered either onsite or within those areas of land within the city which have been identified as being most beneficial for supporting the wider ecological network, to secure as much benefit as possible for nearby species and habitats. If robust evidence is provided to show net gain cannot be achieved onsite or offsite, then the purchase of biodiversity units from a habitat bank or statutory biodiversity credits may be accepted to meet net gain.

27. Policy G5 seeks to enhance on-site biodiversity into landscaping or building facades / roof spaces to meet priority habitats and protected species. Policy G6 requires development proposals to conserve and enhance biodiversity including safeguarding the key sites of Oxford's ecological network.

28. Policy G7 is concerned with flood risk. It requires development proposals to have considered the potential for flooding from all relevant sources now and for the lifetime of the development, including climate change, as well as the potential for them increasing flood risk elsewhere, safety of users of the development, and that they have appropriately addressed any flood risks where they are identified. This would require a Sequential Test and Exception Test to be carried out and passed. A site-specific flood risk assessment (FRA) would be required in key areas of the city.

29. Policy G8 requires all new developments to manage surface water through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). SuDS must be designed in a way that incorporates reuse, infiltration, retention, or conveyance methods which utilise natural, green, and blue infrastructure rather than unnatural, artificial components. The policy requires surface water runoff to be managed to greenfield run-off rates as close to its source as possible. Policy G9 requires a design and access statement to show how the design and construction has responded to existing and future climate and potential weather extremes that the development will have to function within.

A city that utilises its resources with care, protects the air, water and soil

30. Chapter 5 includes policies that seek to ensure that new development comes forward in a way that does not further exacerbate climate change through additional carbon emissions to support the significant reductions needed from the existing built environment over the coming years – also known as climate change mitigation to help achieve net zero carbon.

31. Three key policies address the built environment. Policy R1 provides requirements for the carbon efficiency of buildings once they are in operation and throughout their lifetime. Policy R2 focuses on emissions associated with the construction process, and Policy R3 is concerned with the importance of retrofitting existing buildings in the city and sets out that carbon efficiencies may be considered a public benefit.

32. The second part of this chapter then deals with the protection of various natural resources and ensuring that the development process mitigates its impact on the wider environment. Policy R4 addresses the issue of air quality, which is a key concern in the city due to ongoing issues which arise from a range of sources, including tail pipe emissions, burning of fossil fuels for heat as well as construction pollutants. Policies R5 & R6 are concerned with the quality of land and its soils. As a result of development over many years in Oxford there are contaminants, such as landfill. Policy R5 therefore sets out guidance on what will be expected from new development and how it should address any contaminated land.

33. Policy R6 sets out the need to conserve and enhance soil quality, including peat reserves. Policy R7 then goes on to deal with the wider impacts on amenity & environmental health, including a range of potential risks that new development should seek to mitigate, such as noise and nuisance. The policy approach to water quality is dealt with through inter-linked policies in the Plan. Policy R8 considers the amenity & environmental impacts of new development on the use of water. Whilst Policy G9 provides advice on resilient design and construction for new developments together with Policy G8, which promotes multi-functional green SuDs.

A city that that respects its heritage and fosters design of the highest quality

34. Chapter 6 is concerned with policies that respect the city's heritage and foster high quality design. The approach is to conserve and value the significance of Oxford's heritage, and seeks to achieve well-designed, beautiful buildings and public spaces. High-quality design in Oxford is dependent on an understanding of the city's heritage and managing change in a way that meets future needs whilst ensuring no harm is caused to its important heritage assets.

35. Policy HD1 sets out the criteria for assessing the impacts of new developments in Conservation Areas, being designated heritage assets and the importance of ensuring that they are protected and enhanced.

Policy HD2 deals with Listed Buildings and the need for new developments to be informed by heritage assessments to weigh the impacts of proposals on both the significance of listed buildings and their settings. Policy HD3 is concerned with the assessment of new development proposals on Registered Parks and Gardens, as designated heritage assets. Whilst Policy HD4 provides criteria for assessing the impact of new developments on a Scheduled Monument.

36. Policy HD5 provides criteria for assessing the impact of new developments on archaeological remains in the city centre, allocated sites or areas where archaeological features may be present. Policy HD6 seeks to ensure that new developments do not adversely impact on any non-designated Heritage Assets. Policy HD7 then sets out the principles of high-quality design, which need to show that it is responsive to its context, creates or enhances local distinctiveness & ensure that the amenity of the natural environment is protected.

37. Policy HD8 is concerned with using context to determine the appropriate density for the development of a site. The policy includes criteria to ensure that a proposal makes the best use of its site capacity, but properly reflects its context & place in Oxford, in terms of scale, layout & density. Policy HD9 then goes on to assess views & building heights. It seeks to ensure development retains the significance of the historic skyline and views to it and from it. Detailed assessments will be required for developments that may be impactful because of their height.

38. Additional policies focus on the well-being of new & surrounding occupants, including the need for a Health Impact Assessment for larger developments, and that proposals meet privacy, daylight & sunlight requirements & internal & external space standards.

A liveable city with strong communities and opportunities for all

39. Chapter 7 explains that Oxford is a liveable and accessible city with a range of services within a 15-20 min walk or cycle ride. The city has a good public transport network that provides access to other key areas of the city further away. Policy C1 sets out the hierarchy of centres. The policy approach is to focus town centre uses in the city and district centres, supporting liveable neighbourhoods. Whilst local centres help to provide local services together with community facilities. Any town centre uses, which is a use that attracts people to it, should be directed first to city and district centres, then to sites adjacent to them and only elsewhere if it can be demonstrated there are no alternatives. Policy C2 seeks to maintain vibrant centres & provides general design principles to guide future development and promote vitality and viability. The policy aims to retain active frontages, which support a balanced mix of uses.

40. Policy C3 aims to protect existing local community facilities and support improvements to make more intensive use of existing sites, whilst Policy C4 recognises the importance of schools, libraries and places of worship and seeks to protect them and support their improvement. Their loss would only be supported in circumstances where it was no longer required to meet community needs, or where alternative facilities can be

provided. Policy C5 is concerned with the protection of existing cultural, social and visitor attractions, but supports in principle their alteration, subject to criteria, and the provision of new cultural venues and visitor attractions in appropriate locations.

41. The transport and movement strategy of the Plan seeks to reduce the need to travel, promote active travel, public transport & support the implementation of the County Council's Core Schemes of the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan. Policy C6 requires major new development proposals to optimise active travel & public transport opportunities and aim to limit the increase in car journeys which would add to air pollution & congestion across the city. This policy approach therefore supports the need for major proposals to submit Transport Assessments and Travel Plans in line with published County Council guidance; together with advice set out in the Street Design Guide. Parking design standards for bicycles & powered two wheelers and motor vehicles are set out in Policies C7 & C8. Whilst Policy C9 provides advice on electric vehicle charging.

Development sites, Areas of Focus and Infrastructure

42. Chapter 8 is concerned with Development sites, Areas of Focus and Infrastructure delivery. Development site allocation policies provide advice on what type of land use, or mix of uses is acceptable on a specific site. This positive approach ensures that the right type and amount of development happens in the right place in accordance with the strategy of this Plan & NPPF policy. In response to emerging national government proposals the content of these policies includes greater detail than in previous Plans. There are five 'Areas of Focus' defined across the city (Northern Edge of Oxford, North of the City Centre, Cowley Branch Line and Littlemore, West End and Botley, Marston Road and Old Road). These are areas where changes are anticipated over the Plan period as a result of new development – either within the city or adjacent to its boundaries. They include site allocations for development alongside key principles relevant to the area & its wider context.

43. There are several sites around the edge of Oxford which are allocated for housing in the most recent adopted plans of neighbouring districts, to help deliver the unmet housing needs of Oxford up to 2036. Development has commenced on several of these sites and planning applications submitted for others.

44. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) provides a summary of the infrastructure needs across Oxford & sets out the infrastructure schemes to meet these needs, taking into account the amount of future housing and employment growth over the Plan period. There are four IDP quadrants comprising the North, South, East and West and Central Areas, which include respective Areas of Focus together with key development site allocations. Each IDP Area highlights key considerations for infrastructure and design which are common across their respective area. This could include for example improvements to

walking and cycling routes, public transport connectivity, promoting good urban design & place making and increasing public access to green spaces.

Sustainability Appraisal and HRA

45. A Sustainability Appraisal has been carried out to assess the options against the Sustainability objectives (Appendix 3). This work has informed the selection of preferred options and the drafting of policies. A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been carried out to assess any potential negative impacts of development on the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and suggested mitigations are included in relevant site allocation policies (Appendix 4). The Sustainability Appraisal and HRA will be published alongside the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan and will also be available for consultation.

Consultation

46. The consultation responses and engagement are an important input into preparing and shaping the content of the Local Plan. The Oxford Local Plan Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2022-2027 set out the programme for the production of the Local Plan 2040. The engagement and consultation has been and will be consistent with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in Planning adopted in June 2021, and appropriate to the stage.

47. The Issues and Scoping of the Options took place in June / July 2021, which sought to identify the key issues for the Local Plan to address. The Preferred Options Consultation (Regulation 18 Part 1) was carried out in October / November 2022, which was followed by a Housing Need Consultation (Regulation 18 Part 2) that ran during February / March 2023. These two consultations sought to obtain views on a range of policy options, Preferred Options, together with the Housing Need Consultation. These consultations were then used to inform the development of the draft policies in the Proposed Submission Draft.

48. Consultation at the Regulation 19 stage is more formal. The aim of the consultation stage is to ask for views on whether the Plan meets the tests of soundness set out in paragraph 35 of the NPPF. Comments received at this stage of consultation are sent to the Secretary of State on submission of the Plan for consideration by the Inspector as part of the examination. There is limited scope to make changes to the Plan based on comments received, prior to submission.

Financial implications

49. Production of a Local Plan is a significant and multi-year financial commitment. In particular the costs associated with examination are notable. The budget of the Planning Service is drafted and has been approved with this service pressure in mind. The costs associated with the production of the Local Plan, including the consultation, are being met through the annual Local Plan budget, funds previously allocated to

the Oxfordshire Plan (JSSP) reserve, and the resources of the Planning Policy team. Policies have been drafted to be as easy to evidence (for the developer) and assess (for officers) as possible. In many cases the policies will require a change in the assessment process from that existing under the current Local Plan. However, some of the policies as drafted will have moderate resource implications at implementation stage for other teams in the Council, for example assessing compliance with the carbon reduction policy, biodiversity net gain (a Government requirement in any event) and community employment plans. Relevant teams have been consulted on the draft policies and are satisfied with the implications, and training for planning officers will be provided so that specialist advice is only required on the most complex applications.

Legal issues

50. There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report. There are legal requirements that must be followed through the production of the Local Plan, which will be considered by the Inspector at examination.

51. The Local Plan is a statutory document the Council must produce. The draft submission document is prepared for the 3rd round of consultation, which will follow the procedure set out in Regulation 19. This is a more formal consultation than previous rounds. Comments should relate to the 'soundness' of the Plan and are considered as part of the examination.

Level of risk

52. The completed Risk Assessment is attached as Appendix 6.

Equalities impact

53. A two-stage approach to the Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) has been followed for the Local Plan. The first phase comprised of an initial assessment of the policy areas within the Preferred Options Document. The second phase has looked at the policies as drafted in the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan (attached as Appendix 7). Consultation on the EqIA will be combined with the consultation beginning on 10th November.

Report author
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Please note in the table below the version number of your report that was finally cleared at each stage

Report Stage	**Version Number**
First Draft: *Commissioned and cleared by Director*	V1
Second Draft: *Cleared by Legal and Finance*	V2
Organisational Draft: *Cleared by the Chief Executive*	
Final Draft: *Cleared by the Board Member*	
Final Report: *Cleared by Labour Group*	

Chapter 1 Vision & Strategy

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Where we are – Oxford's Opportunities and Challenges

1.1 Oxford is an attractive place to live, work, study and visit and is home to a diverse range of communities. Its environment is characterised by a wealth of heritage that has built up over centuries of settlement and by the many areas of high quality green and blue spaces that harbour a variety of ecologically important habitats. The city has a broad, multi-faceted and active economy, with one of the highest concentrations of knowledge intensive businesses in the UK. This is enhanced by its historic role as a world-renowned seat of learning with two universities and a strong research and innovation sector.

1.2 However, this attractiveness and success has brought with it challenges for our environment and the people who live and work in the city. High demand for land results in high land values; congestion on the city's roads makes movement difficult and exacerbates poor air quality in certain areas; and the supporting infrastructure has struggled to keep pace with a changing and growing city. These challenges are intensified by national and international pressures such as rising build costs for new development, a chronic undersupply of housing, climate change and energy insecurity. The role of this new Local Plan is to build upon the

positive aspects that make the city so special, whilst also seeking to address the challenges we face through positive planning policies to ensure the optimum outcomes for the environment and its residents, businesses, education, and health institutions.

Table 1.1: Oxford's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Summarise into a graphic by designer

Natural Environment

Strengths

The city hosts a diversity of significant habitats and biodiversity interconnected by a network of blue corridors such as the rivers, the canal, and smaller streams. Publicly accessible open spaces provide many functions that support people's wellbeing, including outdoor sports.

- 117 playing pitches
- 35 allotments
- 248,200 trees
- 22.3% of the city has canopy cover
- 12 Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- 15 historic parks and gardens
- 2 rivers – the Cherwell and the Thames

Weaknesses

Fragmentation has occurred over time which can weaken ecosystems. Some parts of the city have less access to public green spaces nearby than others. Limited opportunities to create new green, open space.

Opportunities

Green Infrastructure is essential to adapting to climate change, for example as flood storage and by creating shade. Green Infrastructure is multi-functional – able to contribute to many other objectives essential for sustainability e.g., health and wellbeing, carbon sequestration, setting for heritage, economic growth. Development will provide opportunities to recreate nature connections, enhance biodiversity and to bring more green infrastructure into brownfield sites.

Threats

Climate change is likely to impact species and ecosystems. Some ecosystems are sensitive to the impacts of development. Development pressure and a growing population could put increasing demands on the city's open spaces.

- 5,000 homes at risk of flooding
- 10% increase in extreme weather by 2050

Built Environment

Strengths

Oxford has a rich and valued built heritage of strong and distinctive character. The city is compact with very good access to local centres and the city centre by sustainable modes.

- Buildings from every period since 11th Century
- 10 scheduled monuments
- 18 conservation areas
- 1500 listed buildings

Weaknesses

Despite the quality of the built environment in some areas, there are other parts of the city where developments have not made the best use of land or have not created successful places. Some areas do not enable easy and safe access to services and facilities. Traffic congestion can be high, which can make the environment feel less safe for cyclists and pedestrians and make public transport less reliable, as well as creating more air pollution and wasting time. There are some barriers to moving around parts of the city, such as watercourses and busy roads. Much of our current building stock will

require improvements or retrofitting to meet net zero objectives.

Opportunities

The compact nature of the city and the wide range of facilities and services mean that there are great opportunities for sustainable and healthy lifestyles, which can be enhanced further by improvements to existing routes or new connections, such as new bridges.

Threats

New development that generates car use would exacerbate problems with congestion, undermine the attractiveness of more sustainable modes and how easily and happily people can access goods and services. Additional car traffic would also affect the quality and enjoyment of the streets and spaces.

Community Culture and Living

Strengths

Oxford's city centre and distinctive district centres sit at the heart of local communities and ensure good access to important leisure, cultural, healthcare and education facilities. Oxford has diverse communities and a strong identity.

Weaknesses

There is a limited housing stock and high demand, limiting people's access to decent homes in the city. There are pockets of housing deprivation. There are wide inequalities in the city, with some of the most and least deprived wards in the county sitting side-by-side in Oxford. The recent pandemic has exposed and exacerbated inequalities, which could take a long time to even out.

- 2,780 people households on housing register June 23
- 10.5% households in fuel poverty 2018
- 12% with limiting long-term illness or disability
- 1 out of 83 areas among the 10% most deprived in the UK, 12 areas in least 10% deprived in the UK
- 29% children live below poverty line
- 12.4 years lower life expectancy for females in Greater Leys than Wolvercote/Cutteslowe
- 38% increase in mental health referrals 2016-2020

Opportunities

The Local Plan's policies are intended to facilitate the delivery of affordable housing and support high quality, sustainable design. In combination, these can support health and wellbeing, net zero and biodiversity objectives.

Threats

A growing economy can result in a side effect of putting more pressure on the housing market, exacerbating issues with affordability. The issues in the housing market will be difficult to resolve. Transient communities can be difficult to absorb into wider society. An ageing population puts more demands on healthcare provision, and attention needs to be given to designing the built environment to meet the needs of everyone.

Economy

Strengths

Oxford's economy has strengths in research and development which are helping to find solutions to global problems, such as through development of the Astra Zeneca Covid-19 vaccine.

- Strong economy
- Major research, publishing, health sectors and the MINI Plant Oxford manufacturing plant
- £7.34bn contribution to national economy in 2017
- University of Oxford has more spin-outs than any other in the UK
- Youthful and well qualified population in and entering the workforce.

Weaknesses

There is a lack of high-quality office space in the city centre, where there is high demand. Some employment areas are harder to access compared to most of Oxford and do not make efficient use of land. There is a disparity in education and skills of the population and therefore in access to jobs. The compact nature of the city means that there is a limited housing stock, and this can lead to difficulties attracting and retaining staff, which affects the running of institutions and businesses.

Opportunities

Growth of green economy, more demand for technologies like heat pumps, solar PV could strengthen market, create job roles for people manufacturing and installing these technologies. More focus on 'local' businesses, produce/foods, as international challenges like pandemics and political instability compromise globalised markets and supply chains. Its youthful, dynamic population means it has a dynamic well qualified looking for new business opportunities, working in our schools, health care and both private and the public sector.

Threats

The links between the universities, the hospitals and private enterprise create opportunities for ground-breaking developments but even greater focus on highly skilled research and development risks disenfranchising some citizens. Greater automation in the manufacturing sector, shifts to online retail and changing job profiles/skills requirements could result in reducing available jobs particularly for lower skilled professions.

Where we are going – Vision for Oxford in 2040

1.2 This Local Plan for the period 2020 to 2040, supersedes the Local Plan 2036 and other relevant parts of the development plan including the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan. The vision for Oxford in 2040 seeks to address the strengths and challenges identified above. It is as follows:

In 2040 Oxford will be a healthy and inclusive city, with strong communities that benefit from equal opportunities for everyone, not only in access to housing, but to nature, employment, social and leisure opportunities and to healthcare. Oxford will be a city with a strong cultural identity, that respects our heritage, whilst maximising opportunities to look forwards to innovate, learn and enable businesses to prosper. The vision is one which supports research and development in the life sciences and health sectors which are and will provide solutions to global challenges. The environment will be central to everything we do; it will be more biodiverse, better connected and more resilient. We will utilise resources prudently whilst mitigating our impacts on the soil, water, and air. The city will be net zero carbon, whilst our communities, buildings and infrastructure will be resilient to the impacts of climate change and other emergencies.

1.3 The vision for the city in 2040 is divided into six themes which are illustrated in Figure 1. These include three themes based on the pillars of sustainability and three themes which fall at the intersections of those pillars. Taken together, the six themes represent what we consider to be a sustainable future for Oxford.

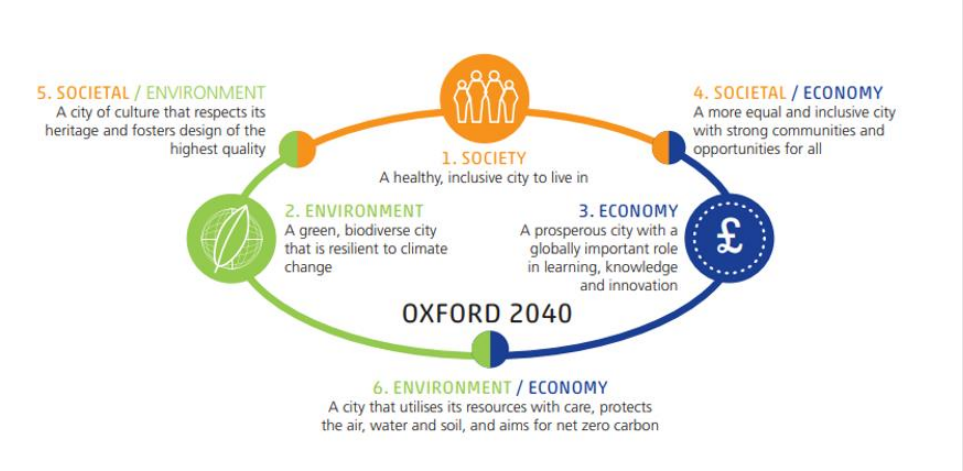


Figure 1.1: The six themes underpinning our vision for Oxford in 2040 – adapted from the three pillars of sustainability (society, economy and the environment)

Objectives and strategy

1.4 The objectives for the Plan set out in more detail how it seeks to meet the vision for the city in 2040. There are several objectives that build off each of the six themes identified above. There are overlaps between the themes and objectives and many could fit within several themes in practice.

Oxford will be a healthy and inclusive city to live in

- There is access to affordable, high-quality and healthy living accommodation for all.
- We have a built environment that supports and enables people to be physically and mentally healthy.

1.5 Oxford as a city is intrinsically a sustainable location for housing because of the access to services and facilities, work, leisure, community, and cultural opportunities. All areas of the city are accessible by sustainable means, and much of the city is within 400m to a 15 minute+ bus service, although there are opportunities for improvement and the Plan will support all opportunities to improve the public transport offer across the city.

1.6 However the physical land constraints mean there is a limited supply of housing in the city, which exacerbates inequalities by leading to high property prices and a limited supply of affordable housing. This is illustrated by the numbers of people waiting on the City Council housing register (2,780 people as at June 2023), and also the house prices: In September 2022 the median house price in Oxford was £445,775, with homes costing 12 times the median

salary[1], meaning Oxford remains one of the least affordable places to buy in the country. Likewise, median rental prices in Oxford are £1,300 a month as of March 2023, which is significantly higher than the average for the South East of England.[2] This means that many lower paid essential workers cannot afford to live in the city and then employers experience high staff turnover and vacancy rates which can affect their operation. This is particularly apparent in the city's schools, hospitals, care homes, public transport services, the building industry, and the universities.

1.7 The Plan sets out a range of policies intended to tackle these issues: the overall priority use for new sites is to deliver homes to meet housing needs (including on some employment sites), whilst also ensuring that the infrastructure, employment, education, and health needs for the city are met. To support this, the Plan also sets out site allocation and Area of Focus policies which will help to give more certainty to communities and landowners about delivery of new homes, and to help ensure that the limited supply of new sites are used as efficiently as possible to help address housing need, with the highest densities directed to the city centre and district centres. The Plan also sets out ambitious policies to tackle the affordability of housing in Oxford; these include policies seeking affordable housing contributions from general housing, student accommodation, and older persons accommodation; as well as continuing the innovative employer-linked affordable housing policy, to enable key employers in Oxford, including the hospitals, to develop affordable housing on their own sites to help meet their staff's needs.

1.8 It is also important that the right kind of homes are provided to meet identified needs, and to deliver mixed and balanced communities and avoid over-concentration of any one type of housing or sector of the community. As such the Plan sets out policies to guide the types, sizes, and tenures of new homes across the city, as well as locational strategies for new student accommodation and other specialist housing needs to help balance the need for those types of accommodation along with general housing.

Oxford will be a fair and prosperous city with a globally important role in learning, knowledge and innovation

- We continue to build on the city's strengths in knowledge, healthcare and innovation.
- We continue to support the city's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and build resilience to future pandemics and economic challenges/shocks.
- There are ongoing opportunities for education, learning and skills development.

1.9 Oxford's economy is a key driver in the wider Oxfordshire economy, which in of itself made a £23bn pre-pandemic contribution to the national economy[3]. The county's wider economic vision and strategy is set out in a series of documents produced by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) in partnership with the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (formerly the Oxfordshire Growth Board). These documents include the Strategic Economic Plan ("SEP")

[1] Based on 2022 house price and salary data from: House price to residence-based earnings ratio - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

[2] Based on March 2023 median rental price figures from: Private rental market summary statistics in England - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

[3] Oxfordshire Local Investment Strategy (LIS) (July 2019) https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/lis

(which was endorsed by the City Council's Executive Board (now Cabinet) in 2016), the Local Industrial Strategy ("LIS") and its supporting Local Investment Plan ('LIP"), which suggests that the county's economic growth is likely to be approximately £1.2bn to 2030. It is worth noting that all of the Oxfordshire authorities are partners in the LIS as the Leaders of the Councils are on the OxLEP Board. In terms of the wider sub-regional economy, in January 2023 the government confirmed support for the locally led Oxford to Cambridge Pan Regional Partnership, which provides access to £2.5m of government funding for the delivery of the Partnership's priorities in delivering sustainable growth and environmental enhancements for the region.

1.10 Oxford's strength in knowledge, healthcare and innovation is supported and encouraged by the Plan's strategy. Oxford's contribution to the knowledge economy stems from its long history as a seat of learning and is part of what gives the city its identity. Research and development in Oxford, as well as in wider Oxfordshire (whilst still closely linked to Oxford and the universities), is finding solutions to global problems such as pandemics, endemic diseases, and climate change.

1.11 The universities and hospitals are key to the success of the knowledge economy in Oxford and many of the research and development locations are closely linked, for example at Old Road and on the hospitals themselves, the Science Area and Keble Road Triangle, the ROQ and the city centre. Other well-established areas include the Oxford Business Park (Arc Oxford), the Oxford Science Park and Headington. Development is underway at Oxford North and in the pipeline for the West End and Osney Mead area.

1.12 The Local Plan 2040 seeks to ensure the continued delivery of employment floorspace on its existing network of high-performing employment sites and in the city's most inherently sustainable locations which are easily accessible by walking cycling and public transport (i.e., the city and district centres) through an approach of modernisation and intensification of employment uses at these locations.

1.13 There are potential benefits for residents of Oxford being at the forefront of much research and development, in terms of healthcare and further and higher education opportunities and the availability of more well-paid jobs and different entry points to the labour market. However, the Local Plan strategy under this theme is also to ensure opportunities are more broadly felt, for example by ensuring a broad employment base with opportunities for smaller businesses and start-ups, greater sharing of facilities and more links between research and development and education, training and skills-building opportunities. This is because delivering the appropriate opportunities for education, learning and skills development can help to foster a more diverse and inclusive economy.

Oxford will be a green and biodiverse city that is resilient to climate change

- We have strong, well-connected ecological networks and are securing net gains in biodiversity.
- The city is resilient and able to adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- The city is resilient and resistant to flood risk and its impacts on people and property.
- The city has a green and blue network that is protected and enhanced.

- We have accessible open spaces for all with opportunities for sport, food growing, recreation, relaxation and socialising.

1.14 Green and blue spaces and green features like trees and hedges bring multiple benefits. They are important to mental health and wellbeing, from merely viewing greenery, by being in green spaces and exercising in them, and having space to play and to interact with others. Green spaces help define local character and community, helping bring a sense of place and togetherness. They can offer food growing and climate resilience like natural flood storage. They also provide habitats for biodiversity and often form an important part of the setting of heritage assets around the city.

1.15 The strategy for Oxford in 2040 is focused on protecting a network of these green and blue features so that we can maximise the benefits they provide for people and the wider environment. The Plan seeks to secure additional greening at a variety of scales across new development, enhancing the green character of Oxford and securing healthier and more resilient neighbourhoods for the future - an essential component of our response to the risks presented by a changing climate. Our strategy also aims to protect our most valued ecological habitat which is an essential component of the wider green infrastructure network, whilst equally ensuring that new development includes a range of ecological features and enhancements that can help establish new spaces for biodiversity.

1.16 In this way, the Local Plan will not only safeguard and strengthen the natural environment across the city, but also contribute to broader strategies seeking to enhance green infrastructure networks and build interconnectedness across the region, such as in the work of the Nature Recovery Network and the subsequent Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy which we expect to emerge during the early years of the Plan period. The strategy also seeks to address the national concern of biodiversity decline and halting the loss of many of our native species which is a key objective of the Environment Act 2021.

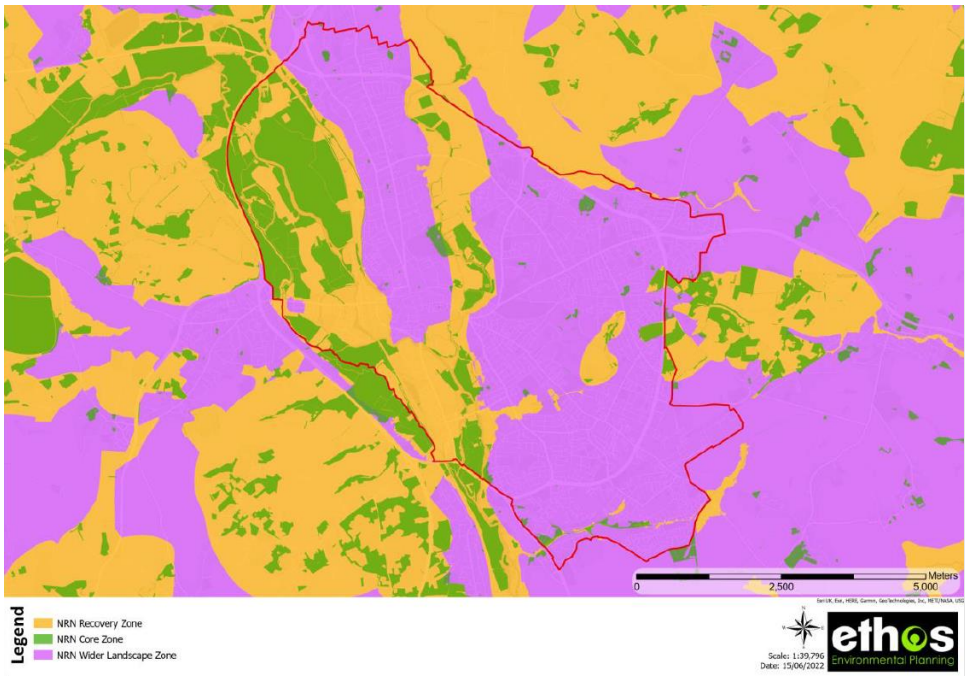


Figure 1.2: Oxfordshire Draft Nature Recovery Network mapping for the city illustrating key areas for biodiversity and areas for recovery which form a network across the county

1.17 Adapting to and building resilience to climate change is the other aspect of this theme and is essential because it can't be prevented entirely. Green and blue infrastructure is a key feature that we can utilise in climate adaptation but the response to this global challenge will require other actions which the Local Plan strategy seeks to support. Taking a rigorous approach to flood risk in the city is important due to our being situated between two rivers, the canal and multiple brooks and streams that permeate Oxford. Therefore, ensuring that new development is guided by the analysis of current and future risk from all flooding sources as presented by the Environment Agency's data and the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment mapping is vital to it being designed in a way that reduces risk as much as possible. Equally there are various other climate risks that new development will need to consider, principally, that of hotter and drier summers and the associated impacts of overheating and water stress that we expect to see as a result.

Oxford will be a city that utilises its resources with care, protects the air, water and soil and aims for net zero carbon

- Our city is ready for a net zero carbon future
- Our resources, including land, soil, water, and raw materials, are used prudently and with consideration of replenishment and renewal
- The city's air quality and its impacts upon public health continues to improve
- The quality of natural resources is protected and human health is safeguarded.

1.18 As well as adapting to climate change, it is vital that every effort is made to ensure that new development in Oxford does not further exacerbate the changing climate. Actions which seek to reduce and prevent greenhouse gas emissions (climate change mitigation) will be important for contributing to achieving the UK's legislated goals of being net zero by 2050 and limiting emissions in the nearer term in line with the sixth carbon budget. It is also essential for meeting the local target of being a net zero city by 2040, which Oxford set for itself in response to the declaration of a climate emergency in 2019.

1.19 The Local Plan is an important instrument in helping to deliver upon these targets. The strategy that guides the policies seeks to ensure that the way the city changes and grows as new development comes forward does so in a way that is as close to net zero carbon as possible. This means new development is energy efficient and meets all energy needs through renewables so that it does not require retro-fitting in future. It also means that where occupants of existing buildings seek to implement retro-fitting to improve energy efficiency and adaptation to climate change, the planning process is as supportive as possible to enable them to bring such improvements forward. These steps are vital for enabling the city to meet the challenging milestones lain out in the Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership (ZCOP) roadmap to net zero by 2040. Policies in the plan covering density of development, parking levels, reducing the need to travel and support for the provision of necessary infrastructure to achieve this are all important.

The Local Plan also demonstrates support for county council policies that seek to deliver net zero targets.

1.20 Equally, however, the Local Plan is only one tool which will facilitate the shift to a net zero carbon city. Challenges such as the extensive retro-fit need across our building stock, the costs of implementing these, as well as the need for broad-scale upgrades and reinforcement of the energy grid to support wholescale electrification of heat and transport which will all support the implementation of the Plan's policies will require wider solutions supported by a range of stakeholders and strategies to help address. There will also be an ongoing role for the City Council to work with partners through ZCOP and neighbouring authorities across the county to deliver on other related solutions to net zero that the Local Plan alone cannot fully address. For example, the delivery of new large-scale renewable energy projects will realistically be delivered outside of the city's administrative boundaries and the city will focus on the smaller-scale renewables that can be accommodated within new developments across the city.

1.21 There are a range of natural resources in the city which are finite and so must not be wasted or polluted and the Local Plan includes policies to protect various aspects of the environment like soils and air. Equally, because land is a precious resource that needs to be used wisely, re-using land is very important, (particularly in helping to safeguard our most valued green spaces). In a city with such a history of development, this inevitably comes with risks of historic contamination which could put people and the environment at risk, so the Local Plan sets out policy that seeks to mitigate negative impacts and deliver remediation where necessary.

1.22 Pollution that stops ecosystems, and people, functioning well should be avoided, and planning policies have a role in this. Oxford has a variety of at-risk groups as well as areas of high biodiversity value that are often sensitive to pollution. Development must be managed to prevent harm. Air quality is already poor in parts of Oxford, and this can have significant negative impacts on health. Whilst the long-term expectation for the city is for overall air quality to continue to improve, we need to ensure that the impacts of new developments on the surrounding area, as well as on the users of new developments, are managed to ensure we continue on this path.

Oxford will be a city that respects its heritage and fosters design of the highest quality

- We have well-designed buildings and public spaces that feel safe, that are sustainable, and that are attractive to be in and travel to
- Our valued and important heritage will be protected and enhanced.

1.23 Oxford has a highly distinctive sense of place. Its built heritage reflects the way it has evolved over time, as a significant seat of learning, and as a seat of government. Industry has been important, with the factory of Morris Motors for example. Healthcare and developments in treatments have also been important in Oxford. Parts of Oxford were originally small rural settlements, and this history is still clear in its built form and interrelationship with green spaces. This heritage is reflected in the built environment and recorded in the archaeology, and the

Local Plan sets out to continue to protect our most precious heritage assets, whilst also encouraging new development to take opportunities that would help enhance them.

1.24 The landscape setting of Oxford and its relationship with the built environment is of great significance. Oxford is recognised worldwide for its distinctive buildings, skyline of domes and 'dreaming spires,' set within a rural framework of interweaving rivers and meadows and contained by wooded ridges. The Oxford landscape consists, however, of more than these 'iconic' features and the evolution of the urban form, cultural associations, relationship of the public and private realms, the density and massing of buildings, the architectural dialogue and vitality, and the way humans have interacted with it through time all make an important contribution to the character of the city's built-up areas. The Local Plan includes policies that seek to protect these important views and other important characteristics of Oxford, such as listed buildings, whilst helping to manage our changing city by ensuring that new development is high-quality and protects these special features so that they can be enjoyed by generations to come (e.g. HD1-4, HD7-9).

1.25 It is not only the historic environment that is significant in Oxford; there are many modern buildings of high quality and distinctive design that add to Oxford's story. The Local Plan sets out the Council's expectations for good design, building on the principles in the Government's National Design Guide. Throughout the Plan, design guidance for applicants is provided at a range of levels, including through our heritage and design policies, as well as in the form of locally specific guidance within the Areas of Focus and on specific site allocations.

1.26 The broad approach requires that new development responds to the context of the city, adding to and enhancing it, being designed to suit what it is to be used for, to last, to fit its context and tell its own story. The Local Plan also stresses the importance of various sustainability principles as intrinsic to the design process, encouraging features that will make space for nature; that build resilience to climate change and help to secure net zero objectives (including retro-fitting of existing buildings).

1.27 The covid pandemic highlighted the importance of healthy internal and external spaces and setting standards for these has also guided our policies. Both outdoor spaces, but also the importance of space within the homes and offices in which we spend so much of our lives. The pandemic instilled a long-term change in the way many people use their homes, with added emphasis on its role as a space to work, to exercise, and to teach our children, which has added extra importance to policies which set standards for space and living environments.

Oxford will be a liveable city with strong communities and opportunities for all

- Our neighbourhoods will have the facilities we need to support our daily lives within a short walk from our homes, to support a liveable city.
- We will have thriving local centres that support a variety of uses and foster activity throughout the day and night.
- We continue in our role as a national and international destination for tourists and workers alike.
- We value diversity whilst fostering greater inclusivity within our communities.

- We support modal shift, to more sustainable/active forms of transport, including by limiting the need to travel, supporting good bicycle parking facilities and reducing on and off-street car parking where possible across the city.

1.28 The Covid pandemic highlighted the importance of our local areas and having access to various services and spaces on our doorstep. The benefit of having access to local amenities, like shops and pharmacies and open spaces in which to exercise and meet other people, without needing to rely upon a car, have become apparent for many. Yet this proximity is not always equal, and a lack of access to such spaces and facilities has become even more apparent for others.

1.29 Policies of the Plan aim to make sure Oxford is a liveable city. This means that there are thriving businesses and facilities in our local areas, that provide for the basis of daily needs and allow people easy access to things they need in their daily lives, including places to meet and socialise. Because of the accessibility and compactness of Oxford and that cycling for some people and for some trips is not practical, our focus is firstly on people being able to walk to a range of facilities. To have most of our shopping, jobs, health, socialising, and recreational needs within a short walk would not only reduce the negative impacts of future pandemics, but also promote healthier and more active lifestyles as well as reducing our impacts upon the climate and the natural environment alongside reduction in congestion and travel delays. Such functioning neighbourhoods offer the opportunity for communities to have a sense of belonging and help residents to feel more invested in their community.

1.30 Oxford city centre has a very particular role as a primary focus for a wide range of shopping, employment, leisure, education, and cultural activities, as well as being a major tourist destination, and it is vitally important to the overall success of Oxford. It draws visitors in from all over the city, the county, and much further afield. Managing visitors in a way that still enables a good visitor experience is important, so that the success of the centre is maintained, and facilities can thrive. It is important that there is the right mix of activities and attractive and accessible public realm for people to meet and linger and policies that direct these uses to the city centre and other centres are aimed at achieving this. Ensuring a city centre that is relevant to local residents is a key aspect of the City Centre Action Plan. The design principles set out in Policy C2 aim to manage to ensure the pressures on the city centre are well managed, and to maintain the attractiveness of the city centre (as well as the district centres).

Overarching threads

1.31 There are three particularly important threads which are wound throughout the Local Plan and supported by multiple policies across the different chapters. These relate to key issues and challenges facing the city which require a multi-faceted response and that cannot be separated neatly into any one of the six themes underpinning the vision. Some of the policies contribute to addressing these key issues directly, meanwhile, others have a more indirect but supporting role in addressing them.

1.32 The first thread is that of **addressing climate change**. In terms of reducing our emissions (climate change mitigation), the policies of chapter 5 most directly address this issue covering topics such as net zero development, embodied carbon and supporting retrofitting of existing

buildings, however policies elsewhere in the Local Plan also address good urban design, parking, and bike storage which can enable people to live lower carbon lifestyles. Equally, a diverse range of policies can support adaptation and resilience to the expected impacts of climate change, from resilient design and construction (which includes concerns around overheating), to flooding, green infrastructure and most of these sits within chapter 4, though other policies such as urban design and health impact assessment will also contribute.

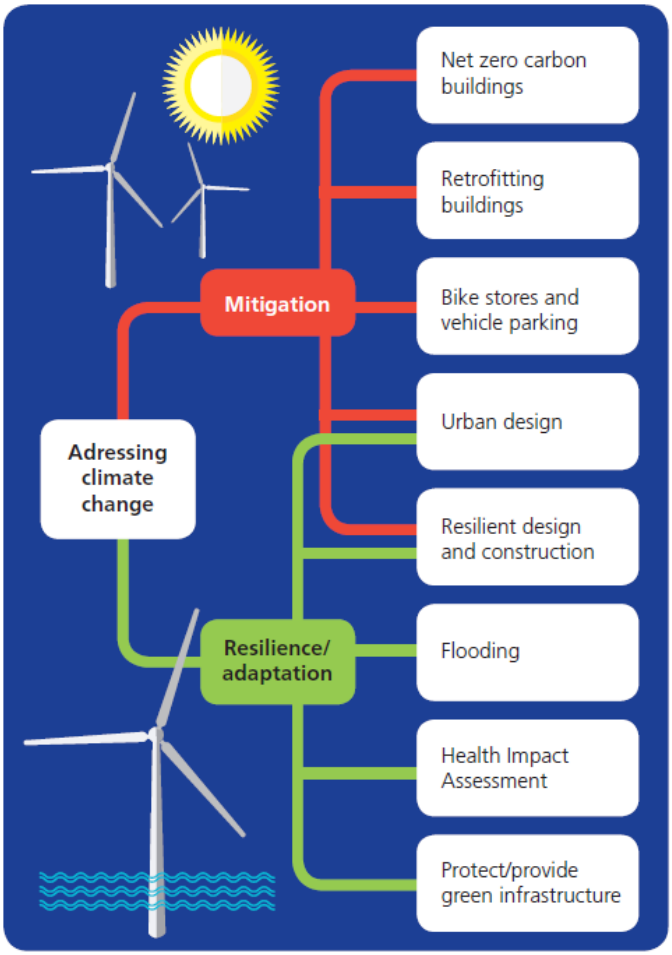


Figure 1.3: Key policies across the Local Plan which support the overarching thread of addressing climate change

1.33 The second overarching thread which various policies are trying to address is that of **reducing inequalities in the city**. The Local Plan chapter 2 has a range of requirements aimed at supporting access to affordable housing, as well as a good mix of housing, in order to help address housing inequality. Equally, chapter 3 sets out policies which seek to support the economy, including addressing unequal access to employment and training through options for policies requiring employment and skills plans as well as provision of affordable workspaces. Polices that relate to protecting, enhancing and providing new green infrastructure in chapter 4 are intended to help preserve access to and improve the natural environment across the city and there are other policies located in the document which also respond to this overarching thread.

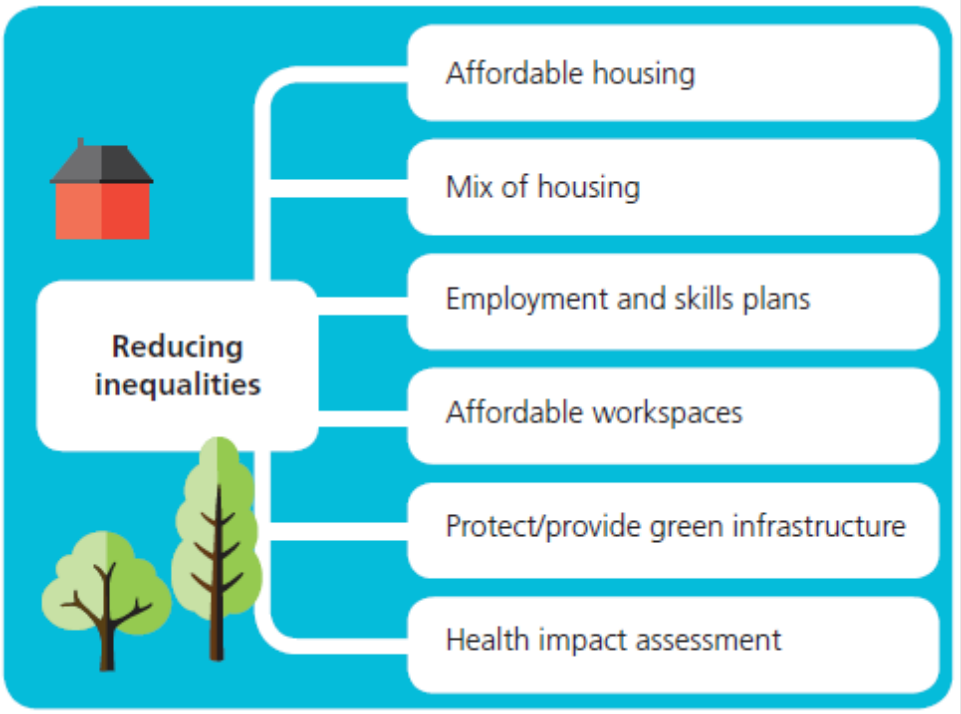


Figure 1.4: Key policies across the Local Plan which support the overarching thread of reducing inequalities

1.34 Meanwhile, the third overarching thread which runs throughout the document is that of **liveable city** and ensuring that residents have access to the basis of their daily needs within an easy walking distance of their homes. The Local Plan strategic policies discussed later in this chapter include an overarching spatial strategy which sets out where types of development ought to be focused in the city and helps support this theme. Within subsequent chapters, there are policies which focus on more specific aspects of provision that we want to see in our neighbourhoods to help ensure the right balance of needs are met. These include policies on town centre uses (chapter 3), the protection of a network of green spaces across the city (chapter 4), as well as policies which address the provision of community facilities (chapter 7).

GRAPHIC TO BE INSERTED

Figure 1.5: Key policies across the Local Plan which support the overarching thread of liveable city

Spatial Strategy and Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

The policies in the Local Plan seek to ensure that new development across the city occurs in the right place. To guide development to the optimum location, development proposals must reflect the key principles which support the spatial strategy.

Policies in the Plan will focus on delivering sustainable growth for Oxford that meets the aims to deliver affordable housing, to support an inclusive economy, to ensure the protection of our green and blue networks and natural resources and support the city in moving towards being net zero carbon by 2040.

Development should create strong sustainable cohesive and inclusive communities to support Oxford as a liveable city which makes the most effective and efficient use of land and enable a larger number of residents to access services, facilities and jobs locally.

When determining development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Council will work proactively with applicants with the aim of finding solutions that mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the city.

Policy S1: Spatial Strategy and Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Planning permission will be granted where development proposals accord with the policies of the Plan.

The City Council, through its policies and decisions, will aim to positively pursue sustainable development and achieve sustainable growth in the delivery of homes, jobs and services to create a network of healthy, well-connected, high-quality areas where people want to live, play, learn and work in line with the vision and objectives of the Local Plan. To help achieve this it will aim to ensure development is located to:

a. **ensure the continued strength and vibrancy district and local centres so they continue to attract people and support a range of facilities that meet people's immediate needs conveniently within their local area;**
b. **ensure new development is focussed on areas with opportunities for sustainable travel links;**
c. **ensure activities that attract large numbers of people are centrally located in the city centre and district centres, so they are easy to reach by walking, cycling and public transport;**
d. **focus new employment development that supports Oxford's national and international role in research and development on existing sites already in that use, prioritising housing elsewhere;**
e. **ensure new uses are in locations where they will not harm the amenity of existing neighbouring uses; and**
f. **prevent new development in locations where it would damage important blue and green infrastructure networks, public open space, and flood plain.**

When determining development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Council will work proactively with applicants with the aim of finding solutions that mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the city.

All new proposals for development must conform with the principles of securing sustainable development, which ensures that the city is ready for a net zero carbon future, natural resources and raw materials are used prudently and considerately, the air quality of the city is improved, and human health is safeguarded.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in any neighbourhood plans adopted in the future) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision, then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise, considering whether:

- **g. the application of policies in the National Planning Policy Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or**
- **h. any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole**

Design Code and Guidance

Good design is a fundamental part of achieving many of the aims of the Plan. Good design is not just about creating aesthetically pleasing buildings. It is about placemaking, strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, promoting a sense of identity and people's health and well-being.

Oxford's heritage is a unique and irreplaceable resource, which has a fundamental role in shaping the city's character and cultural offer. The City Council is committed to preparing, reviewing, and adopting as appropriate) conservation area appraisal and management plans, as well as other evidence base documents to help further understanding of the significance and benefits of our heritage assets.

Good design will also need to support the protection and enhancement of our natural environment for the many benefits it provides. This means ensuring that the design of the built environment factors in spaces for nature and wildlife, as well as green features which perform multiple functions that support people's wellbeing, such as providing spaces to socialise and get closer to nature, promoting cooling during hot weather and flood retention during heavy rainfall. Fundamental to good design is also the transition to net zero carbon development. This means encouraging a range of measures that secure energy efficiency and energy generation so that our buildings operate without adding to greenhouse gas emissions, are constructed in ways that use natural resources prudently and enable future occupants to travel and live in ways that can help them to reduce their carbon footprint.

Design should be a collaborative process. The community has been consulted during the creation of this local plan, including through a workshop led by Design South East that has informed the development principles in the Marston Road and Old Road Area of Focus. Supporting documents will be developed with community collaboration where these would be helpful. The Botley Retail Park Development Brief 2022 and the West End and Osney Mead Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) set out guidance for these two areas.

Policy S2: Design Code and Guidance

The design checklist set out in Appendix 1.1 and expanded on in the Design Code document should be used inform design and ensure that a comprehensive approach is taken from the outset, which includes consideration of the relevant context including heritage, promotion of healthy lifestyles, and protection of the natural environment.

For Areas of Focus, the City Centre and District Centres, and other areas with more detailed guidance, proposals should refer to and align with the design principles set out in the Local Plan or in supporting documents such as the West End and Osney Mead Supplementary Planning Document and the Botley Road Retail Park Development Brief 2022. The City Council will be proactive in producing additional local design codes or guidance when a need arises (such as the Botley Design Guide), involving the local community and landowners, and will support neighbourhood planning groups who wish to produce design guidance for their

areas.

In recognition of the significance of Oxford's heritage, and as part of its positive approach to the historic environment, in addition to fulfilling its statutory duties, the Council will:

a. **identify, conserve and enhance local heritage assets**
b. **take a proactive approach to the protection, promotion and interpretation of the city's archaeological remains**
c. **support the conservation and appreciation of key characteristics of the wider townscape and landscape**
d. **take a positive strategy towards assets that are considered at risk.**

Infrastructure Delivery in New Developments

To deliver the Local Plan vision for 2040, the spatial strategy and plan objectives, the provision of infrastructure will need to be funded and delivered in a timely manner to support development. It is important to ensure that roads, local services and facilities can cope with the increased demand resulting from development proposed in the Plan.

Where new development creates a need for new and improved infrastructure, contributions from developers and delivery of infrastructure will be sought to make the development acceptable in planning terms. These may be delivered as part of a Section 106 (S106) agreement, a S278 agreement, or through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds.

The cumulative impact of individual applications may be considered when assessing infrastructure requirements, taking account of other planning contributions (such as affordable housing). Contributions from a particular development must be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the contribution to the cumulative impact from the relevant scheme; and if necessary, address any unacceptable short-term problems.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a tariff in the form of a standard charge on development, which Oxford, as a CIL Charging Authority, sets to help the funding of infrastructure. The principle behind CIL is for those who benefit financially from a planning permission to pay towards the cost of funding infrastructure needed to support development. Since most development has some impact on infrastructure, it follows that it should contribute to the cost of providing or improving infrastructure.

The City's current infrastructure requirements can be found in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which includes an Infrastructure Delivery Schedule which highlights key infrastructure needed to support the Local Plan to 2040. The IDP includes key infrastructure projects for transport and physical infrastructure; social and community facilities and green infrastructure to support the city's planned development needs to 2040. The IDP forms part of the evidence base and is a 'live' document that is regularly

updated.

The delivery of certain infrastructure projects is considered to have wide-reaching improvements and benefits that could be transformational in nature. This includes the county council's core schemes involving the introduction of traffic filters and workplace parking levy. The two rail two projects that have this potential which could be delivered in Oxford within the plan period to 2040. These are the transformation of Oxford Railway Station (incorporating the delivery of East-West Rail), and the re-opening of the Cowley Branch Line (CBL) to passenger trains (and the delivery of stations to service key employment sites in the south of the city such as the Oxford Science Park and Oxford Business Park (now known as ARC Oxford)). These projects would increase the accessibility of these locations to a wider workforce across the Oxford to Cambridge Pan Regional Partnership area. It is likely that significant funding will be required to deliver these transformational opportunities and certain sites that lie within the Cowley Branch Line and Littlemore Area of Focus (Policy CBLLAoF) will be expected to help contribute to their delivery.

Policy S3: Infrastructure Delivery in New Development

The Council will work with infrastructure providers, developers and other key stakeholders to support the delivery of the infrastructure necessary to enable the development set out in the Local Plan. The projects required to support the Local Plan strategy are identified within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be updated to ensure infrastructure information remains up to date and is monitored effectively.

Developers will be expected to engage early with the Council and infrastructure service providers to discuss their requirements. Developers must demonstrate they have explored existing infrastructure capacity, and how this could be future-proofed, with appropriate providers and demonstrate that they have made sufficient provision. Where appropriate, and where there is an identified shortfall across the city, opportunities should be taken to maximise infrastructure provision on suitable sites.

Development proposals, including those allocated in this plan which give rise to a need for infrastructure improvements, will be expected to mitigate their impact, both individually and cumulatively, and at a rate and scale to meet the needs that arise from that development or a phase of that development. The standards of infrastructure delivery will be expected to comply with other policies set out within this Plan.

Planning permission will be granted subject to the provision of (or appropriate funding towards) the required level of infrastructure to support the development. Infrastructure identified within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan or through negotiations on individual planning applications will continue to be delivered either through on-site provision or off-site contributions and secured by S106, S278 or other appropriate agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or its successor as well as other identified sources of funding as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Development proposals which rely on the delivery of critical infrastructure projects to support the development, will only be permitted prior to completion of that project or where appropriate, a phase of that project which has been identified as necessary in the IDP, where the council is content that the infrastructure or phase of that infrastructure will be in place within a reasonable timetable from the date of permission.

Proposals to enhance the City's rail and bus network will be supported. In particular, the redevelopment of Oxford Station and additional rail capacity to accommodate services including opening of the Cowley Branch Line (CBL) for passengers. Proposals for improvements to Oxford Railway Station that increase network capacity, improve the design and quality of facilities and interchange and support the CBL will be supported.

Enhancements to public transport accessibility in the south east of the city are needed to support the anticipated intensification of existing employment uses and new residential development. Supporting existing public transport and the

reopening of the CBL to passengers would enable a reduction in car use to this area. Financial contributions from new development within a 1,500m buffer zone of the proposed CBL stations will be expected in order to achieve public transport enhancements in this area, including among other sustainable transport measures the delivery of the CBL.

Plan Viability

The Plan needs to deliver development that is viable, and the Local Plan viability study has informed the drafting of the policies. However, in some instances a site faces exceptional costs that could not have been anticipated in the whole plan viability assessment. Setting out the basis for negotiations relating to viability as part of the Plan helps to be clear on priorities and expectations for evidence.

It is anticipated that some new development proposals will have exceptional costs owing to the site conditions, for example land contamination which requires remediation, or transport or educational infrastructure. Assessing these costs is challenging until proper site investigations have been undertaken and we are aware such situations have implications for site viability. In these circumstances, policies in the plan which have the greatest potential impacts upon site viability will need to be considered in combination to ensure that site is deliverable over the Plan period. Policies that are likely to have the greatest impact on viability include the parking policy C8, net zero buildings in operation Policy R1, or the affordable housing policy H2.

Where the combined impact of the policies in the Plan results in a site being unable to deliver a viable development because of a site-specific circumstance, development should proceed in a way that ensures maximum compliance with planning policies. The intention of Policy S3 is guide the process of making amendments to proposals to ensure viability, so that the intention of the policies is met as far as possible. Affordable housing is prioritised in this approach. The policies identified as being most impactful on viability will not apply in all cases. Negotiations will proceed on a case-by-case basis, but the Council will expect the retention of affordable housing delivery to be prioritised over other policy considerations. The City Council will work with applicants to understand where the largest costs savings can be made in terms of items that may trigger non-compliance with policy (such as energy offsetting or parking) and will weigh up the planning (and public interest) merits of doing so but will actively engage with developers before any negotiation is undertaken.

Policy S4: Plan Viability

The policies in the Plan should not generally result in a development proposal becoming unviable. If the combined impact of the policies in the Plan do result in a site being unable to deliver a viable development and if an applicant can demonstrate particular circumstances that justify the need for a viability assessment, negotiations will take place informed by an open book exercise. If the applicant can demonstrate the development to be unviable, a cascade approach should be worked through with the City Council until development is viable, looking at first any carbon offsetting, then any low parking and finally affordable housing

The City Council will always expect developers to have considered the financial implications of affordable housing policy requirements, and local market indicators, when purchasing the land for development.

Where it is clearly demonstrated that any offsetting money against the targets in Policy R1 Net Zero Buildings in Operation cannot be fully achieved t, payments towards energy offsetting should be reduced incrementally until viability is achieved. The development itself must remain free of fossil fuel use to ensure that it is net zero carbon ready and does not conflict with Net Zero Carbon targets for the city and nationally.

If the development remains unviable and the low car requirement in the parking policy impacts upon site viability, then this must be clearly set out in the planning application, including setting out the site-specific circumstances that lead to it being unviable. In the first instance, allocating spaces to units should be considered. If the development is still not viable, increasing the number of spaces incrementally, up to the maximum parking standards, which will be no more than one space per unit for residential schemes.

If, following the above adjustments to achieve viability, the affordable housing policy is impacting upon site viability, then the following steps in the cascade should be followed:

<u>Affordable housing viability cascade</u>

If on relevant sites (of 10 or more units) it can be robustly proven that meeting the affordable housing policy will make a site unviable, developers and the City Council will work through a cascade approach in the following order until a scheme is made viable.

This cascade seeks to prioritise provision of social rent:

1) **firstly, reduce the number of affordable housing units provided by reducing the intermediate housing element only whilst retaining the social rent element in full;**
2) **secondly, if the development is still not viable, continue to reduce the**

amount of social rent incrementally until viable.

Robust evidence must be in the form of an independent viability appraisal. The City Council will expect the developer to negotiate on an "open book" basis which relates to the particular site circumstances that have resulted in the development's non-viability.

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Chapter 2- A Healthy Inclusive City to Live In

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Glossary

Affordable housing – This comprises of Social Rent, Affordable Rented, and intermediate housing (with varying levels of ownership of the home) provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the open market. The high property and rental values in Oxford are so extreme that many of the models for affordable housing do not achieve genuine affordability for people looking to rent or buy in Oxford. The most recent Tenancy Strategy will be used to assess whether proposed forms of affordable housing are genuinely affordable in Oxford. Affordable housing will also comply with one or more of the following definitions:

a. Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: i) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent (see separate definition) or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); ii) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider. This may also include employer-linked housing); and iii) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for

rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

b. Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Income restrictions should be used to limit a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those who have maximum household incomes of £80,000 a year or less (or £90,000 a year or less in Greater London).

c. Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

d. Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Contaminated land — Where substances are causing or could cause: significant harm to people; property or protected species, significant pollution of surface waters (for example lakes and rivers); or groundwater or harm to people as a result of radioactivity.

Demographic – The measures (such as age, gender and income) of a specific group of people.

Employer-linked affordable housing - Housing that is provided on specified sites by key employers in the city for staff carrying out their work. The housing should be rented at levels that are affordable to a cross-section of the key employer's employees, and should be available at Affordable Rent levels in perpetuity.

Flood zones - Areas with different probabilities of flooding as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance: Flood Risk and Coastal Change:

> **Zone 1 (low probability) -** Land having a less than 0.1% annual probability of river or sea flooding.
>
> **Zone 2 (medium probability) -** Land having between a 1% and 0.1% annual probability of river flooding; or land having between a 0.5% and 0.1% annual probability of sea flooding.
>
> **Zone 3a (high probability)** - Land having a 1% or greater annual probability of river flooding; or Land having a 0.5% or greater annual probability of sea.
>
> **Zone 3b (the functional floodplain)** - Land where water from rivers or the sea has to flow or be stored in times of flood. This is land that is designed to flood.

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment - A strategic assessment reviewing the supply of potential sites and their capacity to meet future needs for housing, and for economic growth.

Housing Delivery Test – A check run by the Government to check whether the level of housing delivery in each planning authority is meeting the housing requirement set out in the local plan.

Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) - A house, flat or building will be a house in multiple occupation (HMO) if it meets the definition under the Housing Act 2004 s254 or s257. A HMO is usually a house or flat that is shared by 3 or more people, who are unrelated, form more than 1 household and is their only main residence. There are 2 types of HMO: C4 HMO, and sui generis HMO. A C4 HMO is a small house or flat that is occupied by 3-5 unrelated people who share basic amenities such as the bathroom and/or kitchen. A sui Generis HMO is the same as a normal C4 HMO except that it is a large house or flat occupied by 6 or more unrelated people and can be subject to slightly different planning rules.

Housing need - Housing need is an unconstrained assessment of the number of homes needed in an area (DLUHC).

Housing target / requirement – The number of homes set out to be delivered in the plan period to 2040, also expressed as an annual requirement. In the case of Oxford this number reflects the capacity rather than the need, as the need is greater than can be met.

Intermediate housing - Housing at prices and rents above those of Social Rent, but below market or affordable housing prices or rents. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), intermediate rent and other low cost homes. The Council will consider the suitability of other forms of intermediate housing, such as low-cost market housing, in light of its genuine affordability to those in housing need. NB: Key worker housing is defined separately from intermediate affordable housing.

Market housing – Housing provided by the private sector with no intervention from public bodies and sold or rented via the private market.

Planning Practice Guidance - A web-based resource that brings together national planning practice guidance for England.

Principal elevation - In most cases the principal elevation will be that part of the house that fronts (directly or at an angle) the main highway serving the house (the main highway will be the one that sets the postcode for the house concerned). It will usually contain the main architectural features such as main bay windows or a porch serving the main entrance to the house. Usually, but not exclusively, the principal elevation will be what is understood to be the front of the house. Where there are two elevations that may have the character of a pincipal elevation, for example on a corner plot, a view will need to be taken as to which of these forms the principal elevation.

Social Rent - Homes that are let at a level of rent set much lower than those charged on the open market. The rent will be calculated using the formula as defined in the Rent Standard Guidance of April 2015 (updated in May 2016) or its equivalent or replacement guidance (relevant at the time of the application).

Standard Method – The Government has set out a Standard Method for identifying housing need. This should be the starting point for assessing housing need and it identifies an overall minimum average annual housing need figure.

Student accommodation - Accommodation whose main purpose is to house students in higher education, registered on full-time courses of an academic year or more in Oxford.

Introduction and wider context

2.1 There is a limited supply of housing in the city, which exacerbates inequalities by leading to high property prices and a limited supply of affordable housing. This means that many lower paid essential workers cannot afford to live in the city and employers experience high staff turnover and vacancy rates which can affect their operation. This is particularly apparent in the city's schools, hospitals, care homes, public transport services, the building industry and the universities.

2.2 This chapter sets out policies for the following topics:

- Housing need and requirement
- Delivering affordable homes
- Creating a mixed and balanced community
- Specialist housing needs.

Housing need and requirement

2.3 Housing need must be established and confirmed through the evidence base, and then planned for. We cannot meet all the city's housing need within Oxford, so the calculated need is different to the housing requirement in the Plan (the requirement is also sometimes referred to as the housing target). This was also the situation in the Oxford Local Plan 2036, and work was undertaken with the neighbouring districts to include allocations in their adopted local plans to accommodate Oxford's unmet need).

2.4 The Local Plan must set out a total housing requirement for the plan period to 2040, setting out the number of houses that are required to be delivered each year. The Government checks delivery of housing in each planning authority in the Housing Delivery Test and there are sanctions if the requirement is not met.

2.5 The minimum housing need figure for Oxford can be calculated by using the Government's Standard method as set out in national planning policy guidance. However, simply taking the standard method number would not tackle the fundamental issue of Oxford's urgent need for more homes. Oxfordshire's economic dynamism and its economic growth performance, and particularly the role of Oxford in the regional and national economy, are particular drivers of housing need, and an alternative approach to assessing housing need has been explored which reflects these exceptional circumstances and their impact on current and future demographic trends and market signals. If the Plan sought to deliver lower levels of housing (such as calculated using the Standard Method) then it would be likely to result in more in-commuting and worse affordability of homes, in addition to constraining economic growth, not only in Oxford but with implications for the regional and national economy as well.

2.6 To help address the housing need, we have also been seeking to maximise capacity in the city through our approach in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA – see HELAA methodology for more details) and site allocations policies which prioritise residential development over other uses. More widely in the Council there are further measures to help address the issue of housing need and affordability, including setting up a housing company (OxPlace) to build more homes, and an ambitious programme of delivering Social Rented homes directly by the Council as a registered provider. This is complemented by the innovative policy on Employer-Linked Housing which supports specific major employers in

Oxford to deliver affordable housing on their own sites to help address the housing needs of their own employees.

Housing requirement

The Housing and Employment Needs Assessment ('HENA'), jointly commissioned with Cherwell District Council, objectively assessed the housing need for Oxford.

The housing need in Oxford is for 1,322 new dwellings per annum. This need is greater than the capacity of the city to deliver it. The assessment of capacity (set out in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment 2023) is 9,612 homes over the plan period, or 481 dwellings per annum.

Delivery of housing is a priority, and the Local Plan's strategy is to maximise housing delivery while balancing protection of other important land uses.

Policy H1 – Housing Requirement

Provision will be made for at least 9,612 new homes to be built in Oxford over the plan period 2020-2040 (average of 481 per annum).

Housing capacity in the city has been maximised in the local plan by:

a) making site allocations for housing in this Plan (see Chapter 8: Site allocations);
b) promoting the efficient use and development of land/sites, including highest appropriate densities and building heights in appropriate locations;
and
c) allowing an element of housing on all employment sites if suitable.

Delivering affordable homes

2.7 One of the biggest issues facing residents in Oxford is the unaffordability of homes, to rent or to buy. Oxford is one of the least affordable places in the country, resulting from a combination of high land values, reducing land availability, and a shortage of homes. This means that housing is so expensive in absolute terms and compared to average salaries, that many people are priced out of the market. As such, delivering housing that is genuinely affordable in Oxford is a long-standing priority of the City Council to help ensure that Oxford is a sustainable and inclusive city, with mixed and balanced communities.

2.8 The Government defines affordable housing as comprising Social Rent, Affordable Rent, and intermediate housing (with varying levels of ownership of the home) provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the open market. However, the high land and rental values in Oxford are so extreme that many of the models used elsewhere for making housing more affordable, do not achieve genuine affordability for people looking to rent or to buy in Oxford when taking into account average salaries in Oxford. The Housing Tenancy Strategy[1] and the HENA look at the affordability of different tenures in Oxford. They look at overall earnings and tenure costs in Oxford. Generally, the benchmark for affordability is that rent

[1] https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/4784/tenancy_strategy_2018-2023

and/or mortgage costs should be 30-40% or less of net household income, however with such high prices in Oxford some 'affordable' home ownership models are not affordable in Oxford or only benefit a very small portion of households.

2.9 Affordable housing tenure types in Oxford currently include:

- Social Rent: the most affordable housing type. Rent set at a much lower rate than available on the open market (calculated using the Government's formula)
- Affordable Rent: rent discounted to at least 20% below local market rents This is not considered truly affordable in Oxford because of the high rental prices, which mean that with a 20% discount, market rent levels still exceed Local Housing Allowance levels.
- First Homes: a government-mandated scheme to sell homes discounted to under £250,000 (a 40% discount is required in Oxford) and only available to first-time buyers/ households earning no more than £80,000. This does not meet local needs in Oxford because the market in Oxford can only typically deliver 1 bed homes within the price cap because house prices are so high.
- Other affordable routes to home ownership include shared ownership where a share of the homes is bought (using a mortgage) and the remainder is rented.

2.10 Of these tenures, there is currently a requirement in national planning policy that all qualifying sites provide First Homes as part of the affordable housing element. The introduction of the First Homes requirement reduces the potential for delivery of Social Rented housing in Oxford (which was formerly 80% of the affordable housing element), as well as funnelling smaller dwellings to First Homes because of the national price cap policy. It is considered that Oxford has exceptional circumstances in terms of housing need and affordability, so in order to prioritise Social Rented and regain control of delivering the size of homes the city needs, First Homes are not included in the affordable housing tenure split set out in Policy H2, because of their detrimental effects on meeting the City's housing need.

2.11 Securing new affordable housing on sites as part of larger developments is one way that affordable housing can be provided. In successive Plans the City Council has adopted policies that require the delivery of an ambitious percentage of affordable housing, either onsite or via financial contributions where more appropriate. These contributions – whether onsite or financial – have made a significant contribution to the supply of affordable homes in Oxford, alongside other Council-led initiatives including an affordable housing delivery programme, and the City Council's own Housing Company OX Place. The introduction of the Employer-Linked housing policy in the most recent local plan, has also contributed to the supply of affordable homes for those working at the hospitals and other key economic sectors in Oxford.

2.12 The provision of affordable housing contributions being delivered on-site is important and is preferred to the collection of financial contributions to fund off-site provision, because it provides more certainty in helping to deliver mixed and balanced communities across Oxford. In addition, provision of on-site affordable housing by the developer helps to alleviate the challenge of finding other sites, which is very demanding when supply is so limited. When on-site provision is not practicable then a financial contribution will be sought.

Delivering affordable homes

Securing new affordable housing on sites as part of larger developments is a significant way that more affordable homes can be provided in Oxford. The Council will therefore

expect that on residential development sites of 10 or more units, a proportion of affordable housing is provided onsite. For residential uses where onsite provision may not be appropriate (e.g. student accommodation or retirement homes) then a financial contribution will be sought, which will be secured through a planning condition (see separate policies for contributions from Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) or older people's accommodation, and for employer-linked affordable housing).

In Oxford, Social Rent (the most discounted form of affordable housing to rent) is the only option for many people. It is also the form of housing targeted to those in greatest housing need: those least able to access market housing. If Social Rent is not available, people who are unable to afford alternative tenures may resort to living in sub- standard or overcrowded housing conditions or may have to move out of the city altogether to find more suitable and affordable accommodation. For these reasons, social rented housing is the priority tenure of affordable housing in Oxford, and of the 40% affordable housing requirement on qualifying developments, the majority is expected to be Social Rented housing. The remainder may be provided as intermediate forms of affordable housing. First Homes will not be required to be provided as part of the affordable housing element.

Policy H2 Delivering affordable homes

Planning permission will only be granted for residential development if affordable homes are provided in accordance with the following criteria:

a) **On self-contained residential developments (including for example C3 and C4 but excluding student accommodation and employer-linked housing) where sites* have a capacity for 10 or more homes (gross) or exceed 0.5 ha, a minimum of 40% of units on a site should be provided as homes that are truly affordable in the context of the Oxford housing market.**

b) **At least 80% of the affordable units on the site should be provided as onsite Social Rented dwellings. The remaining element of the affordable housing may be provided as intermediate forms of housing onsite provided that they are affordable in the Oxford market.**

c) **The affordable homes must be provided as part of the same development (i.e. on site) to ensure a balanced community.**

d) **Where affordable housing is provided onsite it should incorporate a mix of unit sizes (see Policy H6 on housing mix for affordable homes).**

*** site area includes everything within the red line boundary of the planning application, which may include existing properties which are being materially altered.**

Where the number of dwellings (including conversions and changes of use) proposed falls below the thresholds set out above, the Council will consider whether the site reasonably has capacity to provide 10 or more dwellings that would trigger a requirement to contribute towards affordable housing. This is to ensure that developers may not circumvent the policy requirement by artificially subdividing sites or through an inefficient use of land.

If an applicant can demonstrate particular circumstances that justify the need for a viability assessment and can through an open book exercise demonstrate the affordable housing requirement to be unviable, a cascade approach should be worked through with the City Council until development is viable, as set out in

Policy S4.

Affordable housing contributions from new Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA)

Contributions towards much-needed affordable housing will be sought from developments of student accommodation because many sites for student accommodation could equally be suitable for non-student homes, from which 40% affordable housing would have been sought. It also helps to ensure that the provision of much-needed ordinary homes is not disadvantaged in the market in comparison with student accommodation.

This requirement for contributions only applies to sites where residential development including affordable housing provision could have been otherwise anticipated. The requirement does not therefore apply to development within university campus sites or redevelopment of existing PBSA that is currently and will continue to be owned and/or managed by the universities. This is in recognition of the onus placed on the universities by Policy H10 to provide accommodation for their students, and because development on those sites would not displace mainstream residential development or result in lost opportunity to achieve affordable housing.

In terms of delivery, onsite provision of general affordable housing within new PBSA developments is unlikely to be appropriate if the site is on campus (unless the affordable housing is via employer-linked housing). Some PBSA developments are off-campus and in residential areas, but typically are designed as flats or apartments which would be challenging for registered landlords to manage if the affordable housing units were not in a self-contained block. Hence onsite provision of affordable housing is seldom achieved owing to management, design, and landownership issues, so a financial contribution will instead be sought, and then be secured through a planning condition.

Direct provision of affordable PBSA bedspaces targeted at students considered to be in need of lower cost rent is also not considered appropriate in Oxford. PBSA is by its nature provided for students who do not live in the city full time, so affordable PBSA bedspaces would not therefore meet the city's affordable housing need.

For monitoring and reporting purposes, the Council use the ratio published by Government in the Housing Delivery Test of 2.5 student bed spaces to 1 dwelling. Therefore, with the threshold at 10 dwellings for residential development affordable housing contributions, the threshold for student accommodation will be 25 bed spaces (or 10 or more self-contained student units as these are counted in monitoring terms as a dwelling).

Policy H3 Affordable housing contributions from new purpose-built student accommodation

A financial contribution will be sought towards the delivery of affordable housing from proposals for new student accommodation of 25 or more student units (or 10 or more self-contained student units). Alternatively, the affordable housing contribution can be provided on-site where both the City Council and the applicant agree that this provision is appropriate.

Contributions towards affordable housing provision from new student accommodation will not be sought where:

a) The proposal is within an existing or proposed university or college campus site, as defined in the glossary; or

b) The proposal is for redevelopment of an existing purpose-built student accommodation site which at the date of adoption of the Plan is owned by a university, and which will continue to be owned by a university to meet the accommodation needs of its students after the redevelopment.

The contribution will be required only from the number of units creating a net gain. For mixed-use developments which include general housing on the site alongside student accommodation, then a pro-rata approach will be used to determine whether a contribution is required, and how much this should be.

The contribution will be calculated using the formula in Appendix 2.1.

Affordable housing contributions from self-contained older persons accommodation

In line with other forms of residential development making contributions towards much-needed affordable housing, contributions will also be sought from developments of accommodation for older persons because those sites could typically also be suitable for residential use, from which 40% affordable housing would have been sought. This requirement only applies to sites where residential development including affordable housing provision could have been otherwise anticipated.

Policy H13 sets out further explanation about different forms of older persons accommodation.

Onsite provision of affordable housing within new developments for older persons such as retirement complexes, is unlikely to be appropriate because of the different housing needs and lifestyles. Management agreements and other restrictions (e.g. car parking) are also imposed which are also not necessarily appropriate to general housing. So a financial contribution will instead be sought towards provision of affordable housing off-site, and then be secured through a planning condition or S106.

Policy H4 Affordable housing contributions from self-contained older persons accommodation

A financial contribution will be sought towards the delivery of affordable housing from proposals for new self-contained older persons accommodation of 10 or more self-contained units. Alternatively, the affordable housing contribution can be provided on-site where both the City Council and the applicant agree that this provision is appropriate.

The contribution will be required only from the number of units creating a net gain. For mixed-use developments which include general housing on the site alongside older persons accommodation, then a pro-rata approach will be used to determine whether a contribution is required, and how much this should be.

Where the number of dwellings or units proposed falls below the relevant thresholds set out above to require affordable housing contributions, the Council will consider whether or not the site reasonably has capacity to provide the number of dwellings that would trigger a requirement to make a contribution towards affordable housing. This is to ensure that developers may not circumvent the policy requirement by artificially subdividing sites or an inefficient use of land. This policy will apply to all types of development including conversions and changes of use.

The contribution will be calculated using the formula in Appendix 2.1.

Employer-linked affordable housing

Employers in Oxford are facing significant challenges in recruiting and retaining staff as a result of the lack of availability and affordability of housing. There is not only a shortage of homes in Oxford, but a shortage of homes that are affordable to local people working in Oxford.

Many jobs in Oxford still require people to attend their workplaces because they are jobs that are not possible to do remotely, such as in frontline healthcare, teaching in schools and universities, as well as those working in manufacturing and R&D labs. Many of these workers are unable to afford market housing or even private rented accommodation in the city and find themselves living outside of Oxford with expensive and time-consuming commutes into the city, or living in shared accommodation in Oxford that is too small for their needs. People with no option but to rent a room in a house-share are prevented from moving on with their lives with a partner or family. In summary people can be discouraged from taking jobs in Oxford if they cannot afford to live close enough to their place of work, and many employers, including critical services such as the NHS, have recruitment and retention difficulties associated with the lack of affordable housing in Oxford.

Employer-linked housing is a new approach that was introduced in Oxford in the LP2036, as an additional means to help increase delivery of much-needed affordable housing. The policy provides an alternative means of delivering affordable housing, to supplement the affordable homes delivered via policy H2.

It involves housing being developed on specified sites, by specified key employers in the city to provide a means of delivering affordable housing for their own staff. This allows those employers to address their own recruitment and retention issues by providing housing on their own land. A typical example is the NHS providing staff accommodation within the hospital sites. For most of the specified sites, employer-linked housing will only be one element of use on the site, for example hospital uses will be retained on the hospital sites.

This approach allows for 100% of the homes built to be employer-linked affordable housing, with no requirement to provide the Social Rented housing that is usually required. By exempting these developments from the normal requirements for affordable homes contributions, the City Council is offering a significant opportunity for those employers to provide for their own needs and address the sector of society between those able to access traditional affordable housing and those able to access market housing for sale or rent. Application of this alternative approach is dependent on a series of criteria that collectively ensure that benefits truly outweigh the compromises. For example, the employer-linked housing must meet many of the features of traditional affordable housing and be available to a true cross-section of employees and retained as Affordable Rent homes in perpetuity. This can help to address recruitment issues, and also free up Social Rent homes in the rest of the city or places on the housing register.

The policy is restricted to specified sites as listed in the policy, which have been chosen for their suitability, availability and potential capacity to cater to the housing needs of essential workers, whilst also not prejudicing the potential supply of new Social Rent homes.

In the event that market housing is also to be provided on the site then Policy H2 is engaged on the market housing element. The employer-linked affordable housing could then contribute to the requirement for the intermediate element within Policy H2 but could not be relied on to meet the Social Rent tenure requirement within Policy H2.

It is important that the housing provided through this policy remains affordable in perpetuity and the City Council will secure this through a legal agreement. In the event that over time, the employer no longer has a need for the employer-linked housing, the legal agreement will also ensure that 50% of the units are transferred to a registered provider or the City Council as affordable housing, with a tenure split that reflects affordable housing policy H2, and not sold on the open market. This clawback approach will ensure that the city does not lose out on the provision of valuable affordable housing (one of the main objectives of this Plan) through misuse of this policy or changing circumstances over time.

Policy H5 Employer-linked affordable housing

Planning permission will be granted on the following sites for employer-linked affordable housing for rent.

The sites identified as appropriate for employer-linked affordable housing are:

- **Campus sites of the colleges of the University of Oxford and of Oxford Brookes University. These are sites with academic accommodation existing**

at the time of the adoption of the Local Plan, and where academic institutional use would remain on the site, even with the development of some employer-linked housing

- **Edge of Playing Fields Oxford Academy**
- **Edge of Playing Fields Bayards Hill Primary School**
- **Slade House**
- **Manzil Way Resource Centre**
- **Warneford Hospital**
- **West Wellington Square**
- **Osney Mead**
- **John Radcliffe Hospital**
- **Churchill Hospital**
- **Nuffield Orthopaedic Hospital**

Where this policy is applied, the standard affordable housing requirements of Policy H2 will not apply, except to any market housing element on the site, or under those circumstances identified under criterion h).

An affordable housing approach will need to be agreed with the Council setting out how the proposed affordable homes will be developed and managed by the employers (or by development partners on their behalf) to meet the housing needs of their employees.

All of the following criteria must be demonstrated as part of the planning application and will be secured through the relevant planning permission:

a) the employer has an agreed affordable housing approach in place setting out access criteria and eligibility, rent policy and rent levels, approved by the City Council and with an appropriate review mechanism in place; and
b) 100% of the housing should be available to be occupied by those employees who meet the requirements of the affordable housing approach agreed with the council and be available in perpetuity; and
c) the occupation of the housing will be limited to households where at least one member works for the employer linked to the site (for the duration of their employment). This also applies to social care workers who work for but are not employed directly by Oxfordshire County Council and to some NHS staff; and
d) an occupancy register should be kept and made available for inspection by the City Council at any time; and
e) planning applications must be accompanied by a detailed explanation and justification of the approach proposed and the mechanisms for securing the requirements of this policy.

A legal agreement will be required to secure the benefits of this policy. In addition, the legal agreement will be used to:

f) agree the allocations policy;
g) agree an appropriate re-letting of units in the property in the event that there are units vacant for more than 6 months;
h) agree that if the employer decides they no longer have a need for the housing, then the affordable housing requirements detailed under Policy H2 will be applied.

Creating mixed and balanced communities

Mix of dwelling sizes (number of bedrooms)

It is important that a range of affordable housing types are available to meet the wide range of needs.

The NPPF requires local planning authorities to plan for a mix of homes based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community. The size, type, tenure and range of homes needs to reflect local needs to ensure that mixed and balanced communities are supported. The housing need across Oxford is high and as such all types and sizes of dwellings are required. However, some sites and the area context will lend itself to certain mixes of dwellings. The city centre and district centres are most likely to be suitable for higher density developments and it is expected that dwelling densities would continue to be higher than those in neighbouring districts reflecting Oxford's urban area.

Policy H6 Mix of dwelling sizes (number of bedrooms)

Planning permission will be granted for residential development that is demonstrated will deliver an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes that responds to the site context, including local needs, and that results in mixed and balanced communities. Evidence to support the proposed mix should be proportionate to the application and may include evidence from the HENA, market demand, design considerations, and should include regard to the housing register and current requirements if the below mix for affordable housing does not apply.

Proposals for 25 or more homes (gross) (C3 residential) or sites of 0.5ha and greater, and which are outside of the city centre or district centres, will be expected to comply with the following mix of unit sizes for the affordable housing element, unless it can be shown not to be feasible (this does not apply to employer-linked affordable housing):

Mix of dwelling sizes for affordable housing (for rent and for ownership):

For affordable rented forms of homes:

Size of dwelling	% of the affordable housing element
1 bedroom homes (all 2 person unless by agreement based on specific need. Or: At least half of these to be 2 person)	30-35%
2 bedroom homes	25-35%
3 bedroom homes	20- 35%
4+bedroom homes	6-15%

For affordable ownership forms of homes: When there are 10 or more units of affordable home ownership types (excluding employer-linked housing):

Size of dwelling	% of the affordable

	housing element
1 bedroom homes (all 2 person unless by agreement based on specific need. Or: At least half of these to be 2 person)	**20-35%**
2 bedroom homes	**30-40%**
3+ bedroom homes	**20- 35%**
4+bedroom homes	**6-15%**

Development involving loss of dwellings

Oxford cannot meet its full housing need and as such it is important to ensure that the existing stock of homes is protected. This is particularly the case in order to protect the supply of family-sized homes which are often under pressure to be subdivided into flats or converted into a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). The city also faces considerable pressure from the use of residential units as short term lets such as Airbnb which are taking more properties away from the longer term private rented sector and/or providing family homes. At the time of writing, the Government is exploring options to deliver a new tourist accommodation scheme and to review the Use Classes Order to enable places to control changes of use to short term lets if they wish. Also see policy E5 which sets out criteria for assessing any proposals for change of use to short term lets.

The policy approach is to resist any net loss of any dwelling, including for short-term lets where planning permission is required, but with some flexibility to allow a loss where there are exceptional justifications. Some flexibility is important to allow facilities important to the local community to come forward.

Policy H7 Development involving loss of dwellings

Planning permission will not be granted for any development that results in the net loss of one or more self-contained dwellings on a site (this includes all HMOs that are suitable for occupation by a single household), except in one of the following circumstances:

- **a) where essential modernisation is proposed to make living accommodation acceptable, and it can be shown that loss of a unit is essential for operational reasons or to secure space standards; or**
- **b) a change of use of a C3 dwelling or dwellings to a non-self-contained C2 extra care, specialist or supported housing, sheltered accommodation or care home is proposed; or**
- **c) a change of use of a dwelling to form a primary care facility, dentist, children's nursery or local community hall or meeting place (Use Class F.2) (defined as a building (or parts of a building) or space that is open and accessible to the local community, providing services or activities that the local community wants and needs).**

In such cases, the following criteria should all be satisfied:

- **d) it must be demonstrated that the layout of the unit retains capacity to be turned back into a residential unit in future; and**
- **e) the scale and nature of the proposed use is compatible with neighbouring uses and with the surrounding area and is not likely to give rise to unacceptable impacts and effects from noise, nuisance, traffic, or on-street parking.**

Houses in Multiple Occupation

A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is a shared house occupied by three or more unrelated individuals, as their only or main residence and who share basic amenities such as a kitchen or bathroom. It is estimated that around 20% of Oxford's population live in an HMO, so they are important in meeting housing needs in Oxford. For many people, HMOs offer the only available and affordable solution as renting individually or buying a property in Oxford is often too expensive, consequently it is important that the occupation is controlled, and this important supply of homes does not inadvertently become additional student accommodation to circumvent Policy H10.

High concentrations of HMOs can result in changes to the character of the local area and can contribute to local parking problems and large numbers of transient households. The policy approach therefore sets criteria to manage how and where new HMOs are allowed and to restrict HMO numbers where there is already a high concentration of existing HMOs. The City Council considers that more than 20% of buildings in HMO use within a 100 metres length of street from the applications site's principal elevation will result in over- concentration.

Purpose-built HMOs can help to reduce some of the potential management issues or neighbour conflicts, because issues like car and cycle parking and bin storage would be fully addressed at the planning application stage and properly integrated into the design. Being designed for the purpose, they will also meet space standards and current building regulations. Purpose-built HMOs in appropriate locations could also help to provide staff accommodation for key employers which have highlighted the issues with recruitment and retention resulting from affordability issues.

In March 2021, Oxford City Council introduced a new designation requiring all HMOs in Oxford to have an additional license from 10 June 2021, in order to improve conditions in private rented housing across the city. Minimum bedroom sizes for HMOs are governed by Government Regulations[2] . In addition, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that the property fully complies with the 'Amenities and Facilities for Houses in Multiple Occupation: Good Practice Guidance' or any Oxford City Council publication that updates or supersedes this. It is important that adequate provision should be made for refuse storage and collection. Cycle and car parking policy for HMOs is set out in Policies C7 and C8.

Policy H8 Houses in Multiple Occupation

Planning permission for conversions to or new HMOs, will only be granted where:

- **a) the proportion of buildings that are used in full or part as a licensed/ pending licensed HMO, within 100 metres of street length either side of the application site's principal elevation, does not exceed 20%; and**
- **b) the development complies with the City Council's good practice guidance on HMO amenities and facilities, or any equivalent replacement document.**

For the purposes of this policy, street length is measured as:

- **i) 100m either side of the mid-point of the principal elevation of the proposed development, including principal elevations that wrap around corners or that are broken by a road or footpath; and**
- **ii) 100m either side directly opposite the mid-point of the principal elevation of the proposed development, including principal elevations that wrap around corners or that are broken by a road or footpath; and**
- **iii) all buildings opposite the principal elevations described above.**

Appendix 2.2 illustrates how this will be applied.

Applications for changes from C4 HMO to a Sui Generis HMO must be compliant with point b above.

In addition, for new purpose-built HMOs, the tenure will be secured through the inclusion of a planning condition or planning obligation, to ensure that Policy H9 is not circumvented (location of student accommodation).

[2] Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018

Providing for specialist housing needs

2.14 The NPPF requires local planning authorities to plan for the needs of groups with specific housing requirements; these include but are not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) also states that policy-making authorities need to plan for sufficient student accommodation whether it consists of communal halls of residence or self-contained dwellings, and whether or not it is on a campus.

2.15 The PPG recognises that encouraging more dedicated student accommodation may provide low-cost housing that takes pressure off the private rented sector and increases the overall housing stock. The City Council recognises that some additional student accommodation should continue to be provided to meet the student accommodation needs of both universities. However, the options recognise that aiming to accommodate all students in purpose-built student accommodation could use up sites better suited to general housing and would undermine the desire to deliver mixed and balanced communities. The policy sets out a strategy for encouraging student accommodation development in the most suitable locations.

Location of new student accommodation

The large number of students resident in Oxford has an impact on the availability of general market housing. Students who live outside purpose-built accommodation tend to house-share in the private rental market. This affects the availability and costs of larger houses in the general market. However, if developing student accommodation were to be given a higher priority than general housing then this could compromise the delivery of housing in Oxford, and in particular the delivery of affordable housing. It is important that policies are in place to control these uses, particularly as they often compete for the same sites.

The Assessment of Student Housing Demand and Supply in Oxford includes a baseline analysis of the current structure of the student population, its current accommodation, and the future plans of the different educational institutions. Oxford Brookes expects student growth to increase by 8% in the first five years and 1.8% after that. University of Oxford expects growth of 2.9% in the first five years and 1.9% after that. This would leave to a total number of students at the universities of 71,000 in the high growth scenario. The high growth scenario would lead to an increase in university students needing accommodation from 22,577 students in 22,577 in 2020/21 to 32-37,000 in 2040. Language school students create a demand nearly entirely for temporary accommodation, which is met largely by homestays, and then by residential accommodation, of which language schools have over 350 rooms. Other further education institutions house most of their students in residential accommodation and have over 500 rooms. There is no significant forecast need for additional student accommodation for students of these institutions.

It is appropriate that some additional student accommodation should continue to be provided in order to meet the need generated by the two universities increasing the number of full-time students. Accommodating university students in purpose-built halls and other university-provided accommodation can help to reduce the demand from students on the general housing stock. However, there is a very limited number of sites in Oxford

and the priority of the Local Plan is to deliver general housing on suitable sites. Aiming to accommodate all students in purpose- built student accommodation would therefore conflict with the overall strategy and vision for Oxford, which is to balance different needs and particularly to maximise provision of general and affordable housing. It is also the case that not all students will choose to live in university-provided accommodation. Furthermore, student halls will not be appropriate in all locations because of their potential adverse impact on local communities.

The policy approach aims to ensure new student accommodation is built only in suitable locations and is limited to those on courses of a year or more who are receiving the greatest and longest-term educational benefit. It prioritises students of the two universities to assist with the economic aims of the Plan in supporting the universities. It is recognised that generally, there is a difference between the needs of those students who are on undergraduate courses and those on postgraduate courses, with the latter more akin to young professionals and who are less likely to have a potential adverse impact on local communities. Therefore, to provide more flexibility, it is considered that allowing new postgraduate accommodation adjacent to existing postgraduate accommodation would be suitable, subject to meeting the relevant requirements of the policy.

Communal space is important for residents of student accommodation. Shared indoor space ensures that occupants have space to gather, socialise and hold events. The nature of provision will depend on the scale of development, and could be a common room, or an informal lobby area.

Policy H9 limits occupation to full-time students enrolled on courses of one academic year or more (including vacation periods). This restriction does not apply outside the semester or term- time. This ensures the opportunity for efficient use of the buildings for short-stay visitors, such as conference delegates or summer language school students. However, it is important that these visitors are also managed, and that the institution undertakes to sign a management agreement with short-stay visitors, which includes reference to not bringing a car into Oxford (allowing use of park and ride sites only).

It is important that student accommodation is well managed so that it results in no unacceptable impact on amenity for local residents, including through any increase in cars brought into an area. Only operational and disabled parking should be provided for new student accommodation. Operational parking should be available for students and their families, for a limited period, arriving and departing at the start and end of semesters or terms. Appropriate management controls will be secured, including that student housing will be excluded from the schedule of streets in the traffic regulation order that creates the Controlled Parking Zone so that students cannot apply for parking permits. The City Council will seek management controls to be secured by planning conditions or obligations which commit the operator to getting an undertaking from their tenants, which will be monitored and enforced by the landlord.

Policy H9 Location of new student accommodation

Planning permission will only be granted for student accommodation in the following locations:

- **on or adjacent to an existing* university or college campus or academic site, or hospital and research site, and only if the use during university terms or semesters is to accommodate students being taught or conducting research at that site; or**
- **In the city centre or a district centre; or**
- **On a site which is allocated in the development plan to potentially include student accommodation.**

In addition, if purpose-built postgraduate accommodation already exists at a particular location, subject to meeting criteria a) to e) below, new purpose-built postgraduate accommodation will be granted planning permission adjacent to existing postgraduate accommodation.

Planning permission will only be granted for student accommodation if:

a) student accommodation will be restricted in occupation to full-time students enrolled in courses of one academic year or more, subject to the provisions of criterion e below; and
b) for developments of 20 or more bedrooms, the design includes indoor communal amenity space for students to gather and socialise; and
c) a management regime has been agreed with the City Council that will be implemented on first occupation of the development (to be secured by a planning obligation); and
d) the development complies with parking standards that allow only operational and disabled parking, and the developer undertakes and provides a mechanism to prevent residents from parking their cars anywhere on the site, (unless a disabled vehicle is required), which the developer shall thereafter monitor and enforce; and
e) a management strategy is agreed if it is intended there will be occupants other than students meeting the definition set in criterion a) outside of term times.

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would lead to the loss of student accommodation linked to an educational institution unless new, alternative student accommodation is available for occupancy, within a reasonable and acceptable timeframe, by students of the same institution. New accommodation should be equivalent in amount, mix and affordability to the rooms being lost.

***An existing university or college campus or academic site is one that exists at the time the Plan is adopted.**

Linking new academic facilities with the adequate provision of student accommodation

In order to balance competing demands on land in Oxford, the policy approach is to ensure that expansion numbers of students at higher education institutions does not occur without consideration of how they will be accommodated. Higher educational institutions

offer courses for students of 18+, many of whom move to live in the city and therefore generate additional accommodation needs. Not all expansion of these institutions will create additional capacity for students, so institutions may be able to set out in the first instance that their proposals for academic or administrative accommodation will not generate an associated increase in capacity for students. Where that is not the case, it should be demonstrated that the additional students may be accommodated through provision of additional student accommodation. For the two universities this is to be done through demonstration that the thresholds set in Policy H10 are not exceeded at the time of the application. The thresholds restrict the number of students that each university is permitted to have living outside of university- provided accommodation and other purpose-built accommodation (in the case of Oxford Brookes). This will be achieved by not permitting new academic floorspace, (or redevelopment or refurbishment which results in an increase in capacity) unless the university has fewer than the threshold number of student numbers living outside of university-provided accommodation. The policy thresholds are to be re-considered from the academic year starting in 2028. Forecasting student numbers beyond the first 5 years is very unreliable. Therefore, at this time it will be considered whether the thresholds are still achievable, and if not information will be needed to explain the current situation and the impacts of a proposal to inform decisions at the planning application stage.

The policy thresholds apply to university students on full-time taught degree courses of an academic year or more. These are the categories of student most suited to living in student accommodation. Student teachers, medical students and post-graduate research students (who could also be viewed as employees of the university) are amongst those categories of students not covered by the policy. These students help support key economic sectors and services in Oxford, might be working on placements outside of the city for much of their course (for example teaching and nursing students) and have very different accommodation needs. The policy approach acknowledges that accommodation needs of undergraduates, postgraduates and staff and those on work placements are all different and should be addressed individually.

This will ensure any increase in students resulting from improved academic accommodation will be matched by increased accommodation provision. These figures reflect what it is considered can reasonably be achieved, with consideration of sites already in the pipeline, or allocated and able to come forward. These thresholds will be reconsidered as part of the Local Plan review cycle.

The reference to students not living in accommodation provided by either University of Oxford or Oxford Brookes University excludes those students who continue to live at their home address while studying. Full details of how the universities will be assessed against the threshold are provided in Appendix 2.3.

It is important that existing student accommodation sites are not lost to other uses. Proposals that would lead to the loss of student accommodation will only be acceptable if an equivalent amount of new student accommodation is available for occupancy, within a reasonable and acceptable timeframe, by students at the same university or institution. The new provision must take into account the mix, occupancy and affordability of the rooms being lost.

Policy H10 Linking new academic facilities with the adequate provision of student accommodation

Planning permission will only be granted for new redeveloped or refurbished academic, research or administrative accommodation for higher education institutions where it can be demonstrated that either:

a. **the new accommodation would not generate or facilitate any increase in student numbers; or**

b. **there is a plan in place for managing the accommodation needs of the additional students, either because the institution has sufficient existing accommodation, or because sufficient accommodation has been identified as being available. For Oxford Brookes University and the University of Oxford this criterion will be measured and can be demonstrated through application of the threshold of the number of qualifying students living outside of relevant student accommodation, as follows.**

University of Oxford
Planning permission will only be granted for new/redeveloped or refurbished academic or administrative accommodation (that generates or facilitates an increase in student numbers) for University of Oxford where the number of full-time taught course students living in Oxford requiring accommodation exceeds the level of university owned or managed accommodation by the following thresholds at the time of the application:

- **until the academic year starting in 2028: 1,300**
- **academic year starting 2028 onwards to be negotiated based on consideration of the situation at the time.**

Oxford Brookes University
Planning permission will only be granted for new/redeveloped or refurbished academic or administrative accommodation (that generates or facilitates an increase in students numbers) for Oxford Brookes University where it can be demonstrated that the number of full-time taught course students living in Oxford requiring accommodation exceeds the level of university owned or managed accommodation or known purpose-built student accommodation by the following thresholds at the time of the application:

- **until the academic year starting in 2028: 6,900**
- **academic year starting 2028 onwards to be negotiated based on consideration the situation at the time.**

The reference to full time, taught course students requiring accommodation excludes those students who were resident in Oxford before applying to study at the university and who continue to live at their pre-application home address while studying. Appendix 2.3 explains how the threshold will be calculated.

Homes for travelling communities

The Council has worked collaboratively with neighbouring authorities on the assessment of need for accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. This includes taking into account waiting lists and whether there are members of the travelling community living in bricks and mortar.

There are currently no existing public or private sites in Oxford, although there are several authorised sites close to the City boundary (Redbridge Hollow, Ten Acre Park Sandford on Thames) as well as Manor View Marston (unauthorised), so it may be that the needs of people wishing to live close to the Oxford urban area is in practice being met by those sites. The most recent published local needs study (2017) indicated that there was no identified current or forecast need for pitches or plots in Oxford up to 2036, and there have been no applications received for these types of home in Oxford during the monitoring period up to 2021/22. Further evidence is currently being gathered to update this assessment, and to assess any need through the full plan period up to 2040.

This Plan therefore does not make any specific site allocations for new sites in Oxford but provides criteria to assess any proposals for new sites that may come forward during the Plan period, along with all other relevant policies of the Plan such as Green Belt policy.

Policy H11 Homes for travelling communities

Proposals for permanent or transit residential pitches or plots for Gypsy, Traveller, or Travelling Showpeople in Oxford will only be granted planning permission where all of the following criteria are met:

a) **The applicant or updated Council evidence base has adequately demonstrated a clear need for the site in the city, and the number, type, and tenure of pitches/plots proposed, which cannot be met by a lawful existing or available allocated site; and**
b) **The site is accessible to facilities and services including local shops, healthcare, education and employment by walking, cycling and public transport; and**
c) **The site has safe and convenient vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access, including adequate access for emergency services and the other types of vehicles that could reasonably be expected to use or access the site; and**
d) **The site has adequate access to or provision of essential facilities and servicing including water supply, electricity and disposal facilities for sewage and waste; and**
e) **The site will provide an acceptable living environment and the health and safety of the site's potential residents should not be put at risk. Factors to take into account include: flood risk (site should not be located in Flood Zone 3a or 3b), site contamination, air quality, and noise; and**
f) **The site is located, and can be managed, so as not to have unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents or other existing uses, or the appearance or character of the surrounding area. Appropriate boundary treatment and landscaping should be capable of being provided.**

Homes for boat dwellers

Residential boats and their dwellers on both permanent and temporary visitor moorings, contribute to the cultural and housing diversity of Oxford and provide a type of accommodation that can be more affordable. Much of the boat-dwelling community relies on the existence of residential moorings which are defined as having planning permission for long-term mooring in a fixed location and for occupation as a household's sole or main residence.

Much of the boat-dwelling community relies on the existence of residential moorings which are defined as having planning permission for long-term mooring in a fixed location and for occupation as a household's sole or main residence. There are also boat-dwellers whose transitory nature generates a significant demand for temporary moorings, including those who identify as Bargee Travellers, as well as those who continuously cruise through Oxford and neighbouring areas.

There are few potentially suitable new sites for moorings within Oxford, because of

constraints such as the need to maintain safe navigation on the main channel of the River Thames and River Cherwell. However, by multiagency working with navigation authorities and landowners, there is potential to increase the current number of residential moorings within existing sites. For example, dredging some existing sites could allow more space for moorings, and working with landowners to change some visitor moorings to residential moorings would also help to meet needs. The Needs Assessment also identifies that temporary moorings with access to vital services such as potable water and waste disposal, and suitable for a range of visitors and length of stay, could also have a role to play. Providing more social housing accommodation in the city will also help provide an affordable alternative for some of those currently living in unauthorised moorings.

The following policy sets out criteria against which potential new moorings will be assessed.

Policy H12 Homes for boat dwellers

Planning permission will only be granted for new residential moorings on Oxford's waterways where all of the following criteria are met:

a) **Proposal does not impede navigation, navigational safety, or operational requirements of the waterway including use of footpaths;**
b) **Proposal will maintain or enhance the amenity, visual character, water quality, historic and ecological value of the waterway or nearby land;**
c) **Proposal is close to existing services and amenities including potable water and waste disposal;**
d) **Proposal is served by adequate pedestrian/cycling access, and vehicular access for emergency vehicles.**

Older Persons and Supported Accommodation

Older people are another identified group in the NPPF with specific housing requirements. Nationally, the population is ageing and whilst Oxford has a younger than average age profile of residents, it is important to ensure that the needs of older people are considered. Specialist housing for older people is provided in a range of formats and can include:

- Age-restricted general market housing, generally aimed at those over 55, potentially with some shared amenities but without on-site support or care services;
- Sheltered housing, typically purpose-built flats with some communal facilities, a warden and some support such as on-site assistance via alarm;
- Enhanced sheltered housing/assisted living, which will have additional services to enable people to retain independence such as some meals provided;
- Extra care housing, which has access to medium to high level of care with 24-hour access to support services and registered care staff and meals available; and
- Residential care/nursing homes, for those with a high level of dependency and which have rooms within a residential building and provide a high level of care for daily living.

No need for additional affordable housing types of specialist accommodation has been identified; instead, the focus should be on delivery of market accommodation. As it is

market accommodation, it is expected that the market will respond by bringing forward specialist housing types. All types have a moderate need, although there is limited need for nursing and residential care. The policy approach is to set criteria for assessing proposals that come forward.

Although there is not a large current need for additional specialist older persons or care accommodation, provision of new extra-care and elderly persons' accommodation is generally supported. It is important it is well designed, with good access to local facilities, and that it is well integrated into a mixed community. Existing extra- care accommodation should be protected unless it is to be replaced elsewhere or unless it can be shown that it is surplus to requirements.

Policy H13 Older Persons and Other Specialist Accommodation

Planning permission for older people and supported and specialist care accommodation will only be granted where it:

a) **is located with good access to local facilities and services including public transport, shops and healthcare facilities; and**
b) **is located close to or as part of a mixed community and will contribute positively to the creation and/or maintenance of mixed and balanced communities; and**
c) **is appropriate for the neighbourhood in terms of form, scale and design; and**
d) **Includes internal rooms and design, gardens and amenity space of appropriate size and quality for residents; and**
e) **meets the affordable housing requirements of Policy H2/H4 as applicable.**

Planning permission will not be granted for the loss of existing specialist care accommodation unless it can be demonstrated that provision is to be replaced or that there is a not a need for the facility. This may be secured by a legal agreement.

Self-Build & Custom housebuilding

Self-build and custom housebuilding is a key element of the government's agenda to increase supply and tackle the housing crisis. Self-build and custom housebuilding is defined in the Housing and Planning Act as: ".... the *building or completion by – (a) individuals, (b) associations of individuals, or c) persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals, of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals. But it does not include the building or a house on a plot acquired from a person who builds the house wholly or mainly to plans or specifications decided or offered by that person."*

As required by the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, the City Council keeps a register of individuals and associations who have expressed an interest in acquiring serviced plots for self and custom-build. In March 2023 there were 133 members and 1 group/association (with 20 members) on the Register. The intention of the Act is that LPAs grant suitable development permission for serviced plots to match demand on the register, although there is no mechanism for ensuring applications come forward.

A local connection test to the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register was introduced by the City Council in July 2022 in order to help protect anyone with a connection to Oxford in accessing community and self-build plots and prevent people with no connection to the city adding excess demand. In March 2023, 3 individuals have submitted evidence of local connection and have subsequently been added to Part A of the Register. Individuals who have not met the criteria or have not demonstrated that they can meet the criteria will remain on Part B of the Register.

Within Oxford there are several organised groups with ambitions for providing community-led housing. Defined as *'local people playing a leading and lasting role in solving local housing problems, creating genuinely affordable homes and strong communities in ways that are difficult to achieve through mainstream housing'*[3], community-led housing is a means of delivering housing which allows for people and communities to be more involved in the process of meeting their specific needs and wants. Community-led housing can be delivered through several approaches including community land trusts, co-housing and co-operatives and can involve homes that are market sale, shared ownership, market or affordable rent, rent to buy, or a combination of all.

The approach of the policy is to help encourage and support community-led housing schemes to come forward. Where applicable proposals will also need to address shared outdoor amenity space in Policy G2, and the bicycle and car parking standards in Policies C7 and C8.

[3] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-housing-fund-prospectus/community-housing-fund-prospectus-accessible-version#:~:text=What%20is%20community%2Dled%20housing,to%20achieve%20through%20mainstream%20housing.

Policy H14 Self-Build & Custom housebuilding

Proposals for self-build and custom-build housing including community-led housing will be supported as a way of enabling people to meet their own housing needs.

On residential sites of 100 homes or more, 5% of the site area developed for residential use should be made available as self-build/custom-build plots. Plots will be part of the market housing element of the scheme, unless they are conditioned to be brought forward as housing that meets the affordable housing definition.

Plots should have services (water, foul drainage and electricity supply) to the boundary and access to the public highway. Plots should also have surface water drainage, telecommunications services, and access to a fuel or energy source in line with policy R1.

A legal agreement will be used to ensure that if the self-build plots have not sold after 6 months of marketing, then dwellings should be built and brought forward in the normal way, in accordance with other policies regarding affordable housing and housing mix. The following development types are excluded from this requirement: Employer-linked affordable housing; student accommodation; other C2 or Sui Generis types of accommodation; and residential development in conversions or on brownfield sites where only flatted development is provided.

Hostels

Temporary housing (hostels) is an important housing type for meeting specific, temporary housing needs. Most hostels are operated by small specialist housing associations or registered social landlords, but they may also be run by charities, voluntary organisations, churches and local authorities. There are a variety of different types and sizes of temporary housing forms. These can provide longer or shorter-term stays. Some provide basic accommodation for a few nights at a time, for emergencies, and which is easily accessed by those in need, for example people who sleep on the streets at times when they need a short respite. These do usually have a charge. Longer-term accommodation may provide varying levels of support and related entry requirements, for example for treating drug and alcohol dependencies and mental health issues.

In order to meet these needs most effectively, it is important that these accommodation types are in the right locations. Problems can arise when hostels become concentrated in any one area of the city, or if they are in locations not easily accessed by those who need them or where they cause conflicts with other uses. Therefore, criteria in the policy are aimed at ensuring the residential character of an area and the amenity of neighbours is protected, and that a suitable living environment for occupiers is provided, in an easily accessed location.

Policy H15 Hostels

Planning permission will be granted for new hostels and similar temporary housing

types, and extensions to these, provided that:

a) **The location is in the city centre or a district centre or on an arterial road or other location that is not on a residential road and that will not cause disturbance to existing residents; and**
b) **The location is within 800metres of the city centre or a district or local centre, to ensure it is easily accessible to residents; and**
c) **It would not result in a concentration of such uses to the detriment of the character of the area, the range of housing available in the area and residential amenity; and**
d) **The proposal is not immediately adjacent to or opposite another hostel and would not sandwich another residential use between two hostels; and**
e) **A management regime has been agreed with the City Council that will be implemented on first occupation of the development (to be secured by a legal agreement); and**
f) **The construction and internal arrangement of the premises will minimise potential noise disturbance to and from adjacent properties; and**
g) **Adequate accommodation including garden or amenity space is provided to meet the needs of the residents.**

Boarding school accommodation

There are many boarding schools in Oxford with children aged 16 or under. Most of these schools are campus-based, so that the children live in accommodation on the teaching campus. These relatively large sites are able to provide continuous supervision for the children and there is no travel needed to reach lessons during the school day.

If boarding accommodation comes forward outside of the main school site, this could have a variety of negative implications. It may prevent the site for coming forward for alternative residential uses for which there is a greater need. It could lead to children being accommodated in a location removed from the school, with a potential drop in supervision and their safety, and with an increased need to travel to reach lessons. There may also be a negative impact on the amenity of surrounding residents if the new accommodation is a conversion of a property not designed for the purpose, for example.

The policy criteria in the policy below are aimed at minimising these conflicts and potential negative impacts and ensuring a good living environment for the children.

Policy H16 Boarding school accommodation

Planning permission will be granted for new or extended boarding school accommodation for children aged 18 and under, provided that:

- **a) It is on or adjacent to a teaching campus of the school the children will attend; and**
- **b) The accommodation would provide an adequate, safe and supervised environment for the children;**
- **c) It will not harm the amenity of any neighbouring residential properties; and**
- **d) It will not cause severe traffic impacts that cannot be mitigated;**
- **e) A management regime has been agreed with the City Council that will be implemented on first occupation of the development (to be secured by a legal agreement) to ensure the safety of students and to avoid harm to the amenity of surrounding residential uses.**

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Chapter 3- A Fair and Prosperous City with a Globally Important Role in Learning, Knowledge and Innovation

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Glossary

Affordable workspace – workspace to be delivered on commercial sites which would be available for rent set at an agreed rate below the **commercial** rent (e.g., 50% of market rent).

Affordable workspace strategy – a strategy which sets out the details of the affordable workspace to be delivered on site which will include details of the size of the affordable workspace, marketing, management and servicing of the site that will be delivered.

Arterial road - The principal routes for the movement of people and goods within the city. Arterial roads in Oxford include Botley Road and Iffley Road among many others.

District centres - District centres comprise groups of shops often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as a library.

Employment generating uses – The traditional employment generating uses are those sectors that are likely to generate requirements for office, research and development, industrial and warehouse space (I.e, referred to in planning terms as 'employment floorspace or land').

Employment Land Needs Assessment (ELNA) - The purpose of the ELNA is to provide supplementary and updated economic evidence specifically to inform the approach to economic growth and employment land policies within the emerging Oxford City Local Plan which will cover the period up to 2040.

Gross value Added (GVA) - This measures the contribution to an economy of an individual producer, industry, sector or region. It is used in the calculation of gross domestic product (GDP). GDP is commonly estimated using one of three theoretical approaches: production, income or expenditure. When using production or income

approaches, the contribution to an economy of a particular industry or sector is measured using GVA.

Inclusive economy - An Inclusive Economy offers a genuine progressive conceptual frame in which greater consideration is given to social benefits that flow from, and feed into, economic activity. (Centre for Local Economic Strategies)

Oxford Living Wage - The Oxford Living Wage is an hourly minimum pay that promotes liveable earnings for all workers and recognises the high cost of living in Oxford. For 2023-24 the rate is £11.35 per hour.

Oxford Short Stay Accommodation Study - A study that provides a summary of findings with an analysis of the impact on the development of policies which will influence both the existing stock of short stay accommodation as well as the amount and type of future provision to meet future forecasted demand.

Short stay accommodation - Accommodation providing residential tenancies, typically provided on a daily basis, principally for short stays by visitors. Accommodation will typically be in self-contained space consisting of complete furnished rooms or areas for living/dining and sleeping, with amenities (e.g. television, internet) included in the rent. This accommodation type and includes hotels and bed and breakfast. Aparthotels or serviced apartments are treated as residential uses, for which affordable housing provision is sought, and are not considered as short stay accommodation for the purpose of the policy.

Introduction and wider context

3.1 Oxfordshire's wider economic vision and strategy are set out in a series of documents produced by the Oxford Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP). These include the Strategic Economic Plan (2016), the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and the Local Investment Plan (LIP). The Strategic Economic Plan is currently being refreshed by the OxLEP. At the time of writing this work was at an early stage. The LIS (2019) made some confident pre-pandemic economic predictions which have been revised to more modest goals in the LIP (produced in late 2020). The LIP aims to add £1.2bn annual GVA by 2030, which would equate to an increase of £12bn by 2040. Oxfordshire had one of the strongest pre-pandemic economies in the UK being a net contributor to the UK exchequer, contributing £23bn GVA in real terms before Covid-19.

3.2 Oxford is a well-known city which has a global reputation, is influential and considered to have its own well established unique brand and was ranged as the top performing city in PwC's recent Good Growth Cities Index[1]. Oxford has many major economic assets, including two leading universities, and cutting-edge research in key areas including biotech, data science, quantum technology and robotics. The city is home to a diverse array of international enterprises including BMW Mini, Oxford University Press, Unipart, Centrica, Amey and TripAdvisor amongst others. Oxford also had an impressive tourism economy which pre-pandemic accounted for 14% of all jobs in the city.

[1] https://www.pwc.co.uk/government-public-sector/good-growth/assets/pdf/good-growth-2023.pdf

3.3 Oxford is home to 162,100 people and 4,950 businesses[2]. It has the highest employment rate in the country, 128,000 jobs[3], which contributed around £6.8bn to the national economy each year pre-pandemic. Oxford has been one of a handful of net contributors to the national economy. The city has been identified by Government as a growth engine within the Oxford to Cambridge Pan Regional Partnership – one of the most important areas for catalysing national productivity and easing the nation's housing crisis.

3.4 Oxford's economy is shaped by the presence of its two successful universities. The city is a major centre for teaching hospitals and is home to several acute and specialist medical research organisations. Oxford is an attractive location for a range of companies and can foster home-grown spin out businesses because of the existing research capabilities, the ready supply of graduates and the clustering effect of organisations with close ties in a number of related areas being closed located with one another. Work that is happening in Oxford is helping to find solutions to global problems such as the Covid pandemic and climate change. Oxford's economy makes a vital contribution to the regional and national economy and is important in contributing to economic recovery.

3.5 Before the pandemic, Oxford had a very strong visitor economy with tourism generating about £988million for the city's economy in 2019. The pandemic had an adverse impact on the tourism sector with city centre footfall reducing by over 60% in July (from 3.1m in 2019 to 1.2m in 2020) and by over 40% in August (from 2.7n in 2019 to 1.4m in 2020). Since this sharp decline, visitor numbers have been returning and have been assisted by City Council investment to help the recovery of the city's visitor economy.

3.6 Oxford is the most sustainable location for employment in the county. It is easier to strengthen and develop the public and active transport systems to take people to jobs in the city rather than scatter employment to less sustainable locations.

3.7 The demand for employment space in Oxford has remained high despite changes to working practices that have emerged since the pandemic (e.g. increased hybrid and home working for office-based workers). This strong demand for employment floorspace in the city exists because many of Oxford's key employment sectors are those where home working is not possible or very difficult (e.g., research and development and manufacturing).

Employment Strategy

Oxford's employment land needs over the plan period have been calculated by Lichfields in the Oxford Employment Land Needs (ELNA) Update as 296,000 sq.m. A high proportion of this need is attributed to office; research and development; and laboratory space which reflects the market demand profile for the city.

Oxford is in a strong position to be able to meet its employment land needs arising to 2040 in the city. This is through a locational strategy of intensification and modernisation of

[2] Census 2021

[3] Oxford's Labour Market Profile - https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157324/report.aspx

existing employment sites; the appropriate redevelopment opportunities to be delivered within the city and district centres; and without the need to allocate any significant new employment floorspace.

Oxford's employment sites fall into one of three categories. Category 1 sites are nationally and regionally important to the knowledge economy or are significant employers or sectors usually within Use Class E(g)[1] and B2[2], with some B8[3] uses relating to their function. Many of these sites are large and often include a range of uses. Examples of category 1 sites include the hospital and research sites, hi-tech manufacturing, bio-engineering companies and the BMW Mini Plant.

Category 2 employment sites provide important local services and often include a mix of E(g) and B2 uses. These sites have been assessed in the Employment Land Needs Assessment against set criteria and identified as performing well and having long-term potential for continued employment uses. These sites make a valuable employment contribution and often provide important supporting infrastructure for the larger employment uses in Oxford. These businesses meet local needs. They may offer skilled manual work and lower skilled jobs which are important to delivering a diverse range of employment opportunities, and local services in Oxford.

Category 3 employment sites mainly comprise smaller, poorly located sites that do not perform such an important economic function or are likely to be able to in the future. Should these sites become available for redevelopment, they should be considered for housing in order to help ensure that Oxford maximises the delivery of homes within the city.

The City's employment strategy does not seek to allocate new strategic sites for employment-based uses (i.e., Use Class E(g), or B class uses). Instead, it takes a locational approach and restricts new employment-based uses to the city and district centres and to existing category 1 and 2 employment sites. This is because the ELNA has demonstrated that Oxford is likely to meet its employment floorspace needs to 2040 through a process of intensification and modernisation of existing employment sites and through employment-related development opportunities that are likely to come forward as part of mixed-use schemes in the city and district centres, including Oxford's West End.

The city's network of category 1 and 2 employment sites are well-established and although some sites have accessibility challenges, there is the potential to address these challenges through infrastructure improvements that can be enabled through the successful delivery of redevelopment opportunities.

Delivering housing in the city is an important priority for Oxford and opportunities should be sought to provide homes in the city wherever possible. Maintaining a good supply of housing has a number of benefits, including reducing barriers to economic growth by ensuring a good supply of suitable homes to people on a range of different incomes. Mixed-use developments are already supported in the city and district centres, both of which have good accessibility to a range of shops, services and facilities. The Local Plan's employment strategy is supportive of the loss of poorly performing category 3

employment sites for housing. The Plan's employment strategy also allows for the delivery of an element of housing on the city's employment sites where this would not prejudice the site's present or future continued use as an employment site and would result in well-located, and well-designed homes being provided, which link well with existing communities.

Policy E1: Employment Strategy

All new development on employment sites needs to show that it is making the best and most efficient use of land and premises and positively promotes sustainable development through the upgrading and re-use of existing buildings and does not cause unacceptable environmental impacts.

<u>New employment-generating uses and intensification of existing sites:</u>

Planning permission will only be granted for new employment generating uses within Category 1 and 2 employment sites or within the city and district centres.

Planning permission will be granted for the intensification and modernisation of any Category 1 or 2 employment site.

Planning permission will only be granted for the intensification and modernisation of a Category 3 employment site where that site is located within the city or a district centre. Outside of these locations, Category 3 employment sites can only be regenerated for employment purposes if better and more intensive use is made of the site through the redevelopment, up-grading or re-use of existing under-used buildings. Proposals for additional employment floorspace on Category 3 employment sites outside the city and district centres must follow the sequential approach for new town centre uses as set out in Policy C1.

Re-development of brownfield Category 1, 2 and Category 3 employment sites in the city and district centres, with new buildings, must use sustainable methods of construction and materials and be operationally energy efficient.

Category 1 and 2 employment sites are listed in Appendix 3.1 and 3.2 and are shown on the policies map. All other employment sites are Category 3 employment sites.

<u>Loss of employment floorspace</u>

- **A) planning permission will not be granted for development that results in a net loss of employment floorspace on Category 1 sites (unless it can be fully justified that the site will remain fully operational for its employment use, and as long as the number of jobs related to employment generating uses at the site is retained).**
- **B) planning permission will be granted for development that results in a net loss of employment floorspace on Category 2 sites providing the number of jobs in employment-related uses at the site is retained.**

C) planning permission will be granted for the loss of any Category 3 employment sites to other uses. Proposals for residential development will be supported.

Residential development on employment sites:

Proposals for residential development on any category of employment sites will be assessed by a balanced judgement which will consider the following objectives (in addition to the considerations regarding loss of floorspace or jobs outlined above, which still apply):

D) the desirability of meeting as much housing need as possible in sustainable locations within the city;
E) the need to avoid loss or significant harm to the continued operation or integrity of successful and/ or locally useful, or high-employment business and employment sites and the need to avoid impairing existing business operations through the location of incompatible residential uses in close proximity to exiting employment uses;
F) the essential importance of creating satisfactory residential living conditions and a pleasant residential environment with a sense of place, connected by safe walking routes to shops, schools and open space, community facilities and public transport; and
G) the desirability of achieving environmental improvements such as remediation, planting, biodiversity gains, sustainable development forms, improvements in highway conditions and the improvement of living conditions for existing residents.
H) Be well designed in terms of scale and massing, compliment the surrounding development and contribute towards the creation of a sense of place and be well connected to services and public transport / active travel opportunities;
I) Provide an acceptable level of amenity for future occupiers, in accordance with Local Plan standards; and
J) Not be located next to incompatible uses, by virtue of their noise / disturbance or operational issues.

Warehousing and Storage Uses

Warehousing and storage uses can be useful in supporting local employers in sectors such as manufacturing and are essential in supporting key employers to maintain their supply chain. However new B8 uses, owing to their low job density and high demand for land will not be encouraged in the city except in exceptional circumstances where there is a specific link to a Category 1 employment site.

The Council will work with partners to promote the use of freight consolidation centres where possible. Within consolidation centres goods are grouped together so that fewer delivery journeys are required by road, thus reducing air pollution, congestion and noise across Oxford. This would be particularly beneficial in reducing delivery trips to the city centre businesses, Oxford University and the colleges.

Policy E2: Warehousing and Storage Uses

Planning permission will only be granted for new or expanded warehousing and storage uses if it is within an existing employment site (of any category) and where it can be demonstrated in the planning application that the use is essential to support the operational requirements of a Category 1 employment site.

Planning permission will be granted for the loss of B8 space (on any category site) where it is not essential to support a Category 1 employment site.

Planning permission will be granted for redevelopment of an existing car showroom for housing where the site is considered suitable for such an alternative use.

In all cases the suitability of the proposed use will be assessed against the site-specific circumstances.

Affordable Workspace Strategy and Affordable Workspace

Oxford has a successful economy, but its success does bring challenges. The recent demand for more research and development space has seen a significant increase in office rents, which has meant that SME's and Social Enterprises have experienced difficulties in being able to find affordable workspace in the city. Office space in the city centre has reached almost £50 per sqft, whilst laboratory space now commands up to £75 per sqft. SME's and Social Enterprises are now being priced out of the city, which will have a detrimental impact on innovation opportunities, productivity and the diversity of jobs in Oxford.

The provision of such affordable workspace would help a broader range of businesses to remain and locate in the city which would otherwise not be able to afford the rent spaces at the high market rent. The provision of such workspaces brings more diversity to the city's employment offer and provides employment opportunities that would not be available in the city. This approach would help local people to start-up new businesses, support social enterprises and promote social value.

This policy approach aligns with the vision for an 'inclusive economy', set out in the Oxford

Economic Strategy together with the aims and objectives of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy and Investment Plan (2022). The policy comprises two key elements, firstly the requirement for an affordable workspace strategy and secondly it identifies larger commercial development sites where the provision of affordable workspace is required. A workspace strategy should set out the details of the affordable workspace to be delivered which would include details of the amount of affordable workspace, its marketing and future management and servicing.

The policy requires the affordable workspace to be provided on-site and designed and fitted out to meet the needs of the sector for the future SME or Social Enterprise occupier, which could include office, light industrial or research and development. The policy sets out a list of major commercial development sites where affordable workspace is expected to be provided.

Policy E3: Affordable Workspace Strategy and Affordable Workspace Provision on Commercial Sites

Development proposals delivering commercial development[4] are expected to produce an affordable workspace strategy which will set out the details of the affordable workspace to be delivered as part of their masterplans which should include details of the size, marketing, servicing and the management of the spaces on the following sites:

- **ARC Oxford**
- **Oxford Science Park**
- **Oxpens**
- **Osney Mead**
- **Nuffield Sites**
- **Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure complex**
- **Unipart**
    - **Northern Gateway**

The City Council will work proactively and collaboratively with any developers on any sites where they would like to promote the delivery of affordable workspace in their development.

The details of the affordable workspace strategy including the size, management and servicing of the space will be secured through a Section 106 agreement to the satisfaction of the local planning authority.

[4] This is commerical development and would not include development to meet Category 1 employer operational needs

Community Employment Plans

The City Council is committed to working in partnership with business and key partners (OxLEP, Oxford Strategic Partnership), to promote an 'inclusive economy' that helps to deliver greater job opportunities and skills for local people. Oxford has a challenging labour market with different sectors competing for jobs. Skills and training for the local workforce is important for businesses to drive economic growth, productivity and provide services, but equally helps to deliver wider economic benefits, social value and well-being for all its citizens.

Community Employment Plans (CEP's) can significantly improve job opportunities for local people and support both the local labour market and the businesses that operate in Oxford or wish to move to the city. CEP's have an important role to play both during the construction period of a development but also in providing jobs through the operational phase or completed development from the end-users.

The construction phase of a major development provides the opportunity, through a community employment plan, for local people to work in the building industry (through apprenticeships / skills / training and making links to schools and colleges) and to secure commitments from a developer to procure materials and labour supply locally. The developer would be encouraged to pay employees the Oxford Living Wage and use contractors who pay this higher level than the national living wage. During the operational phase agreements to secure a proportion of the longer-term workforce or supply chain locally or commitments to community education and outreach can ensure ongoing benefits. Developers would also be able to deliver affordable workspaces under this policy which have been shown to bring a range of socio-economic benefits including bringing diversity and strengthening to an area and building community wealth.

Policy E4: Community Employment and Procurement Plans

Planning permission will only be granted for proposals of 50 or more homes or over 1,000sqm non-residential floorspace where they are supported by a Community Employment and Procurement Plan (CEPP). The CEPP must identify the opportunities that will be provided by the development to support the inclusive economy, demonstrate the social value of the proposals and set out how they will be promoted and delivered. CEPPs will be expected to address all the following criteria:

a. **Securing construction jobs for local residents;**
b. **Providing construction apprenticeships and/ or training opportunities for local residents**
c. **Linking with local schools and colleges;**
d. **Securing jobs in the operational/ end-user phase for local residents;**
e. **Procuring a proportion of on-going supply chain needs locally;**
f. **Paying all employees (other than apprentices) the Oxford Living Wage;**
g. **Only using contractors who commit to paying the Oxford Living Wage or other social clauses appropriate to the development**
h. **Procuring a proportion of construction materials locally; and**
i. **Delivery of affordable workspaces.**

The City Council will use a condition and/or legal agreement to secure these commitments in accordance with a site-specific CEPP.

Smaller developments, below the threshold for a CEPP, will be expected to provide a written statement in support of their planning application to show what job opportunities, and or skills and training prospects can be delivered during the construction and or end-user phase of the development.

Tourism and Short Stay Accommodation

Tourism is a significant sector of Oxford's economy with distinct needs and pressures. Oxford is consistently in the top 10 most visited UK overnight destinations for international tourists. Tourists and visitors help support a wide range of facilities and attractions such as theatres, cinemas and the ice rink. Before the pandemic, Oxford had a strong tourism sector with 14% of all the jobs in the city being tourism-related in 2019. However, in 2020, the city was impacted by a decline in visitor spend of 66% and a 51% decline in the sector[5]. The tourism sector (and hospitality) was impacted by the pandemic. It is important to support the recovery of sectors such as these which are critical to the vitality

[5] https://www.experienceoxfordshire.org/economic-impact-survey-2020/

and functioning of a city such as Oxford. Oxford has many short-stay visitors, often visiting for a day or only a few hours, which has fewer benefits for the local economy.

The Oxford Short-stay Accommodation Study recognises the important role that visitors (both for leisure and business) play in Oxford's economy. The city has a good range and diversity of short-stay accommodation. The policy sets out the locational requirements for the provision of new short stay accommodation; it includes criteria for the expansion of existing accommodation and criteria for seeking to protect the loss of existing short-stay accommodation. It does however provide support for the loss of smaller guesthouses and or B & B's either to residential use or where it does not meet the locational requirements. Policy H7 Development involving loss of dwellings needs to be fully considered when assessing proposals for tourism and short stay accommodation.

Tourism and hotel development are 'main town centre uses'. Future growth is therefore subject to a sequential approach directing new development to the City and District centres as the preferred location for these uses.

Policy E5: Tourism and Short Stay Accommodation

Planning permission will only be granted for the development of new sites for holiday and other short stay accommodation in the following locations:

- **in the city centre;**
- **In district centres;**
- **on sites allocated for that purpose; and**
- **on Oxford's main arterial roads where there is frequent and direct public transport to the city centre.**

Planning permission will only be granted for new holiday and short stay accommodation or for the expansion and or refurbishment of existing accommodation where it meets the following criteria:

a. it is acceptable in terms of access, parking, highway safety, traffic generation, pedestrian and cycle movements; and
b. it does not result in the loss of a residential dwelling as set out in Policy H7; and
c. it will not result in an unacceptable level of noise and or disturbance to nearby residents.

Planning permission will only be granted for the change of use from holiday and other short-stay accommodation when any of the following criteria are met:

d. the existing property has less than 10 bedrooms and is proposed to be changed to residential use;
e. a property with 10 or more bedrooms, within the City centre, District centre or on a main arterial road would need to provide sufficient robust evidence of non-viability to justify its loss;
f. **a property is unsuitable for the use as demonstrated by being contrary to the location requirements or any of the criteria a-c above.**

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Chapter 4 - A Green Biodiverse City that is Resilient to Climate Change

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Glossary

Biodiversity - A collective term for the variety of wildlife and flora that are present in a particular area. More species and greater variety is generally reflective of higher biodiversity, this can be important for ensuring greater resilience to pressures such as climate change and pollution.

Biodiversity net gain - Biodiversity net gain is a strategy to develop land and contribute to the recovery of nature. It is a way of making sure the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development.

Climate Change Adaptation - A process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects, in order to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.

DEFRA biodiversity metric - The biodiversity metric is a habitat based approach used to assess an area's value to wildlife. The metric uses habitat features to calculate a biodiversity value. Use of the metric is required to demonstrate net gain requirements in line with the Environment Act legislation.

Ecological network - this is one component of the overall green infrastructure network and where the term is used in the Local Plan, this specifically relates to the collection of spaces in the city which play a particularly vital role in supporting ecology and have been designated for this primary purpose.

Ecosystem services - The direct and indirect goods and services that nature contributes to our health and wellbeing, including benefits like food production, water quality, regulation of floods, resilience to soil erosion, as well as more intangible benefits like stress reduction and contributing to our sense of place and character of the city.

Green Infrastructure - A network of spaces and features including parks, playing fields, woodland, allotments, private gardens, green roofs and walls, street trees. The term also incorporates 'blue infrastructure' such as streams, ponds, canals, and the rivers.

Multi-functional - In the context of green infrastructure, the term multi-functional means the multiple benefits that features and spaces can provide simultaneously, often contributing to better health and wellbeing for people and the natural environment (e.g. supporting mental/physical health; providing space for biodiversity; climate resilience etc). Some types of GI may provide more benefits than others.

Native planting - A native plant is one that has evolved naturally in its location without direct human intervention, as opposed to species that have not existed historically in an area but are introduced by human activities.

Residual risk - Residual risk is the risk that remains after efforts to identify and eliminate some or all types of risk have been made.

Resilience - Our ability to anticipate, absorb, accommodate, or recover from the effects of a hazardous event in a timely and efficient manner. When talking about climate resilience such events could include flash flooding or intense heatwave events.

Site of Special Scientific Interest - Areas identified by Natural England as being of special interest for their ecological or geological features. Natural England is the government's advisor on the natural environment.

Site specific flood risk assessments (FRAs) - A study that determines how a proposed development will manage flood risk from all possible water sources to the site in question.

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) - Special Areas of Conservation are areas that have been designated at a European level as important for nature conservation.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) - Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems are a sequence of water management practices and facilities designed to drain surface water and protect against flooding. These include porous roads, high-level road drainage, swales, soakaways, filter trenches, wet and dry attenuation ponds and ditches. SuDS helps mimic natural drainage processes and can provide benefits in terms of sustainability, water quality and amenity.

4.1 The policies set out in this chapter address the important need for protecting and enhancing a network of green and blue spaces across our city for the multitude of benefits they provide for our health and wellbeing and the wider natural environment. This includes conserving those spaces that are particularly valuable for our wildlife and flora but also making new space for nature at a variety of scales supporting nature recovery—from smaller features in new development to wider habitat creation in line with the objectives of the Environment Act 2021.

4.2 Together, these policies also form a key part of the Local Plan's strategy for maintaining and strengthening the city's resilience to climate change, by which we mean ensuring that Oxford and its inhabitants are adapted to withstand the risks arising from the changing climate, and better able to recover when hazards like flooding or heatwaves occur. There is intrinsic

overlap between the policies in this chapter, however they are divided into three subsections addressing the topics of green and blue infrastructure; biodiversity and the ecological network; as well as flood risk and climate resilient design.

Green and Blue Infrastructure

4.3 A key feature that contributes to the special character of Oxford is its close relationship with the natural environment that encircles and permeates the city. The city benefits from a wide range of green spaces such as parks, natural and semi-natural spaces, historic sites, floodplains and sites of importance to biodiversity and nature conservation. There is also an extensive network of more than 248,000 trees of varying age, species and quality that cumulatively comprise the 'Urban Forest' and which provide a myriad of social, environmental and economic benefits. Equally, blue infrastructure is interwoven and interlinked with these areas, enhancing the experience and function of it. The key waterways are the River Thames, River Cherwell and the Oxford Canal, but there are also many brooks and streams, such as Bayswater Brook and Northfield Brook, which form part of wildlife and movement corridors.

4.4 Green and blue infrastructure performs a vital role in supporting the health and wellbeing of our residents and is particularly important for its 'multi-functional' role, providing a range of services and benefits at the same time for the local area. These benefits include space for recreation and social interaction; food production; habitat for biodiversity; mitigating flood risk; a place of respite in heatwaves; and ameliorating poor air quality. This wide range of outputs and benefits is sometimes referred to as 'ecosystem services'. But our green and blue infrastructure faces a variety of pressures, from those arising from the need to accommodate new development in a constrained city; to the recreational impacts that occur as people use these spaces, as well as from climate change and pollution.

4.5 The approach for the Local Plan recognises the multi-functional benefits of our GI network and seeks to ensure that we protect a range of spaces and features for the benefit of the city now and into the future, where possible enhancing these and providing new features to strengthen that network. There are three policies that relate directly to the provision of green and blue infrastructure in the city. Policy G1 sets out the protections on the various features and spaces that make up the green and blue infrastructure network in the city, including green spaces and individual features such as trees and hedgerows, which applicants will need to consider when bringing forward development in the city. Policy G2 sets out how enhancement of existing green infrastructure and provision of new green infrastructure should be delivered within development, which will also be of relevance where applications need to re-provide features or spaces to address any losses as required under policy G1. This policy also sets out expectations for aftercare in terms of ongoing management and maintenance to ensure successful establishment. Meanwhile, Policy G3 includes more specific requirements around providing green, natural surface cover on specific types of development through use of the Council's Urban Greening Factor policy tool.

Protection of Green Infrastructure

Green and Blue Infrastructure Network

Green Spaces in the city will have a varied range of functions. Of great importance is the way these spaces function together as a network. Connections between these features means green spaces can act as movement corridors for both people and nature. The spaces to be most strongly protected are those that provide a multitude of functions, that are most important to the local area and also those that need to be protected in situ to avoid fragmenting linkages. Blue infrastructure is particularly important in this linking role, such as the rivers Cherwell and Thames and their embankments and surrounding green spaces, as well as smaller streams and watercourses found throughout the city. These dynamic assets serve as important blue corridors that not only play a role in linking up natural spaces within Oxford, but also more widely throughout the county, as well as contributing to flood resilience and general wellbeing.

The Local Plan seeks to protect all public and private green infrastructure in the city from inappropriate development and ensure that, where it comes forward, development mitigates any potential impacts. However, the protection in this policy recognises that particular spaces and their existing location are especially fundamental to the functioning of a strong GI network. The hierarchy of GI spaces is as follows:

1. **Core Green and Blue spaces** – designated at highest level in hierarchy due to their fundamental role in supporting the city-wide network through wildlife habitat and corridor functions, flood storage, intensity of use and strength of heritage or other local value, which means they are not easily moved elsewhere. It is considered that these spaces cannot be removed/reprovided sufficiently without compromising the overall character and function. Some spaces are subject to separate policy protection to reflect the additional considerations that apply here (namely ecological designated sites). *Designated G1A on policies map.*
2. **Supporting Green and Blue spaces** – These spaces play an important role in enhancing the network and its overall function, and their loss will be resisted; however there is more opportunity for reprovision. As such change of use which is accompanied by reprovision to another part of the network, ideally onsite, to the same standard or higher will be accepted. Spaces have only been identified as supporting green and blue spaces if they are clearly carrying out green infrastructure functions; therefore, it is considered to be unlikely that any of these spaces could be found to be surplus, although it is accepted that there could be changes over time. Additional considerations for proposals affecting these types of spaces are highlighted below. *Designated G1B on policies map*.
3. **All other Green and Blue spaces –** these spaces also support the overall network, as well as often helping to enhance the more urban areas of the city by breaking up the built environment with pockets of natural amenity, but are typically smaller and more fragmented, playing a reduced multi-functional role as a result. Change of use will be accepted where it is accompanied by sufficient reprovision, ideally onsite, and to the same standard or higher, or if it can be demonstrated in the application that current provision is surplus to requirements. *Other green and blue spaces are not identified on the policies map*.

Additional protections apply to land designated as Green Belt (also identified on the policies map) which is primarily focussed on preventing the spread of development and the coalescence of urban areas helping to protect the historic setting of the city. Where applications are proposed within green belt, these will be determined in accordance with

national policy.

Additional considerations for proposals affecting particular types of spaces

It is important to recognise that there may be other specific contextual considerations relating to the type of open space which need to be taken into account in proposals affecting open spaces, aside from level of designation within the network. These are expanded upon in the Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity TAN. These considerations will relate to the particular primary function a space is providing and will be of relevance when determining whether a site is 'surplus to requirements', but also in identifying the qualities and sensitivities that enable these spaces to function as they do, which any design would need to take into account. As well as making reference to an up-to-date GI or open space study, proposals should consider the following when demonstrating compliance with Policy G1, regardless of where the site sits in the hierarchy:

- **Spaces for outdoor sport including pitches** - where relevant, particularly when demonstrating a proposal to reprovide facilities, applicants will have to demonstrate that alternative sites are equally available locally, review any relevant information within the Council's latest Playing Pitch Study, and liaise with Sports England and the City Council's Active Communities team where necessary. Consideration should be given to the types of sports that the space provides for currently, whether this can be accommodated elsewhere, or whether alternative sports might better suit the local community.
- **Allotments and other spaces for food growing (e.g. community orchards) –** where relevant, particularly where a proposal could reduce provision, applicants will have to demonstrate consideration of the current provision of allotments and other food growing opportunities in the local area, including review of up-to-date waiting lists, quality/quantity of plot provision and supporting facilities. Disposal of allotments requires application to the Secretary of State and is only consented in exceptional circumstances.
- **Churchyards and cemeteries –** where relevant, will have to demonstrate consideration of the historical context of many of these areas and their role as a setting for irreplaceable heritage assets and broader cultural/social significance.
  Parks and gardens, accessible greenspace and amenity greenspaces – these spaces often play a role in supporting people to socialize, take part in informal recreation (particularly where facilities like children/youth play and outdoor gym equipment are present), and generally provide an escape from the urban environment. Where relevant, applicants will have to demonstrate consideration of how any loss can be mitigated, especially if this is located in an area which already suffers from a deficit of such spaces according to an up-to-date green infrastructure/open space study.

Another important element of the GI network is that of private gardens, which make up a considerable amount of land use within the city. Private gardens offer valuable opportunities for private amenity and socialising and can host a range of green and blue features which support the functioning of the wider network by providing additional space for wildlife, as well as contributing to resilience to climate change. As with other spaces, they make an important contribution to the fabric of the urban realm injecting pockets of natural features that support the amenity of the surrounding public realm. Many of these same characteristics extend to other non-domestic garden settings, such as those

associated with academic buildings (schools, colleges and universities), as well as other non-residential uses like offices and industrial buildings.

Existing green infrastructure features

Trees and hedgerows – Aside from open spaces, the network is also enhanced by a number of individual features such as trees and hedgerows which are spread across parks, street planting, institutional and municipal land, as well as private gardens and other spaces. Of particular value are ancient woodland, ancient/veteran trees and important hedgerows (as defined by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997), which are assigned a high level of protection through national policy. A small proportion of trees benefit from TPOs, or protection through conservation areas, but this is not the only determiner of quality/importance and many have not been designated with formal protection though may be of a similar or higher quality with varied contributions to the area (e.g. of value for amenity, biodiversity or as setting of heritage assets). A varying level of protection and associated requirements expected in order to justify any loss are assigned through the policy. Any strategy for a site where trees are present should consider their value with regard to these broader benefits, making use of best practice criteria such as the BS.5837:2012 standards or future equivalent. *Individual trees are not identified on the proposals map.*

Other features – A range of other individual GI features support the GI network and provide localised benefits to the spaces where they are found particularly in supporting amenity and biodiversity. These include features like ponds, smaller streams, green roofs and walls, as well as hedges, and wild patches of vegetation. As well as in public spaces, these features can be particularly important to the amenity of domestic/institutional gardens (such as gardens associated with private dwellings, care homes, schools and the Universities/Colleges).

Policy G1 – Protection of Green Infrastructure

Green and Blue Infrastructure Network

The City Council will seek to protect the GI network for the many and varied benefits it offers. The hierarchy of GI spaces and the policy approach for each level of the hierarchy is as follows:

G1A: Core Green and Blue spaces

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would result in loss of, or harm to, the protected spaces identified as Core Oxford Green and Blue spaces and the important green network function they provide. These spaces are designated G1A on the proposals map.

G1B: Supporting Green and Blue spaces

Planning permission will only be granted for proposals which affect Supporting Green and Blue spaces where any harm/loss is mitigated by ensuring sufficient reprovision, ideally onsite, and to the same standard or higher. These spaces are designated G1B on the proposals map.

G1C: All other Green and Blue spaces

Planning permission will only be granted for proposals which affect all other Green and Blue spaces where any impacts are mitigated by ensuring sufficient reprovision, ideally onsite, and to the same standard or higher, or if it can be demonstrated in the application that current provision is surplus to requirements.

Residential Garden Land

Planning permission will be granted for new dwellings on residential garden land provided that:

a) the proposal responds to the character and appearance of the area, taking into account the views from streets, footpaths and the wider residential and public environment; and

b) the plot to be developed is of an appropriate size and shape to accommodate the proposal, taking into account the scale, layout and spacing of existing and surrounding buildings, and the minimum requirements for living conditions set out in Policies HD11, HD12 and HD13; and

c) requirements are met for biodiversity as set out in Policy G4, greening factor as set out in Policy G3 as well as requirements for protection of existing green infrastructure features, as set out below.

Existing green infrastructure features

Planning permission will not be granted for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland or ancient or veteran trees and important

hedgerows except in wholly exceptional circumstances or there is a suitable compensation strategy in place (as per Government Guidance[1]).

Planning permission will not be granted for development resulting in the loss of other trees, except in the following circumstances:

d) it can be demonstrated that preservation of the trees is not feasible which should include:

i. evidence of testing of practical alternative site layouts that might preserve the tree(s) where possible; and

ii. Evidence that loss or other impacts to any tree(s) on the site has been minimised where possible, and guided by BS.5837:2012 recommendations or its future equivalent;

e) where tree retention is not feasible, any loss of tree canopy cover should be mitigated by the planting of new trees or introduction of additional tree cover (with consideration to the predicted future tree canopy on the site at maturity following development) to achieve a minimum of no net-loss of tree canopy cover; and

f) where loss of trees cannot be mitigated by tree planting then alternative forms of green infrastructure should be incorporated that will mitigate the loss of trees, using the Urban Greening Factor to demonstrate no reduction in GI score as a minimum (as well as meeting any other requirements as set out in policy G3).

Planning permission will not be granted for development that results in the loss of other green infrastructure features such as hedges or ponds where this would have a significant adverse impact upon public amenity or ecological interest. If it is demonstrated that their retention is not feasible, then their loss must be mitigated in accordance with other relevant policies, in particular Policy G3.

Enhancement and provision of new green and blue features

Ensuring the provision of green and blue infrastructure features on new development that provides *multi-functional* benefits for health and wellbeing of people and wider environment should be fundamental to the design process. This might include providing enhancements to the existing green/blue features on a site, as well as providing entirely new features and spaces.

Choice of green features should be guided by the context of the site but could include trees, hedges and pollinator friendly planting as well as blue features like ponds and rain gardens. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate green/brown roofs into the design of the development as well as greening facades through use of green walls. On larger sites, there may be opportunities to incorporate tree-lined streets and multi-purpose green drainage features (SuDS) that can provide space for play and recreation, protection from heat, and also act as flood storage at times of heavy rainfall. By ensuring that the choice of species, their location and arrangement within the site and ongoing management is tailored towards maximising such benefits from the beginning, applicants can ensure the

[1] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-ancient-trees-and-veteran-trees-advice-for-making-planning-decisions

most successful and long-lasting design outcomes for the lifetime of the development.

Beyond multi-functionality, in demonstrating that green infrastructure considerations have played a fundamental part of the design process, it is important that selection of new features has been guided by local context and opportunities on the site as well as in the surrounding area. In practice this could mean that:

- Where new open space is provided, applicants have tailored the type of provision to address existing needs or deficiencies in access locally. For example, by providing space for food growing where residents might not have access to allotments in the local area or incorporating play features for younger people.
- Where there is an opportunity to strengthen links between green spaces, particularly ecological sites, the applicant has incorporated features like lines of trees/hedges to support these linkages and enhance the network, or perhaps taken opportunities to open up and enhance access to rivers and streams including their banks.
- Where the site is in proximity to busy roads that could cause noise or air pollution issues, green infrastructure such as trees and wild meadows has been used as a buffering feature to improve amenity for residents and reduce their exposure to ill effects.
- Where a site is particularly urbanised and lacking in green features, including an abundance of hard, artificial surface cover or lack of canopy cover, the new design has responded to these conditions and paid particular focus to unsealing surfaces where possible and incorporating additional natural surfacing, including on walls/roofs, as well as increasing canopy cover.

Larger developments will be expected to include on-site public open space such as small parks which should have a mix of uses tailored to the needs of occupants and the local area, for example, a nature area, seating, a playground and kick-about area, or areas left aside for community food growing. This provision can be important for reducing pressures on existing green spaces in the local area when new development brings in more residents. In exceptional circumstances, where on-site provision is not achievable, opportunities should be sought for enhancing existing public open space in the vicinity of the development to help accommodate any additional pressures arising in liaison with the Council, such as by providing additional recreational facilities on a site where existing provision is lacking. Developer contributions and/or legal agreement may be sought to deliver such outcomes where these are identified as important for the sustainable delivery of a scheme.

Additional greening requirements in certain situations

Whilst this policy sets out general requirements for new green infrastructure, particular types of development and development on allocated sites will be subject to additional bespoke requirements that are set out in complementary policies in the Local Plan. On qualifying sites, applicants will need to make use of the Council's Urban Greening Factor to quantify changes in green surface cover proposed in their application and to meet specific targets for provision, and reference should be made to **policy G3** where applicable. Meanwhile, on allocated sites, the Council has assessed existing green infrastructure provision and future needs in advance of allocation through the Local Plan, and applicants are expected to address any detailed requirements for green infrastructure as set out in the relevant allocation policy for that site (**chapter 8**).

Maintenance and management arrangement

Regardless of the type of green infrastructure provided by new development, it is important that design has considered the ongoing maintenance and management of these features to ensure future success. For example, new trees require ongoing watering and care for the first few years after planting to ensure successful establishment as well as periodic pruning and surveying throughout the rest of their life. Establishment periods for green infrastructure like trees are also coming under increasing pressure as climate change brings longer periods of hotter, drier weather that can put new planting under stress, particularly in more urban areas. The City Council will require agreement of maintenance and management arrangements where appropriate to ensure new features are successful in the long term.

Policy G2 – Enhancement and provision of new Green and Blue features

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that include a variety of green infrastructure features as a fundamental component in the design of new development. Where the site includes existing GI features, proposals should seek to enhance these, prioritising opportunities to improve linkages between features in order to strengthen connections with the wider green infrastructure network including beyond the boundaries of the site. Features should be highlighted clearly within the Design and Access Statement where required and/or on landscape/elevation plans, which should also include details of how the following requirements have been met where relevant.

The selection of green/blue features, or enhancement of any existing features, should be tailored to the specific context of the site and surrounding area. The proposal should set out clearly how GI has been designed to secure multi-functional benefits which contribute to the following, where relevant:

a) **Public access**
b) **Health and wellbeing, including recreation and play**
c) **Biodiversity**
d) **Creating linkages with surrounding green infrastructure (including the countryside)**
e) **Addressing climate change (including carbon sequestration; reducing flood risk; providing sustainable drainage; reducing overheating and promoting urban cooling)**
f) **Enhancing appearance and character/sense of place**
g) **Enhancing the setting of heritage assets**
h) **Connectivity of walking and cycling routes**
i) **Opportunities for edible planting or community food growing**

<u>Opportunities to enhance blue corridors</u>

For proposals on sites incorporating or located adjacent to watercourses, opportunities should be sought through careful design and landscaping to re-naturalise the water courses where possible, including restoration of the bankside and instream habitats and leaving an undeveloped buffer zone of at least 10 metres width. In some cases, this may require reinstatement of the buffer zone on previously developed land.

<u>New public open space</u>

In situations where the proposal relates to replacement provision that is mitigating losses elsewhere, this will need to be demonstrated to be equally or more accessible by walking, cycling and public transport to local users of the existing site where relevant.

For residential sites of 1.5 hectares and above, new public open space of 10% of the area covered by residential development is required. For mixed-use sites, the area of residential use should be used for that calculation.

Maintenance/management arrangements

Appropriate maintenance/management plans should be organised as part of the design/construction process. Applicants will be required to replace any failed features for the first five years post-completion, unless agreed otherwise with the Council, and this will be secured through planning condition. Where appropriate, applicants will be expected to enter into a legal agreement to ensure that any new public space is properly maintained, by means of a financial contribution to the City Council.

Provision of new Green and Blue features – Urban Greening Factor

Overuse of artificial, impermeable surfacing materials like concrete, artificial lawns and tarmac on new development can have a range of negative impacts for the environment and the people that go on to utilise these spaces. Conversely, natural, green surface cover can promote multiple benefits, from providing space for biodiversity and mental/physical health benefits for people, as well as promoting climate resilience through slowing and storing rainwater during intense downpours and promoting cooling during high heat events.

The Urban Greening Factor (UGF) assessment is a policy tool that seeks to quantify and drive onsite urban greening on new development, with particular attention on the naturalness of surface cover. The UGF assigns weighted scores to different types of surface cover provided on a site based upon the variety of environmental benefits that they provide the site and its occupants.

The assessment process requires applicants to assess and quantify green infrastructure on their site prior to developing the area to establish a baseline for the site. This process is then repeated to assess the green infrastructure coverage which is proposed in the design of the new development to be provided post-development.

This policy sets out the minimum conditions for urban greening that major development will need to meet in Oxford, which are:

- a requirement of no net loss in baseline score of the site through the development process; and
- ensuring all new development also meets the minimum standard of provision in the amount of natural surface cover expected on sites in the city where the current baseline is below this.

The requirements of this policy and the UGF tool are not intended to be used in place of other policy requirements, such as submission of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) biodiversity metric to demonstrate biodiversity net gain, or the need for landscaping plans. There will however be natural crossover between these considerations and the assessment process for this policy can supplement/contribute to meeting other relevant policy requirements where relevant. Whilst the use of the UGF assessment is only required of major development through the policy, other types of development are encouraged to use the tool to calculate change in green surface cover in support of their application where possible.

Policy G3 – Provision of new Green and Blue features – Urban Greening Factor

An appropriate proportion of natural green surface cover – which may be comprised of both existing and newly installed features – will need to be demonstrated on certain proposals (as set out below) and evidenced via submission of a completed Urban Greening Factor (UGF) assessment.

Applicants are expected to assess and submit the baseline score for the site pre-development, prior to any site clearance, as well as the proposal as built/post-development. The as built/post-development score required for development proposals will need to meet the following policy criteria:

Major development: proposals should demonstrate that there would be no reduction in baseline score and achieve a minimum score of:

- **0.3 for residential or predominantly residential schemes**
- **0.2 for predominantly non-residential schemes**

All other forms of development – with the exception of householder applications – are encouraged to demonstrate how they have undertaken greening of their site through use of the UGF tool, though this is not mandatory.

Along with the submitted UGF assessment, all greening features proposed for the development and used in the calculation of the UGF score should be clearly demonstrated on associated landscaping/elevation plans in the application.

The adopted calculation formulae and the factors for various surface cover types are outlined in Appendix 4.1.

Biodiversity and the ecological network

4.6 Oxford benefits from a concentration of rare and valuable habitats that are important refuges for a variety of flora and fauna, including lowland hay meadows, calcareous grassland, alkaline spring fen (among other types of wetland) as well as pockets of woodland. Their ongoing protection is important as many species and habitats across the country continue to experience significant losses due to a range of pressures including from changing land use, pollution and climate change. Alongside the broader green infrastructure policies set out earlier which will make an important contribution to supporting biodiversity in the city, the Local Plan includes several more specific policies that seek to reduce and mitigate the pressures on biodiversity in Oxford.

4.7 Policy G4 and G5 set out requirements for biodiversity net gain and additional onsite ecological enhancements that are intended to support increases in biodiversity in and around the city. Policy G6 sets out specific protections for Oxford's most important local and national designated ecological sites. These sites are an important component of the wider Green Infrastructure network referred to in policy G1 but are subject to additional considerations which reflect their specific role in supporting biodiversity now and in the future.

Delivering mandatory net gains in biodiversity

Under the Environment Act 2021 all new planning applications must deliver biodiversity net gain, with an initial requirement of 10% expected to be introduced for large sites in January 2024 and small sites in April 2024[2]. There are certain exemptions, including householder applications, to which this requirement does not apply. The 10% target should be considered as the minimum and applicants are strongly encouraged to explore options for delivery of net gain that exceeds this 10% wherever possible.

This policy sets out that in the first instance the expectation is that biodiversity net gain is delivered either onsite or within those areas of land within the city which have been identified as being most beneficial for supporting the wider ecological network to secure as much benefit as possible for nearby species and habitats. These areas have been identified in the Oxfordshire draft Nature Recovery Network (NRN), which has been prepared in advance of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Oxfordshire. Where these options are not possible, applicants should then look to provide offsite enhancements in another suitable location within the city, or else, more widely on NRN/LNRS sites in the wider county.

As a last resort, and where there is robust justification for why delivery of net gain cannot be achieved onsite or offsite in line with the above, purchase of biodiversity units from a habitat bank or statutory biodiversity credits may be accepted to meet net gain requirements, for as long as such scheme exists.

Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the 10% net gain requirement will be met using the latest version of the Biodiversity Metric. The metric rules and principles set out by Natural England in the relevant User Guide must be adhered to, ensuring that all habitat categorisations and condition assessments are justified, with reference to the UK Habitat Classification System and the latest Biodiversity Metric Technical Supplement. Baseline and proposed habitat plans must also be submitted.

[2] Expected introduction dates based on central government guidance at time of writing.

Policy G4 – Delivering mandatory net gains in biodiversity

Planning permission will only be granted for development where it delivers a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain, as measured by the latest version of the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric, unless exempted by national legislation or guidance. This must be achieved in all sections of the Biodiversity Metric relevant to that development (e.g. habitat, hedgerow, and river units). Delivery that exceeds 10% net gain is strongly encouraged wherever possible.

A copy of the completed metric spreadsheet must be submitted in support of planning applications. All metrics must be completed in line with the requirements set out in the relevant DEFRA User Guide, Technical Supplement, and best practice principles.

Applications are expected to prioritise the delivery of net gain onsite, or on land in Oxford identified for its ecological potential within the Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network or the future Local Nature Recovery Strategy, unless this can be demonstrated to be unfeasible.

Where this is not feasible, delivery of off-site biodiversity enhancements will be expected to accord with the following hierarchy of preference:

- **Elsewhere within the Oxford boundary**
- **Elsewhere within the Nature Recovery Network in wider Oxfordshire**

Where offsite measures are proposed, these should focus on delivering high-quality priority habitats. Any offsetting proposed in alternative locations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Where it is robustly justified that the above cannot be achieved, purchase of biodiversity units from habitat banks elsewhere or statutory credits may be accepted as a last resort.

All onsite and offsite measures must be delivered through a biodiversity management and monitoring plan which must cover a period of at least 30 years in line with the national legislation requirements.

Enhancing onsite biodiversity in Oxford

The biodiversity net gain requirements required as part of the Environment Act, which are addressed in policy G4, focus specifically on habitat creation. This is one important way of supporting our wildlife; however, there are additional ways in which design can support biodiversity in the city, including targeted support for wildlife by providing resources such as food and shelter within the urban environment. These extra measures are particularly important where the 10% biodiversity net gain requirement cannot be delivered onsite.

As such, in addition to the habitat net gain required within policy G4, it is expected that applicants make space for nature by incorporating a range of ecological enhancements as

part of their development. Wherever possible, these features should be tailored to specific opportunities for supporting local species in the area, particularly priority species.

A minimum number of new ecological enhancements will be required on new developments. A list of enhancements have been identified in the Council's Ecological Points list as being particularly suitable to Oxford's setting which will need to be picked from and this is set out in appendix 4.2. In future, it is envisaged that this list may be updated and any subsequent versions will be published within the Technical Advice Note for Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity which should be referred to where appropriate.

After incorporating the 'mandatory' features that are required of all new development (including householder applications), the policy is flexible as to which enhancements can be chosen to reach the minimum points total for minors and majors allowing for selection to be tailored to the specific context of the site and surrounding area. Applicants should select a certain number of features from each of two 'pots' as set out in Figure 4.1. One pot relates to provision of shelter and movement features, whilst the other focuses on supporting landscape features. The ecological enhancements chosen to meet the points requirement of the policy will need to be clearly evidenced on associated landscape and elevation plans and/or within the Design and Access statement.

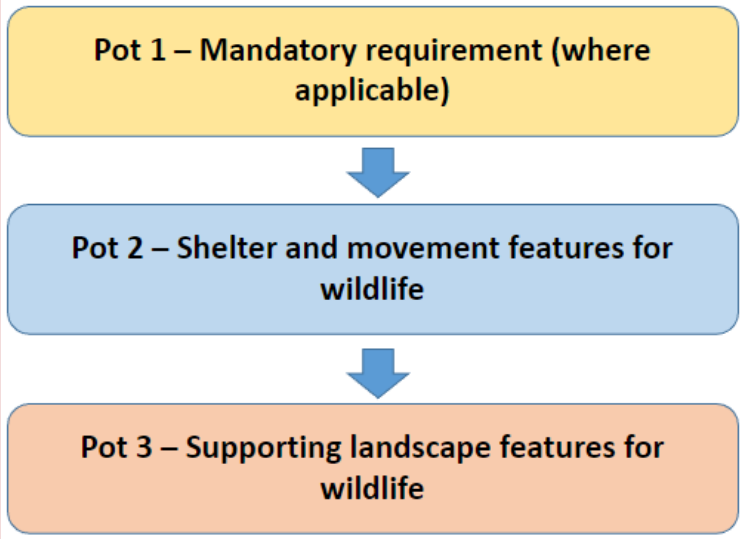


Figure 4.1: process for selecting ecological enhancements

Policy G5 – Enhancing onsite biodiversity in Oxford

All extensions and new-build development should seek to incorporate ecological enhancements into landscaping or building facades/roof spaces which are tailored to the priority habitats and protected species present within the site and surrounding area. Opportunities to create, expand, enhance or link ecological networks are particularly encouraged.

All new development must deliver a minimum number of ecological enhancements selected from the Council's Ecological Points List to achieve the required point total. The number of points required is as follows:

Type of application	Pot 1 requirements	Pot 2 requirements	Pot 3 requirements
Householder	All mandatory features (where applicable)	N/A	N/A
Minor		1	1
Major		2	2

Seeking advice from a suitably qualified ecologist on the ecological enhancements selected is encouraged. The chosen measure(s) will need to be clearly highlighted on landscape and elevation plans and/or within the design and access statement.

In addition, all new tree and soft landscaping must incorporate an element of native planting, and where non-native planting is proposed this should comprise species beneficial to UK pollinators and/or chosen to be well-adapted to future changes in climate. Proposals incorporating invasive plant species will be refused.

All maintenance and management requirements of the proposed enhancements must be specified within planning applications and secured via planning conditions.

Protecting Oxford's biodiversity including the ecological network

It is vital that existing biodiversity and features of ecological interest within Oxford are understood, and development proposals will need to be accompanied by sufficient ecological survey information to enable this. The extent and scale of survey effort required must be informed by the context of the site and appropriate ecological expertise. Where there is a reasonable likelihood of harm or loss to protected species or semi-natural habitats, targeted ecological surveys must be undertaken prior to the determination of any planning application.

The mitigation hierarchy needs to be followed when addressing any potential impacts on ecology and biodiversity that survey work has identified. This requires that applicants seek to avoid any potential impacts in the first instance through careful design/construction choice before tailoring the proposal to mitigate impacts. Only once the first two steps in the

hierarchy have been exhausted should compensation measures be considered. More advice is set out in the Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity TAN, whilst Oxfordshire County Council also has biodiversity guidance[3] available to assist applicants.

Designated sites

Whilst policy G1 assigns protection to a network of green and blue space across the city, this policy sets out additional protections for ecological sites within the network based upon their importance and value for the species and/or habitat they have been designated for, namely:

- International designations - The Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC), part of which is within Oxford's boundary, has been designated for the presence of lowland hay meadows and creeping marshwort (*Apium repens*).
- National designations - There are 12 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), eight of which were notified for their nature conservation interest and the others primarily for geological interest.
- Local designations including Local Wildlife Sites (LWS); Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and Oxford City Wildlife Sites (OCWS) - Oxford City Council holds a copy of the "Living List" of these sites that will be reviewed and maintained throughout the Local Plan period.

The starting point is that all designated sites within the ecological network will be protected from development except in exceptional circumstances as set out in the policy. This includes being developed upon, as well as being adversely affected by development nearby.

In determining the potential for adverse effects on ecology from a development, applicants will likely need to consider information from various sources, including the site context and surrounding area; expert ecological advice, as well as a review of relevant existing information where available, such as Natural England's Impact Risk Zones (IRZs). A range of potential impacts will need to be considered and will depend on the context of the application and proximity to any protected site(s), particularly, but not limited to:

- Loss of protected land
- Recreational impacts
- Changes to the hydrological regime (surface and groundwater particularly)
- Impacts on air quality
- Impacts on water quality
- Impacts from artificial lighting.

Areas of the city are potentially vulnerable to changes in hydrology that could arise from development and these impacts will need to be fully considered and mitigated where relevant. For example, Oxford Meadows SAC is potentially sensitive to changes in groundwater flows stemming from development on the North Oxford gravel terrace and new subterranean development on the gravel terrace will need to demonstrate through a hydrogeological assessment that there will be no significant adverse effect upon the integrity of the SAC through changes to groundwater flows. Within the groundwater catchment areas for the Lye Valley and New Marston Meadows SSSI's, development will

[3] https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/countryside/natural-environment/environmental-policy-and-planning/biodiversity-and-planning

need to demonstrate that impacts are avoided, or mitigated, such as by the use of infiltration methods where geological conditions allow.

New development immediately adjacent to Oxford's most valued sites, the SAC and SSSIs, will be expected to incorporate appropriate buffers that protect these sensitive areas during the construction and operational phases and ultimately deliver additional supporting habitat. The design of these buffers will need to be guided by the ecological context of the sites they are being designed to protect, as well as appropriate ecological advice.

There are also undesignated sites that support habitats and species of principal importance (this is a wider selection of habitats and species listed under S41 of the Natural Environmental and Rural Communities Act, 2006, some of which are protected under other legislation and some not). Wherever possible, development should seek to retain and enhance these other features of interest.

Policy G6 – Protecting Oxford's biodiversity including the ecological network

Development proposals must seek to conserve and enhance biodiversity including safeguarding the key sites of Oxford's ecological network.

Proposals with a reasonable likelihood of adversely impacting semi-natural habitats or protected species on or immediately adjacent to the site, will only be permitted where:

- **a) They have been informed by targeted ecological surveys, completed prior to determination of the planning application, unless explicitly agreed with the Council; and**
- **b) Any impacts identified have been satisfactorily addressed in the design of the development in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy; and**
- **c) Any impacts on species or habitats that are of city or county importance, in line with the criteria for LWS or OCWS designation, have been addressed in accordance with requirements for proposals affecting locally designated sites (criteria d and e below).**

<u>Internationally and nationally designated sites</u>
Development will not be permitted that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or an adverse effect on any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

In addition, development will not be permitted within the SAC or a SSSI except where it is related to and required for the management, maintenance or enhancement of the qualifying features of the site.

Development proposed on land immediately adjacent to the SAC or any SSSI must be designed with a buffer to that site that both helps to prevent adverse effects during the construction and operational phases of the development and delivers habitat supporting the interest features of that site.

<u>Locally designated sites</u>
Development that would have an adverse effect on a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Local Wildlife Site (LWS) or Oxford City Wildlife Site (OCWS) will only be permitted where:

- **d) There is an exceptional need for the new development that outweighs any adverse effect from loss of habitat or harm to any feature of interest for which the site was selected, and this need cannot be met by development on an alternative site with less biodiversity interest; and**
- **e) Satisfactory mitigation and compensation onsite or sufficiently local to preserve the feature of interest can be delivered and has been agreed with the Council.**

The same level of protection will be afforded to proposed LWS and proposed OCWS (prior to the conclusion of the selection process).

Where proposals result in habitat loss within a LNR or LWS, they must retain and enhance the interest features for which the site was selected.

Other features of interest
Development should seek to retain and enhance habitats and species of principal importance for biodiversity wherever possible.

Flood risk and climate resilient design

4.8 Climate change is the greatest threat facing society today and the way we design and construct the built environment has a key role to play, not only in how we mitigate our impacts on the climate (as is dealt with in Chapter 5), but also in how we can adapt to and withstand the impacts of a changing climate in future. A certain amount of climate change is already effectively baked into our future, even if the world were to stop emitting greenhouse gases tomorrow, due to the long-term effects of emissions like carbon dioxide already within the atmosphere. Adaptable and resilient design in new development that can enable it to better withstand the impacts of climate change and reduce the harmful effects for occupants and other users will therefore be essential.

4.9 Oxford's risk from future climate change is primarily related to the hazards of flooding and hotter, drier summers. A significant amount of the city lies within areas of higher flood risk according to EA mapping and the Council's updated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2023). Climate change is projected to bring about wetter winters, and more intense rainfall events that could exacerbate flood risk from various sources like rivers, surface water and the sewers with impacts for people's health as well as economic costs through damage to properties and businesses. The Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) is a partnership project led by the Environment Agency which will reduce flood risk from the River Thames to existing businesses, residential properties, major roads and the railway development particularly at risk from flooding in the Botley and Abingdon Roads area. However, the OFAS is only one response for addressing flood risk in city and will not remove risk entirely, thus it is imperative that new development proposals consider flood risk from all sources and respond to particular circumstances of the local area accordingly.

4.10 A further climate hazard relates to overheating. Whilst areas of the city are very green and natural, other areas are considerably urbanised with significant proportions of artificial surface cover which can lock in heat far more than in more rural surroundings (also known as the urban heat island effect). Additional risks arise for those communities who are more economically deprived or vulnerable due to other characteristics such as age, living with health issues or living in poorer quality accommodation (this is also true of flood risk). Again, as with much of southern England, climate change is expected to exacerbate risks from overheating, with future climate expected to involve hotter, drier summers and more heat wave events. Future climate change will have impacts for water supply too, making conservation and efficient water use even more important, particularly as Oxford is already an area of water stress.

4.11 The previous policies in this chapter that address greening and biodiversity will play an important role in helping new development to be more resilient to the issues outlined above. The remaining policies in this section address climate hazards in greater focus. Policies G7 and G8 set out the approach development needs to take to addressing flood risk now and in future with

the added effects of the changing climate. Policy G9 aims to ensure that all design is considered in the context of future climate change and incorporates appropriate resilience measures more generally, including the need for conserving water and considering issues of overheating and the need for appropriate cooling strategies to safeguard the wellbeing of occupants.

Flood risk and Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs)

In the first instance, it is expected that new development avoids all areas of flood risk and does not exacerbate flood risk elsewhere in the city. However, Oxford has a complex geography with potential for flooding from various sources and complete avoidance may not always be possible. In these instances (and in conjunction with the sequential approach requirements of national policy) it is crucial that proposals are carefully designed to reduce flood risk as much as possible, methodically following several key steps:

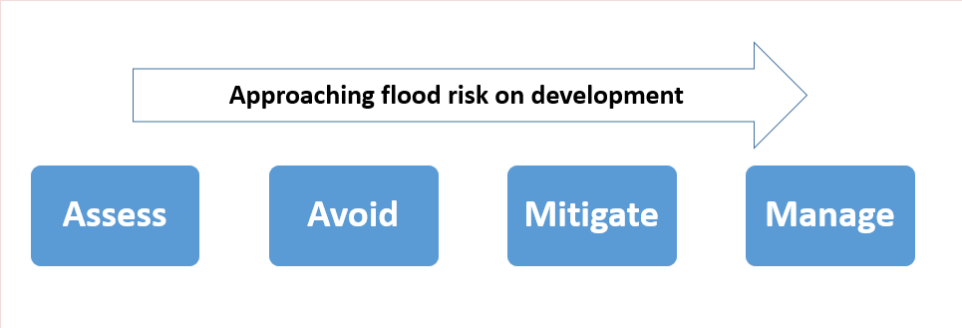


Figure 4.2: Key steps for approaching flood risk

First, it is important to **assess** the potential for flood hazards from all relevant sources (e.g. rivers, surface water, sewers, groundwater etc.) that could pose a risk to the site, as well as any impacts the development could have on flood risk offsite. Second, design in a way that seeks to **avoid** highest risks, e.g. on a site with varying levels of flood risk, through locating the most vulnerable uses (e.g. residential) in areas of lowest risk, and least vulnerable uses (e.g. open space) in areas where higher risk may be present. Once avoidance has been fully explored, consideration will need to turn to how to **mitigate** flood risk impacts which can't be avoided through careful design and layout of the site which could involve a multitude of solutions such as:

- flood resistance measures (dry-proofing) like barriers or raised floor levels which can help to mitigate the impact of flood events by keeping water out at times of flood;
- flood resilience measures (wet-proofing) like using materials that can quickly dry out in order to mitigate the most severe impacts of flooding by helping to ensure that buildings can be made habitable again quicker, reducing the aftereffects on occupants;
- appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to reduce surface water run off by slowing and storing water (see also policy G8);
- flood compensation measures such as creating new flood storage to mitigate any loss of storage through development to prevent increased flood risk elsewhere.

It's important to remember that risk generally cannot be totally eliminated where it is

present and an element of residual risk can be present regardless of mitigation measures e.g. flood defences can fail or be overrun by exceptional flood events. The final step in the approach should include consideration for how to **manage** this remaining risk through the design of the scheme, potentially through providing occupants access to alert/early warning systems or safe evacuation plans. Ensuring that occupants and the emergency services have appropriate access/egress routes during flooding that align with the specifications set out in the Environment Agency's best practice guidance[4] is also crucial to addressing residual risk and it should be noted that no application will be permitted where this requirement cannot be demonstrated.

Site-specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) will be required for development in a variety of locations as detailed in the policy and are likely to be the key way that applicants will be able to demonstrate they have followed the above approach. The policy sets out the considerations which will need to be addressed as part of the FRA and these will need to consider the lifetime of the development and the impacts of climate change now and in future.

In some parts of Oxford development already exists in areas at the highest risk of flooding. This is generally older development that won't incorporate features such as SuDS that minimise the impacts of flooding on the existing properties and that minimise the risk of flooding elsewhere. The NPPF allows only new water-compatible uses and essential infrastructure in Flood Zone 3b[5]. This restricts reuse of existing buildings in areas at highest risk of flooding. The approach of the Local Plan policy is to allow very careful re-development of existing brownfield sites in Flood Zone 3b. This is to make best use of existing sites in the sustainable location of Oxford and because new development has the potential to improve the flood risk situation. The policy sets out conditions for re-development of brownfield sites in Flood Zone 3b that will ensure the flood risk situation is improved. Conditions include that the overall physical built footprint (at ground level) is not increased, and that flood storage is not lost.

Extensions are a common form of development occurring regularly around the city, and whilst these may have limited flood risk implications in isolation, their frequency of occurrence does have potential for cumulative impacts resulting in increased flood risk as flood storage areas are lost to development. For this reason, householder extensions proposed in Flood Zone 2 or 3 will require an FRA to be carried out to assess risk on and off the site and mitigation measures provided to reduce these risks. It is acknowledged however, that the limited scope of some extensions can make achieving the full requirements challenging – such as fully mitigating lost flood storage, thus the Council will take a pragmatic view to such applications requiring that applicants robustly justify how they have sought to minimise and ideally mitigate all risk to occupants and surrounding area in accordance with the hierarchy as set out in the policy.

A change of use to a house in multiple occupation (HMO) in flood zones 2 and 3 will also require an FRA to be carried out to assess risk on and off site. This is because there is a higher risk when managing the safe access and egress of individuals that live separately (which is more typical of those that live in HMO accommodation) should flooding occur. Planning permission will only be granted where applicants have met the full requirements

[4] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessment-standing-advice

[5] The Council has undertaken a new Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to support the Local Plan's policies including defining Flood Zone 3b using the most up-to-date modelling available.

of the policy, and it is demonstrated that flood risk can be suitably managed.

The policy also sets out other more specific requirements that are intended to protect occupants of development and more widely across the city. For example, basement accommodation will not be permitted in areas of flood risk due to the high risk to life for occupants when this type of development floods (potentially filling the basement entirely with flood water) and difficulty with access for emergency services to help those trapped inside. Equally, culverting of open watercourses will be resisted, not only because of the loss of natural flood management features and linear corridors which benefit movement of people and wildlife, but also because culverts can act as a constriction on a watercourse that can increase the upstream water level (and also flood risk) in conditions of high flow, and due to the greater risk of blockage along with the challenges of maintaining them.

Policy G7 – Flood risk and Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs)

Planning permission will only be granted where proposals have considered the potential for flooding from all sources now and for the lifetime of the development including climate change, as well as the potential for them increasing flood risk elsewhere, the safety of users of the development, and where they have appropriately addressed any flood risks identified.

Planning permission will only be granted where a sequential approach has been taken to locating the development and where the Sequential Test and the Exception Test (where necessary according to national policy and supporting guidance) have been passed.

Planning applications for development (including minor householder extensions and changes of use to houses in multiple occupation (HMOs)) must be accompanied by a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) when proposed in the following locations:

- **within Flood Zone 2,**
- **within Flood Zone 3,**
- **on sites within Flood Zone 1 larger than 1 ha,**
- **on sites within Flood Zone 1 of less than 1 ha but including a change of use in development type to a more vulnerable class,**
- **on sites within Flood Zone 1 in areas identified as Critical Drainage Areas.**

The FRA must be undertaken in accordance with up-to-date flood data, national and local guidance on flooding and consider flooding from all sources including the impacts of climate change now and in the future.

Planning permission will only be granted where the FRA demonstrates that for the lifetime of the development and including the impacts of climate change:

a) the proposed development will not increase flood risk offsite; and
b) future occupants will be safe during times of flood; and
c) safe access and egress in the event of a flood can be provided; and
d) details of the necessary mitigation measures to be implemented have been provided.

For minor extensions (including householder) proposed within Flood Zone 2 and 3a, it is acknowledged it may be challenging to meet all the requirements above. Proposals will be expected to minimise risk to occupants and surrounding area by following the below hierarchy of principles in order of preference, demonstrating robust justification where the top levels in the hierarchy cannot be met:

e) Full requirements of an FRA (as above)
f) Finished floor levels above design flood level with compensation
g) Finished floor levels above design flood level
h) Finished floor levels at existing level with water exclusion
i) Finished floor levels at existing level with a water resilient strategy (unless the development cannot be made safe).

Planning permission will not be granted for development in Flood zone 3b (including minor household development) except where it is for water-compatible

uses or essential infrastructure; or where it is on previously developed land and includes a high standard of mitigation designed to demonstrably decrease flood risk compared with the current situation. All the following criteria must also be met:

j) it will not lead to a net increase in the built footprint of the existing building within Flood Zone 3b and where possible lead to a decrease; and
k) it will not lead to a reduction in flood storage (using flood compensation measures) and where possible increase flood storage; and
l) it will not lead to an increased risk of flooding elsewhere; and
m) it will not put any future occupants of the development at risk, including in relation to ensuring safe access/egress.

Proposals for basement accommodation within flood zone 2 or 3 will not be permitted due to the unacceptable additional risks associated with this type of accommodation. Where proposals for basements are at risk of other sources of flooding (i.e., groundwater, surface water, or sewer flooding), it must be demonstrated that flood risk can be managed safely.

Applications that propose culverting of open watercourses will not be permitted.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are features which are designed to manage the flow of rainwater in a way that mimics the natural landscape. SuDS need to be incorporated into the development from the earliest stages of design conception and may include water conservation (e.g. rainwater collection and storage) as well as surface water drainage (e.g. soakaways, porous surfaces, swales, streams and balancing ponds). SuDS are increasingly important in the context of climate change, building the resilience of our urban areas to flooding during times of intense and heavy rainfall events but they can provide additional benefits, particularly where these are implemented through green features, including:

- providing open space for recreation;
- habitat to support wildlife and wider biodiversity;
- supporting water quality (through filtering out pollutants before the water joins larger water bodies like the rivers);
- adaptation to other climate hazards such as overheating.

Wherever possible, these multiple benefits should be sought through careful design of SuDS features, contributing to the health and wellbeing of people and the environment beyond the benefits of managing surface water. In most instances, this will mean that natural, green and blue infrastructure features like soft landscaping, green roofs and ponds, will be preferable. These features should allow for water to be managed above ground, utilising conveyance via swales, rills, and channels, and using above ground attenuation such as basins, wetlands and rain gardens where required. Artificial/unnatural features below ground like pipe systems and underground attenuation tanks will not be permitted unless there are exceptional site conditions present, as they do not provide the

wider benefits of SuDS such as those highlighted above. Where natural, green and blue infrastructure features are utilised within SuDS design on a site, these measures could also contribute to achieving other policy requirements in the Local Plan, such as those set out with policies G2, G3 and G5.

Appropriate SuDS features will also need to consider the context of the site and any previous site uses. Where a site has a history of contamination for example, then infiltration methods may not be suitable unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no pathway of contamination and alternative SuDS features will need to be utilised instead (see policy R5 also). The choice of features and any specific management requirements selected to address site conditions should be detailed in the maintenance plan as discussed below.

When assessing applications, the City Council will deal with proposals requiring SuDS on minor developments (up to 9 dwellings, non-residential floor area less than 1000m2, or sites under 1 hectare in size). Oxfordshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority will respond on all applications for major developments (10 or more dwellings, non-residential floor area of 1000m2 or more, or sites over 1 hectare in size). Applicants must demonstrate that they have had regard to the SuDS Design and Evaluation Guide TAN for minor development and Oxfordshire County Council guidance for major development.

To ensure that SuDS are successfully operational for the lifetime of the development, applicants will also be expected to submit a SuDS maintenance plan for any minor or major development. This plan must demonstrate how SuDS will be regularly maintained, to stop them from being obstructed and remain effective.

To reduce water flows into wastewater systems, proposals will need to be designed with separate foul and surface water sewers on all sites delivering new development. Applicants undertaking works to existing development are encouraged to take opportunities to separate foul and surface water also, which will be beneficial for improving the resilience of their development and the wastewater network in future.

On larger schemes, a Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy will be required and should include evidence that demonstrates agreement between the developer and sewage undertaker on the available infrastructure capacity to accommodate the additional foul water. It may be appropriate to phase development so that initial additional flows from the proposed development do not exceed the capacity available prior to upgrading of the foul drainage network. It is important to note that up to three years lead in time could be required to undertake such upgrade works.

Policy G8 – Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

All development proposals will be required where feasible to manage surface water through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

SuDS must be designed in a way that incorporates reuse, infiltration, retention or conveyance methods which utilise natural, green and blue infrastructure rather than unnatural, artificial components. Below ground features such as pipe systems or underground attenuation tanks will not be permitted, unless exceptional site conditions justify an alternative approach which has been agreed with the Council. Multi-functionality of SuDS should be maximised in their design, such as where they are incorporated into public open space.

Where a site has potential for contamination, SuDS that rely on infiltration will be discouraged and other suitable methods should be adopted to protect the water environment unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no pathway of contamination.

Surface water runoff should be managed to greenfield run-off rates as close to its source as possible, in line with the following drainage hierarchy:

- **a) store rainwater for later use; then:**
- **b) discharge into the ground (infiltration); then:**
- **c) discharge to a surface water body; then:**
- **d) discharge to a surface water sewer, highway drain or other drainage system; and finally:**
- **e) discharge to a combined sewer (only in exceptional circumstances).**

Details of the SuDS must be submitted as part of a drainage strategy or FRA where required.

A SuDS maintenance plan must be submitted alongside any planning application for minor or major development, demonstrating how SuDS will be managed and remain effective for the lifetime of the development. The plan must clearly explain what maintenance measures will take place, how frequently they will occur and for how long and will be secured by condition.

For major developments, Oxfordshire County Council (as Lead Local Flood Authority) are a statutory consultee, and as such proposals will be expected to be adhere to their SuDS standards.

Developers must separate foul and surface water sewers on all new development. Where opportunities present during works on existing development, including householder extensions, applicants are encouraged to separate existing combined foul and surface water sewer arrangements.

A Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy must be provided for all new build residential development of 100 dwellings or more; non-residential development of 7,200sqm or more; or student accommodation of 250 study bedrooms or more, to demonstrate how foul water and surface water drainage will be managed to reduce run off and improve water quality in line with national policy.

Resilient Design and Construction

All new development needs to be designed in a way that can function efficiently and preserves the wellbeing of occupants in the context of current and future climate. This means applicants should have a good understanding of future climate risks (which extend beyond flood risk) and incorporate a range of adaptation measures into their development that enable it to be resilient for its lifetime.

This policy has two elements which should be demonstrated with detail that is proportionate to the scale of the development. Firstly, it requires that applications demonstrate appropriate consideration of existing and future climate and potential weather extremes that any proposed development will have to function within. Some of these considerations will already be integral to addressing other policies such as G7 on flood risk, but they should also encapsulate other important issues such as risk of overheating in summer heatwaves (which should consider external areas as much as internal) as well as the need for water efficiency and conservation.

Secondly, it requires applicants to demonstrate that the design of new development has been tailored to these risks both for the building itself, as well as occupants, incorporating a range of measures that can ensure resilience to existing and future climate hazards. This is also important for avoiding 'maladaptation', whereby inefficient design results in inappropriate development for future climate and the increased risks for occupants that come with it.

A checklist is included in the policy setting out the key measures which need to be addressed in the design of the development where relevant. Meeting these requirements will help demonstrate the proposal is designed for resilience to the spectrum of climate impacts, including a sufficient strategy for promoting cooling inside and outside; flood resistance/resilience where necessary; as well as ensuring the development incorporates sufficient water conservation measures. It is acknowledged that there may be overlap with requirements in other policies, equally, there will be many design solutions that can deliver upon multiple requirements (e.g. green infrastructure can promote urban cooling as well as flood resilience). Applicants are encouraged to incorporate design measures that have multi-functional benefits and can refer to the same design features where they meet the requirements of multiple parts of the checklist.

The design and access statement should clearly set out how the requirements within the checklist have been addressed (or identify where these are not relevant). Where a design and access statement is not required, the proposal should clearly set out in one place how the requirements have been met in another part of the application (e.g. planning statement). Applicants can reference supporting evidence for these other policies where relevant (e.g. FRAs for policy G7, urban greening factor for policy G3), rather than duplicating evidence. However, to ensure compliance with this policy, the proposal will need to explicitly identify how the measure adapts or builds resilience to the existing and

future climate change risks.

It is important to note that the considerations in this policy could also support applicants in ensuring that their proposal's design aligns with the requirements of the updated Building Regulations and the separate standards that are enforced through that process. The newly introduced Part O which addresses overheating, for example, requires more stringent consideration of factors that influence a building's thermal performance such as the design/layout of windows which need to be agreed through the planning process. As such, considering these issues at the design stage and as part of the planning process could help to reduce the potential for conflict with the separate standards required through Building Control.

Policy G9 – Resilient Design and Construction

Planning permission will be granted where proposals have been designed with regard to most up-to-date climate change projections, suitably addressing the key risks from changing climate on occupants; the development; and any supporting infrastructure for its lifetime.

All proposals excluding householder applications, unless this is required as part of other policies in the Local Plan, will be expected to demonstrate (which could be as part of the Design and Access Statement) that the following resilience requirements are incorporated into the design:

- **Risk of overheating, flooding (from all relevant sources), and storm extremes have been considered for the lifetime of the proposed development and that design has been tailored to function effectively within future climate scenarios.**
- **A cooling strategy to address risks of overheating which is proportionate to the scale of the building and promotes passive cooling, energy efficient measures in the first instance (in line with requirements of policy R1). This should consider both internal and external environments.**
- **The measures incorporated to manage water run-off and, where the site is at risk of flooding now or in future, measures to reduce flood risk, such as flood resistance measures (e.g. dry-proofing to keep water out) and resilience measures (e.g. wet-proofing to allow continued function during, or quick recovery after flooding).**
- **All dwellings (including conversions, reversions and change of use) achieve an estimated water consumption of no more than 110 litres per person per day (proposals are encouraged to go further than this). All non-residential development should demonstrate what measures have been incorporated to reduce water use.**
- **In addition to the above, other measures to conserve water use including rain/grey water harvesting/reuse where appropriate.**
- **Supporting infrastructure is designed to function in extreme weather conditions.**

Chapter 5 - A City that utilises its resources with care, protects the air, water and soil and aims for net zero carbon

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Glossary

Built environment - Refers to aspects of our surroundings that are built by humans, that is, distinguished from the natural environment. It includes not only buildings, but the human-made spaces between buildings, such as parks, and the infrastructure.

Climate Change mitigation – Actions to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system. Entails interventions to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, or to increase their storage within 'sinks' (adapted from IPCC).

Circular Economy - Unlike traditional linear economy whereby materials and products are created, used and then thrown away, a circular economy promotes conservation of energy, reduction in waste and extending the lifetime of products through various means such as sharing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products for as long as possible.

Embodied Carbon – The carbon dioxide in producing materials, including the energy used to extract and transport raw materials as well as emissions from manufacturing processes. The embodied carbon of a building can include all of the emissions from the construction process and materials used throughout; as well as from deconstructing and disposing of it at the end of its lifetime (adapted from UCL fact sheet).

Micro-renewables - Small-scale non-commercial renewable energy installations such as a domestic solar panel array.

Net zero carbon – A situation where any emissions of carbon dioxide are balanced out by removal elsewhere – equating to no net increase (adapted from IPCC).

Retro-fitting – In the context of this chapter, retro-fitting describes improvement works to an existing building for the purpose of improving its energy efficiency (such as by making them

easier to heat or by replacing fossil fuel systems with renewable energy-based systems), or its resilience to climate change.

Renewable energy - Energy that uses technologies which generally rely on the elements (e.g., sunlight, wind, rain), biomass, or on generating energy from the earth itself.

Whole building approach – In the context of retrofitting, taking a Whole Building Approach means that improvements are informed by an understanding of how the entire building and the different materials that it is comprised of currently performs, considering issues such as air quality, damp management and ventilation. It involves selecting fabric improvements and other upgrades that complement each other to ensure the best results for the long-term sustainability of the building and health of occupants and avoiding problems of maladaptation, whereby improvement projects can have unintended, negative consequences (such as excessive moisture build-up, or inadequate ventilation).

5.1 The policies set out in the previous chapter are designed to preserve and enhance green infrastructure and our natural environment, support nature recovery, as well as to build the city's resilience to the changes in the climate that are already happening as a result of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (climate adaptation). This chapter sets out policies which seek to ensure new development comes forward in a way that does not further exacerbate climate change through additional carbon emissions and to support the significant reductions in emissions needed from the existing built environment over the coming years – also known as climate change mitigation – to help achieve net zero carbon. The second part of the chapter then deals with protection of various natural resources and ensuring that the development process mitigates its impact on the wider environment.

Net zero carbon development

5.2 In Oxford, the primary source of existing carbon emissions comes from the built environment, including buildings like homes and offices, as well as industrial and commercial uses. It is imperative that new buildings do not contribute further to this problem and that they are able to operate in a way that does not add additional carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. The Climate Change Act requires that the UK achieves net zero carbon emissions by the year 2050 and the City Council has set itself a local target of being a net zero carbon city by 2040. Whilst these targets establish an ultimate point by which net zero carbon status needs to be reached, in actuality, we need to deliver consistent and meaningful reductions in carbon emissions throughout that period if we are to avoid the most extreme impacts of climate change. For example, the Sixth Carbon Budget for the UK sets out that in order to achieve the 2050 target, there needs to be an 78% reduction in emissions by 2035, well in advance of local and national net zero targets.

5.3 As development planned for, and built, during the lifetime of this Local Plan will continue to be in use well beyond 2040 and 2050, it is crucial that it is brought forward in a way that is consistent with a net zero carbon future now. This means that buildings should be able to function without the need for further retro-fit to cut emissions at a later point and, in the meantime, do not contribute any additional emissions into the atmosphere which would

otherwise need to be removed in another way. Development should also be designed in a way that supports users to live their daily lives in a sustainable way. Naturally, there is cross over with other areas in the Local Plan, such as the design policies of chapter 6 and the policies of chapter 7 which seek to support sustainable/active modes of travel, as well as local amenities within walking distance of where people live. There are three key policies in this chapter that address the carbon footprint of the built environment itself: policy R1 addresses the performance of buildings once they are in operation and throughout their lifetime; policy R2 addresses emissions associated with the construction process; and policy R3 addresses the need for retro-fit of existing buildings in the city. The Technical Advice Notes (TANs) will expand on many of the requirements of these policies and are flagged where applicable, Appendix 5.1 also provides some useful external resources that can help applicants inform their design.

Net zero carbon buildings in operation

All new buildings should be net zero carbon in operation (carbon associated with construction is addressed in policy R2). At its simplest, to be 'net zero carbon in operation' means that energy efficiency is maximised and that what energy is being used within the building is sourced renewably, ideally generated onsite, so that the balance of carbon dioxide emissions associated with operation of the building is zero. Exemplary design may actually be able to demonstrate a negative carbon balance (i.e. offsetting more carbon dioxide than the development is producing, such as through installing renewable energy generation capacity that exceeds the needs of the development itself). Applicants will need to clearly demonstrate how all of the relevant principles/targets in this policy have been addressed through submission of an Energy and Carbon Statement.

The key source of emissions from buildings' operation is from energy use. Energy is used in a variety of ways depending on type of building but is primarily consumed for heating (and increasingly cooling), hot water, cooking and powering of appliances. The policy has been framed around the principles of the energy hierarchy and it is expected that all new development is designed with a fabric-first approach, i.e. the fabric of the building makes energy needs as low as possible (e.g., by being well insulated), in accordance with the energy hierarchy principles as set out in Figure 5.1.

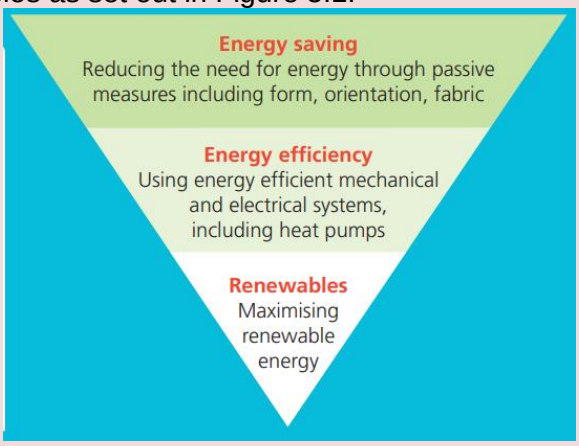


Figure 5.1: The energy hierarchy which should guide the design of all new development

Reduce energy use (energy saving)

The first step in the energy hierarchy is to reduce energy use as much as possible. Various

design measures can help reduce energy demands through the choice of materials and lighting, heating and cooling systems and the layout of the building. Energy efficient design will also reduce the amount of energy generation needed to meet energy needs, which can be particularly important on more constrained sites.

An Energy Use Intensity (EUI) calculation will be required within the Energy and Carbon Statement identifying the overall energy demand for the proposal and that it meets the target set in the policy. EUI is the measure of the building's energy use, which is calculated by combining energy demands from all sources, then dividing by the gross internal floor area (m2).

All energy calculations required for this policy, including in relation to EUI and space heating as detailed below, will need to be undertaken using an approved methodology. At the current time, the most appropriate methodology is considered to be the CIBSE TM54 methodology[1] and the Energy and Carbon Technical Advice Note (TAN) expands on this with additional guidance. Use of an alternative methodology should be agreed with the Council in advance. The TAN will be kept under review and updated to set out any additional approved methodologies.

Use energy efficiently (energy efficiency)

Once energy demands have been reduced as much as possible, the second step in the energy hierarchy is to use energy efficiently. The energy used for space heating is typically a significant proportion of overall energy use and is the key concern at this stage. A space heating target as part of the total EUI target, is set out in the policy.

Certain types of heating system run more efficiently than others, in terms of heat generated to power consumption, and the policy is not prescriptive in terms of technology choices. However, on many developments, the most suitable low/zero carbon technology to meet heating/cooling needs is likely to be heat pumps as they are particularly efficient in terms of electricity used and heat generated and can help to reduce overall EUI for a building. On larger developments, communal and district heating/cooling systems, such as heat networks, may be the appropriate choice; these systems should be designed in a way that does not rely on fossil fuels as their main heat source.

Meet energy needs through renewables

To be net zero carbon in operation, proposals will need to demonstrate that all energy needs are being met without relying on fossil fuels, and this energy should ideally be generated onsite. Increasing levels of decentralised energy generation through onsite micro-renewables such as solar PV is an important step in moving our energy systems to net zero carbon. This also helps to reduce strain on the central energy network (which will be subject to increasing demands as we switch to electric technologies like electric vehicles and heating) and improve energy security in general. Technology choice will depend upon the specifics of the site and the local context, rooftop solar PV is likely to best suited to many new developments though is not a requirement. Design and siting of technology on buildings should be guided by local context. Where there are wider sensitivities, such as risk

[1] LETI operational modelling guidance includes more info on the TM54 methodology: https://www.leti.uk/_files/ugd/252d09_68369f33aca74bf49edaea562eca81d5.pdf

of harm to heritage assets, negative impacts that might otherwise make an application unacceptable can be reduced or avoided through careful design choices or locating technologies on less visually impactful facades.

The Energy and Carbon Statement will need to clearly demonstrate that the development's total EUI figure is being met through the equivalent onsite energy generation. Use of battery storage is encouraged in order to meet needs throughout the day and to reduce reliance on grid energy even at times of low generation resource. Where operational energy needs cannot be fully met onsite, applicants should seek to secure additional offsite generation to offset the residual need. The Council will look to ensure that this offsite provision is secured through an appropriate legal agreement. As such, evidence will need to be submitted to show that there is capacity for the required renewable installation there; that this can be installed in an appropriate time to begin generating energy to offset the development's unmet energy needs; and, where the offsite location is not in direct control of the applicant, a formal agreement between the landowner and the applicant showing that they are happy to accommodate these installations. The offsite energy generation should be able to offset the remaining energy demand that is being sourced from the wider energy grid and where it is not being met through renewables on the development itself.

Energy offsetting

Energy offsetting is the least favourable approach to delivering net zero carbon development; however, the Council accepts that there may be circumstances where certain requirements in this policy may not be technically feasible and may require an element of offsetting to deliver net zero carbon through mitigating onsite energy demand elsewhere as a last resort. For example, particularly energy intensive uses that may not be able to meet all energy needs onsite and are unable to secure off-site renewable installation themselves as an alternative.

Before offsetting will be considered acceptable, the onus will be on the applicant to robustly justify that the earlier steps in the energy hierarchy *have been exhausted* and onsite/offsite energy generation is not possible to meet the development's EUI figure. Only then, will payment be accepted into the Council's offsetting fund to mitigate remaining energy use that cannot be met through establishing new renewable generation capacity directly through the proposed development. This would be secured through a legal agreement/S106. The preference will be to utilise offset funds to deliver additional renewable energy production or energy saving measures elsewhere in the city (also known as 'insetting').

Conversions, extensions and change of use

Proposals for conversions, extensions and change of use (where they include works to the fabric of the building to facilitate this) that would require planning permission will be expected to demonstrate that the design process for the new elements of the building have followed the principles of the energy hierarchy where relevant. The specific targets set out for energy use, generation and monitoring (criteria 2, 3, 5 and 6 in the policy) do not apply. However, where development would result in the creation of a self-contained dwelling(s)/or non-residential units, all policy requirements will need to be met, unless it can be demonstrated that this would not be technically feasible (e.g., such as without imposing further works to the remainder of the building).

Policy R1 – Net Zero buildings in operation

All new buildings should be net zero carbon in operation. This must be demonstrated through submission of an Energy and Carbon Statement that details how all the criteria below have been met:

1. **Developments have been designed in accordance with the energy hierarchy. Applications should demonstrate how design has methodically followed the steps in the hierarchy, firstly through reducing energy use; using energy efficiently; and then, meeting all energy needs through renewables sources, ideally generated onsite, or else offsetting as a last resort.**

2. **A total Energy Use Intensity (EUI) figure for the development has been provided, calculated using an approved methodology as set out in supporting text. Developments will not be permitted where they exceed the following Energy Use Intensity targets:**
   - **Residential: 35 kwh/m2/yr**
   - **Non-residential: 70 kwh/m2/yr**

3. **The proportion of the development's total EUI associated with space heating is no more than 20 kwh/m2/yr.**

4. **No fossil fuels are being directly utilised in the operation of the development (e.g., no gas used for heating and cooking).**

5. **All energy needs (matching the development's total EUI figure) will be met through onsite renewable energy generating technologies in the first instance, accompanied by energy storage where possible. Where the total energy need cannot be met onsite, the remaining energy balance should be met through installation of sufficient additional renewable generation at a location offsite. In these circumstances, it will need to be demonstrated in the Energy and Carbon Statement that offsite provision has been fully secured and will be in operation upon completion of the development.**

   <u>As a last resort</u>, where the above steps have been fully explored and net zero carbon still cannot be fully delivered, offsetting may be accepted to mitigate any remaining energy demand that cannot be sourced renewably either onsite or through an identified offsite location. The Council will accept payment into the Council's offsetting fund that can be shown to fully offset this remaining energy demand, and this will be secured through an appropriate legal agreement/S106.

6. **All new development must include information that specifies the approach to metering that will be adopted as well as proposed monitoring of the performance of the development to be undertaken post-completion (to ensure performance is in line with design specifications).**

Proposals for conversions, extensions and change of use (where they include works to the fabric of the building to facilitate this) that would require planning permission are only expected to demonstrate accordance with criteria 1 and 4, unless they would

result in the creation of a self-contained dwelling or non-residential unit, in which case all criteria apply.

The City Council will expect that, having worked through requirements 1-6, Energy and Carbon Statements demonstrate compliance with the above criteria; however, a case for anything short of full compliance will be expected to be clearly justified as follows:

1. **Full details of where a criterion cannot be met will be provided and justified within the Energy and Carbon Statement with explanation of the reasonable attempts to meet it provided; and**
2. **clarification that all other criteria are met or exceeded; and**
3. **the proposal is overall net zero carbon in operation (meaning no reliance on fossil fuels and including use of offsetting only as a last resort).**

Embodied Carbon in the construction process

There is an embodied carbon content within the materials used in the built environment and associated with the construction, maintenance, redevelopment and demolition processes. As energy use of developments becomes net zero carbon when they are in operation, the embodied carbon cost for constructing, maintaining and deconstructing buildings will become the primary source of carbon emissions associated with them making this an important issue to address too.

The lifetime of a typical building can be broken down into various life stages and the balance of embodied carbon associated with processes at each of these stages is a complex one and still subject to much research. Knowledge and understanding is better for the earlier design and construction stages prior to completion of the building, whereas understanding of embedded carbon associated with maintaining a building whilst it is in operation, or deconstructing it at the end of its life, is still emerging. As such this policy is primarily concerned with addressing **the construction stages** prior to building completion **(including sourcing/selection of materials)**, though many of the principles will apply at all stages and where possible designers are encouraged to consider impacts at these later stages.

Simple actions can help to reduce carbon embodied in the construction process. This policy sets out a number of high-level principles which will need to be applied to all scales of development. Applications will need to demonstrate how the design and construction process has been approached in light of each of these principles, setting out a sufficient level of detail that is proportionate to the size and scale of the development. Many of these principles are also beneficial in aligning with a circular economy, such as reducing waste and promoting re-use of materials wherever possible, which enable more prudent use of resources and protection of our natural environment.

Additional requirements for large scale new-build developments
Larger developments are likely to produce a higher proportion of emissions associated with construction processes due to their larger scale and typically higher material/resource use. As such, it is expected that applicants quantify their embodied carbon (associated with the material sourcing and construction stages prior to completion of the development). The Energy and Carbon statement should include this figure and be supported by submission of the assessment using a recognised methodology such as a

Whole Life Cycle Carbon Assessment. More details on recognised methodologies that applicants should choose from are included in the Energy and Carbon TAN.

Along with quantifying embodied carbon, applicants for major development are also expected to demonstrate what actions have then been taken to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the construction process as much as possible – supported by figures for how much carbon dioxide has been reduced through these actions. The high-level principles set out in the first part of the policy could be used as a way to frame these actions.

Future direction of policy/Building Regulations/ and more guidance

It is envisaged that future Local Plans will seek to embed targets for embodied carbon in policy, unless this is superseded by targets set out in national policy/building regulations. As such, the requirements of this policy are intended as a stepping stone to building understanding and good practice within the building industry, supporting a shift to more rigorous reporting of embodied carbon in construction and driving the shift toward net zero carbon construction in future. Further detail and guidance on all requirements of this policy are set out in the accompanying Energy and Carbon TAN, which will be subject to regular updates whenever possible to reflect improved future guidance and understanding.

Policy R2 – Embodied carbon in the construction process

All developments are expected to demonstrate consideration of embodied carbon in the construction process and take actions to limit this as much as possible through careful design choices. Planning permission will be granted for proposals that demonstrate through their Energy and Carbon Statement that the following principles are embedded in design choices:

a. **Re-use of any existing buildings on a site has been robustly explored and demonstrated to be unfeasible before resorting to demolition.**
b. **Waste generation has been minimised and re-use and recycling of materials has been maximised in the construction process, including using any demolition materials.**
c. **The selection of construction materials has been informed by the carbon footprint associated with their sourcing and production (carbon footprint sought to be reduced wherever possible); use of materials that sequester more carbon than is produced in making them is prioritised where opportunities arise.**
d. **The ways that materials are transported to site and processed during construction have been chosen to minimise the associated carbon emissions wherever possible.**
e. **Design choices would allow buildings to be easily maintained, adapted and repurposed at the end of use/life.**

Proposals for large scale new-build development (developments of 100 or more dwellings, or 10,000m2 or more non-residential floorspace) will also need to be accompanied by details within their Energy and Carbon Statement that provide the following:

a) **a measurement of <u>total embodied carbon</u> associated with the construction process (including sourcing/selection of materials). A recognised methodology should be followed to determine these quantities, such as completion and submission of Whole Life Cycle Carbon Assessment.**
b) **details of actions taken to reduce this embodied carbon as much as possible and the <u>specific reductions in embodied carbon</u> that have been secured through design process.**

Where any future updates to Building Regulations (or other national policy) make embodied carbon requirements at a national level, the Energy and Carbon Statement should instead demonstrate how embodied carbon is being addressed in the context of that national legislation.

<u>Retro-fitting existing buildings</u>

The Council recognises the significant need to retrofit the existing built environment to address its impact on the climate. Retro-fitting existing buildings to net zero carbon through energy efficiency improvements will be essential if we are to mitigate our impacts on the changing climate. Equally, retrofitting has a role in facilitating adaptation of buildings to the changing climate and building in resilience to impacts like flooding and heatwaves to protect the health and wellbeing of occupants. Not only can improving and adapting these buildings help reduce their impact on the environment, but it can also ensure that carbon embodied within the materials of these structures remains locked up

by helping to extend their usable lifetimes for many years to come.

It is recommended that retro-fitting projects are undertaken as part of a 'whole building approach'. This means that retro-fit improvements are informed by a methodical assessment of how the entire building and the different materials that it is comprised of currently performs, considering issues such as air quality, moisture movement and ventilation. Fabric improvements and other upgrades are then selected that complement each other in order to ensure the best results for the long-term sustainability of the building and health of occupants. This can also help to avoid problems of maladaptation, whereby improvement projects can have unintended, negative consequences (such as excessive moisture build-up, or inadequate ventilation).

For all existing buildings which are not designated heritage assets, or within the setting of a designated heritage asset, the starting point in decision-making is to support retro-fitting measures that have been designed to secure demonstrable energy efficiency and/or climate adaptation improvements – particularly where this is in line with a whole building approach. This means that applications received which propose such measures should be approved, unless other policy/material considerations would make them unacceptable.

Traditional buildings and heritage assets

In relation to traditional buildings, including heritage assets (such as listed buildings and conservation areas), there are an additional set of considerations which need to be carefully thought about, thus the presumption in favour does not automatically apply. Nevertheless, retrofitting can be carried out sensitively and successfully, whilst preserving their unique historic character, and the Council will support this wherever possible where interventions have clearly been designed with appropriate consideration of these additional factors.

Many of these heritage assets are afforded statutory protection through the Listed Building and Conservation Area Act as well as great weight being automatically assigned through the National Planning Policy Framework to preserving the significance of these assets. This needs to inform the selection of retrofit measures. Equally, it is important that retrofit measures for traditional buildings have been informed by the whole building approach, which takes account of the way they have been constructed and how they perform. This will help ensure that the optimum interventions are selected for the building, without compromising the natural processes such as passive ventilation and free movement of moisture that the fabric of these structures often rely on. The policy sets out some principles to inform the approach taken to designing any intervention in order to get the best outcome from a proposal.

National policy sets out that harm to heritage assets should be mitigated as far as possible, and any residual harm must be justified by public benefits of the scheme that outweigh the harm (see policies HD1-HD6). Measures that seek to deliver carbon reduction through energy efficiency or provide adaptation to changing climate will be considered as a public benefit; however, this will not automatically override any harm to an asset. The City Council will need to consider the level of harm to the significance of the asset and make a determination as to whether or not this is outweighed by that public benefit where harm does occur.

Applicants are encouraged to review the additional guidance set out in the Heritage Retro-fit TAN which expands on many of these considerations/principles and seeks to illustrate the variety of approaches that could be tailored to specific site contexts.

Policy R3 – Retro-fitting existing buildings

The Council will support retrofit measures to existing buildings where they secure energy efficiency improvements or adaptation to changing climate. The expectation is that the interventions are selected in accordance with the steps of the energy hierarchy (reduce energy use, use energy efficiently, source energy renewably) as set out in Policy R1.

A whole building approach should be taken to the retrofitting of traditional buildings, including heritage assets, whereby applications will need to demonstrate how the following principles have been embedded in the design rationale:

a. **choices on interventions have been informed by a whole building approach which includes methodical assessment of the building's heritage significance, its current performance in terms of energy efficiency and climate risk, its use (now and in future), its context, and the selection of suitable materials;**
b. **any harm to the heritage significance of the asset has been minimised and mitigated as much as possible through careful design choices and in line with requirements of policies HD1-HD6;**
c. **professional advice has been sought from historic environment and energy/climate experts to inform proposals where necessary/appropriate;**
d. **all required consents have been secured, or are in the process of being secured, such as Listed Building Consent or consent for works affecting TPOs.**

Measures that seek to deliver carbon reduction through energy efficiency or provide adaptation to changing climate will be considered as a public benefit in the balance against harm, although this will not automatically override any harm to an asset.

Natural resources

5.4 As well as carbon impacts of development in the city, there are a wide range of natural resources which need to be considered by new development. Natural resources such as the soil, air, and water are all important to health and wellbeing but also to the sustainable functioning of the wider natural environment that makes Oxford so special. As such, it is important that the development process considers these issues and mitigates its impact on them.

5.5 There are several policies in this section which deal with protection of different elements of the natural environment. Policy R4 addresses the issue of air quality, which is a key concern in the city due to ongoing issues from a range of sources (e.g., tail pipe emissions, burning of fossil fuels for heat, wood-burning stoves, as well as construction pollutants). Policy R5 and R6 deal with the quality of the land and its soils. Due to Oxford's long history of development, there are areas of the city which are likely to be affected by poor soil quality and the presence of contaminants that could be harmful for human health (particularly on sites of historic landfills), as such, policy R5 sets out expectations for how development should address potentially contaminated land to make sites safe for future occupants. Meanwhile, policy R6 sets out expectations for conserving and enhancing soil quality including protection of peat reserves which are located across the city and are important stores of both carbon and potentially valuable archaeological resources. Finally, policy R7 addresses wider impacts on amenity and environmental health and includes a range of potential risks which new development will need to consider and mitigate through careful design choices (e.g., noise and vibration as well as other micro-climatic issues such as wind drafts).

5.6 The issue of water quality is addressed via several interlinked policies across the Local Plan. New development has the potential for directly introducing a range of pollutants into water bodies where it is not appropriately mitigated, equally, once in operation, its users can influence nearby water quality through increased demand on water supplies as well as through output of pollutants which can be particularly harmful where this happens close to sensitive catchments. The risk of pollutants discharging into water bodies as well as impacts of new development on wastewater are part of the considerations for compliance with policy R7 (amenity and environmental health), but also of relevance are the requirements for limiting water use in new development in policy G9 Resilient Design and Construction as well as the incorporation of multi-functional green SuDS in policy G8 SuDS.

Air quality assessments and standards

Improving local air quality, mitigating the impact of development on air quality and reducing exposure to poor air quality across Oxford is key to safeguarding public health and the environment. Some people are more vulnerable to poor air quality because they are at a heightened risk of negative health outcomes due to existing ill health (defined as sensitive receptors).

The whole of the city has been declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and the City Council has produced an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP)[1] which sets out a range of measures that will be required to improve air quality across Oxford. The AQAP includes a commitment to a more rigorous standard for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) compared with national legal limits which is to be kept under review throughout the Plan period and it is important new development accords with this. Whilst air quality in the city continues to

improve, there are a number of areas of the city where exceedance of the local annual mean target for NO2 occurs[2].

In 2022 a Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ) pilot was introduced in the city centre with a view to expanding the ZEZ over the coming years. The move away from vehicles which do not have an internal combustion engine alongside traffic measures to reduce the number of private vehicles driving across Oxford and the introduction of a workplace parking levy will all support the ambition to improve air quality across the city (see Chapter 7) as well as reduce carbon emissions from the transport sector. Policies in the Local Plan (R1 & R3) that seek to deliver net zero buildings for new development and support retrofitting existing buildings will also contribute towards improving air quality across the city as the need for fossil fuels to heat homes and other buildings reduces.

It is important that any negative impacts on air quality from new development are mitigated and that exposure to poor air quality is minimised or reduced (including emissions of NO2 as well as other harmful pollutants such as particulate matter). The potential impacts upon air quality from new development must be considered at the outset to avoid the need for future site mitigation. Sensitive uses in particular, meaning those expected to host more sensitive receptors such as schools, nurseries, care homes and healthcare settings need to be located away from areas of poor air quality. This means site layout should be designed in such a way as to protect human exposure to high pollution, which could involve setting the development back from key sources of pollutants; placing habitable rooms away from, and avoiding installation of balconies near to, highest pollution areas; as well as use of buffering measures like planting.

Major applications will be expected to submit an Air Quality Assessment that fully considers the issue of air pollution, identifies negative impacts from the development and sets out how these will be mitigated. Further guidance on meeting the requirements of the policy is set out in Oxford City Council's Air Quality Planning Application Guidance Note and the most up to date Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM)[3] guidelines which applicants are expected to follow.

[2] These locations can be found at: www.oxonair.uk

[3] Institute of Air Quality Management website: https://iaqm.co.uk

Policy R4 – Air quality assessments and standards

Planning permission will only be granted where the impact of new development on air quality is mitigated and where exposure to poor air quality is minimised or reduced as far as is reasonably practicable.

The design of new development (during construction and in operation) needs to consider the potential impacts upon air quality for current and new occupants. Sensitive uses such as schools, nurseries, care homes and healthcare settings, should be located away from areas of poor air quality as far as reasonably practical through careful site layout designed to protect human exposure to high pollution levels.

Air Quality Assessments (AQA) will be required for all major developments. Planning permission will only be granted for major developments where the AQA meets the following criteria:

- **a) provides an assessment of the impacts of all the different sources of air pollution generated during the development's operational and construction phases, (including but not limited to transport, heating, dust generated from demolition/construction/earthworks activities); and**
- **b) has considered the cumulative impacts from other sources of air pollution in the local area where relevant; and**
- c) **clearly identifies any potential negative air quality impacts, including where these would compromise achievement of the local annual mean air quality target for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2), as set out in the city's Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) and**
- **d) sets out appropriate site-specific mitigation measures to address negative impacts identified, following the principle of redesign – mitigate – offset.**

Planning applications for proposals that involve significant demolition, construction or earthworks will also be required to submit a dust assessment as part of the AQA, to assess the potential impacts and health risks of dust emissions from those activities. Any appropriate site-specific dust mitigation measures will be secured as part of the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) as required by Policy C6.

All applications are expected to follow the guidance set out in the Oxford City Council's Air Quality Planning Application Guidance Note.

Land contamination

Due to Oxford's extensive history of development, there are areas of the city which are likely to be affected by poor soil quality and the presence of contaminants that could be harmful for human health. For example, the city has a number of closed landfill sites of varying ages, some of which are still actively producing landfill gas, as well as previously developed sites that have been contaminated by historic industrial processes. Contamination can also arise from natural sources.

Whilst the presence of contamination can restrict the use of land, development can also be an important mechanism in bringing land back into beneficial use through sustainable remediation processes that eliminate and/or control unacceptable risks in a safe and timely manner, and which maximise the overall environmental, social and economic benefits of the remediation work. The NPPF sets out that after remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

In assessing whether land contamination is an issue that needs to be taken into account when a planning application is submitted, the Council will have regard to a range of information sources including its database of potentially contaminated sites, information provided by developers and third parties, and the advice from the Council's Environmental Health department. Ultimately, where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner.

Policy R5 – Land contamination

Planning applications where proposals could be affected by contamination or where contamination may present a risk to the surrounding environment, must be accompanied by a report which:

a) details the investigations that have been carried out to assess the nature and extent of contamination and the possible impacts it may have on the development and its future users, biodiversity, the natural and built environment; and
b) sets out detailed mitigation measures to allow the development to go ahead safely and without adverse effect, including, as appropriate:

I. **removing the contamination;**
II. **treating the contamination;**
III. **protecting and/or separating the development from the effects of the contamination;**
IV. **validation of mitigation measures.**

Where site investigation and mitigation measures are needed, these will be required as a condition of any planning permission.

Soil Quality

Soils are a source of natural capital from which we derive many benefits including food production and flood mitigation, preserving water quality and acting as stores of organic carbon. The natural accumulation of soil can be a slow process and as such, soil should be considered to be a non-renewable resource which needs to be managed as such[4].

[4] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/909069/ncc-advice-soil-management.pdf

On development sites in Oxford, particularly undeveloped areas of land and predominantly greenfield sites, it is important that proposals consider the type and quality of the existing soils and be designed in a way that incorporates measures to mitigate negative impacts from the development where appropriate, particularly to the highest quality soils. This could include tailoring construction processes to avoid loss, erosion, compacting soils with heavy machinery, as well as minimising risks from release of contaminants through the construction stages (see also policy R8 amenity). Applicants should make careful choices about the design of the site and its landscaping, such as by locating development away from the highest quality soils where relevant; ensuring beneficial soil reuse and sustainable soil management; as well as minimising artificial surface cover that would lock away the soils (in combination with high-quality green and blue infrastructure which will help meet requirements of policies G2 and G3). This will help to conserve and enhance soils as well as creating opportunities to allow regenerative practices to enhance soil quality in future.

Though the mapping of these habitats in the UK is limited, there is evidence of peat deposits (which are especially beneficial as carbon sinks) in several locations across Oxford as highlighted by Natural England[5], particularly on greenfield sites. Where development comes forward in areas of known potential for peat deposits, any impacts on the natural and historic value of these reserves needs to be considered, including their important role as carbon sinks. Any harm or loss from a proposal which equates to removal or dewatering of 10m3 or more of peat will be refused.

To allow the Council to make an informed decision as to the impact of the development, proposals for major development of undeveloped land upon, or within 200m of, an identified peat reserve in the city (as per Natural England mapping) will need to submit an assessment that details soil conditions and any existing peat reserve affected by the scheme alongside the application. This assessment will need to be informed by physical borehole sampling to better understand the physical character of the underlying site and potential extent of any possible peat reserves. The submitted assessment should clearly set out the existing value of any identified reserves, addressing the key requirements in the policy.

Where there is potential for harm or loss of peat, proposals could seek to avoid impacts through careful design choices informed by the assessment, such as through development being located away from peat reserves where the site allows. Reliance on mitigation through offsetting the impact of lost peat alone, such as by providing carbon storage elsewhere, is unlikely to make a development acceptable as it is very difficult to achieve the same benefit for many years.

[5] https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/1e5a1cdb2ab64b1a94852fb982c42b52_0/explore?location=51.761809%2C-1.240866%2C13.00 (This mapping is expected to be updated by the England Peat Map project in future)

Policy R6 – Soil quality

Planning applications will be expected to demonstrate how the impact of development on soils has been mitigated and opportunities for conserving and enhancing the capacity/quality of soil maximised. The design and access statement and associated landscape plans should include details setting out the following where relevant:

a. **How impact on soils during the construction process has been minimised through avoiding: soil loss, compaction, pollution and reduction in the quality of soil; and**
b. **Development has been located in a way that avoids highest quality soils on sites where possible; and**
c. **Beneficial soil reuse and sustainable soil management has been implemented where possible; and**
d. **Artificial surface cover that seals off soils has been minimised.**

Planning permission will not be granted for proposals that would remove or dewater 10m³ or more of peat.

Major developments on undeveloped land upon, or within 200m of, known peat reserves should submit an assessment, informed by borehole sampling, to allow the Council to determine any potential impacts on reserves. The assessment should include details of the following:

- **The estimated carbon footprint of the peat impacted by development.**
- **Its palaeo-archaeological interest.**
- **Its function in the surrounding habitats.**
- **Its hydrological condition and stability.**

Amenity and Environmental Health Impacts of Development

New development can create environmental impacts, particularly during the construction phase, as well as once in operation. This can range from increased noise and vibration (e.g., from movement of trucks bringing materials to site, to presence of plant equipment on buildings once in operation), to the generation of dust and other contaminants (e.g., during demolition or processing of construction materials). These impacts need to be fully assessed during the planning application process to ensure that any potential nuisance resulting from the development can be properly mitigated to protect the amenity of residents, employees and the wider environment in the vicinity of the development.

The policy sets out a number of factors which should be considered where they could have an impact on amenity and health. As every development is different, the considerations set out will be of varying relevance – e.g., a taller building will have more potential to cause issues of loss of privacy for neighbours (refer to Policy HD 11) or microclimatic impacts like changes to wind drafts, meanwhile, a development in a quieter neighbourhood could cause more concerns about noise and traffic from construction than one located elsewhere. It is important that applicants consider the factors of relevance to their proposal and appropriately address these in their application to demonstrate that

they have addressed the amenity and environmental health impacts set out in this policy. For example, should the risk of glare be present from elements of the building, design could be modified by reorienting elements of the building to avoid reflection, or using matte cladding material.

Noise and vibration have a significant impact upon amenity and people's health and wellbeing. The management of noise should be an integral part of development proposals and should be considered at the earliest opportunity to ensure that the right acoustic environment is achieved in new development. The consideration of existing noise sensitivity within an area is important to minimise potential conflicts of uses or activities[6]. In cases where noise sensitive development is proposed near to an existing noise generating use (e.g., a music venue or pub) the Council will consider whether the introduction of the sensitive use might threaten the continued operation of the existing premises, which might mean the development is inappropriate in that location. Measures to mitigate the impacts of noise and vibration associated with demolition and construction will be secured by legal agreement or condition through construction management plans which form part of the transport assessment.

Applicants must ensure that any transport impacts likely to occur as result of the development are assessed and managed in compliance with Policy C6 Transport Assessments, Travel Plans and Service and Delivery Plans. Specific requirements related to amenity are also set out in separate policies in relation to matters of air quality (policy R4) and land quality including contamination (policy R5).

[6] The Council typically require the cumulative noise level from all proposed building services plant to be 5 dB below the representative background noise level. Noise levels that are 10 dB or more above the existing background sound level, are likely to be an indication of a significant adverse impact. If the level is 5 dB above the existing background sound level, it is likely to be an indication of an adverse impact.

Policy R7 – Amenity and Environmental Health Impacts of Development

Planning permission will only be granted for development that:

a. **ensures that the amenity of communities, occupiers, neighbours and the natural environment is protected; and**
b. **does not have unacceptable transport impacts affecting communities, occupiers, neighbours and the existing transport network; and**
c. **provides mitigation measures where necessary.**

The factors the City Council will consider in determining compliance with the above elements of this policy will also include where relevant:

a) **visual privacy, outlook;**
b) **sunlight, daylight, overshadowing and mitigating glare from solar panels and windows where applicable;**
c) **artificial lighting levels;**
d) **transport impacts;**
e) **impacts of the construction phase including the assessment of these impacts within the construction traffic management plans (refer to Policy C6);**
f) **odour, fumes and dust;**
g) **microclimate e.g., wind, overheating**
h) **contaminated land;**
i) **impact upon waste and wastewater infrastructure;**
j) **noise and vibration; and**
k) **preserving surrounding water quality.**

Planning permission will not be granted for development sensitive to noise in locations which experience high levels of noise, unless it can be demonstrated through a noise assessment, that appropriate attenuation measures will be provided to ensure an acceptable level of amenity for end users and to prevent harm to the continued operation of existing uses.

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Chapter 6- A City that Respects its Heritage & Fosters Design of the Highest Quality

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Glossary

Conservation areas - an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Heritage assessment - May also be referred to as a Heritage Statement or Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). This should set out the significance of a heritage asset or landscape within its wider setting and outline the proposal, assess the impact on significance and set out a mitigation strategy. The local Historic Environment Record should be consulted, and expert assessment will be required. It should have a level of detail appropriate to enable an informed decision to be reached.

Heritage assets - A building, monument, site, place, area, or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. Heritage assets are the valued components of the historic environment. They include designated heritage assets and assets identified by Oxford City Council during the process of decision-making or through the plan-making process (including local listing).

Historic core - area of the city centre comprising the spires and towers that make up the historic skyline, and in which any additions of height will intrude directly into the view of the skyline.

Listed Building- A building deemed to be of special architectural or historical interest is placed on a statutory list maintained by Historic England. Such buildings cannot be demolished, extended, or altered without special permission from a local planning authority, which typically consults with Historic England before determining an application. The designation regime is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Listed buildings are classified into three grades:

- Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest
- Grade II* buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest.
- Grade II buildings are of special interest warranting every effort to preserve them.

Listed building consent - permission required from a local planning authority before making changes that affect the character or appearance of a listed building.

Oxford Heritage Assets Register – A register of buildings, structures, features, or places that make a special contribution to the character of Oxford and its neighbourhoods through their locally significant historic, architectural, archaeological or artistic interest.

The City Centre Archaeological Area - area of the city centre where archaeological remains are almost certain to be present.

Introduction and wider context

6.1 A key theme of the Local Plan 2040 vision, which addresses both the social and environmental pillars of sustainability, is for Oxford to respect its culture and heritage and foster design of the highest quality. This is underpinned by two key objectives:

- Well-designed, beautiful buildings and public spaces that feel safe, that are sustainable, and that are attractive to be in and pass through; and
- To ensure that the significance of valued and important heritage is conserved and that understanding of the value and importance is enhanced.

6.2 To respond to this theme successfully, it will be important that we drive the highest quality design in all new development, which means developments are both aesthetically pleasing and functional, so that they enable people to live healthy, happy lives, and that they respond to climate change and make space for biodiversity.

6.3 Oxford is a world-renowned historic city with a rich and diverse built heritage. It is highly recognisable by its iconic skyline and its architecture. Oxford is also a dynamic city that must adapt and change. High quality design is key to managing this change positively, for the continued success of the city.

6.4 A cornerstone of good design is about ensuring proposals are informed by an understanding of existing context and designed to respond to this positively. Oxford has been shaped by its landscape and by development related to defending the city, church and academic institutions, industry and commerce. Oxford is a product of more than a thousand years of evolution, with layers of history both visible and buried resulting in many valuable heritage assets, together and individually contributing to a special character that defines and is particular to the place. The natural landscape around Oxford is key to its sense of place. The floodplains and valley sides provide a backdrop to Oxford's cityscape, and setting is defined by agricultural vales, wooded hills, and river valleys.

Heritage

6.5 Successful new design and the conservation and enhancement of the heritage of Oxford should not be separated. Managing change in a way that respects and draws from Oxford's heritage and landscape is vital for the continued success of the city. Therefore, new developments will need to come forward in a way that respects and responds to landscape, heritage and archaeology and takes opportunities to celebrate this history. Successful design in Oxford is reliant on first understanding this heritage and managing change that meets future needs (such as providing new homes, greening our streets and reaching net zero carbon) whilst ensuring that there is no harm to the special significance of these heritage assets so that they can continue to be understood, valued and enjoyed for years to come. Paragraphs 199-202 set out considerations for designated heritage assets, which are conservation areas, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, and scheduled monuments. In all cases, significance must be understood, and the level of any harm on this significance. This must be weighed against public benefits, which could be wide ranging and will vary in magnitude but include delivery of needed homes and facilities and environmental improvements such as carbon efficiency.

Heritage Assets

Conservation areas

Conservation areas are designated heritage assets. They are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.' Oxford has 18 conservation areas which are listed in Appendix 6.1 and defined on the Policies Map. They include a diverse range of qualities, reflecting the story of Oxford, from the medieval walled city to surrounding agricultural settlements, the open green space found in the Headington Hill Conservation Area to the meadows of the river valleys such as Wolvercote and Godstow. However, they all have the common element of containing features that link us to our past. The protection of these features needs to be effectively managed, ensuring future generations will value and enjoy their special qualities.

Conservation Area Appraisals and management plans help describe what makes the distinctive character, appearance, and historic interest of the conservation areas, and where these exist these should be a starting point in creating good, contextually responsive new development. Full regard should be given to the detailed character assessments and other relevant information set out any relevant conservation area appraisal and management plan.

Certain features may be characteristic in a particular conservation area, and these must be responded to sensitively. Characteristic features may include:

- The urban grain such as specific settlement patterns, plot types and groupings of buildings and their relationship to each other and the wider area.
- Proportions, such as height and massing, may be characteristic and may be harmed by developments that do not relate well to these;
- Views, which includes long distance and close views, focal points at the end of a view, glimpsed views of spaces beyond and between;
- Setting of the conservation area and what the setting contributes to its significance;
- Trees and other landscape features, including views and backdrops to views.
- Boundary treatments, which may include railings, walls and hedges are often characteristic and add to the significance of the area; and/or
- Architectural details such as the palette of materials, windows and doors, proportions, and rhythms.

Policy HD1 Conservation Areas

Planning permission will be granted for development that respects and draws inspiration from Oxford's conservation areas, responding positively to their significance, character and distinctiveness.

For all planning decisions for planning permission or listed building consent affecting the significance of a conservation area or its setting, great weight will be

given to the conservation of that conservation area and to the setting of the conservation area where it contributes to that significance or appreciation of that significance.

An application for planning permission or listed building consent for development which would or may affect the significance of a conservation area, either directly or by being within its setting, should be accompanied by a heritage assessment. This must be based on an understanding of the context and that includes a description of the conservation area and its significance and an assessment of the impact of the development proposed on the conservation area's significance.

Certain features may be characteristic of a particular conservation area, as outlined in the supporting text, and planning applications should set out how these have been responded to sensitively to avoid harm.

A heritage assessment must include information sufficient to demonstrate:

- **a. an understanding of the significance of the conservation area, including recognition of its contribution to the quality of life of current and future generations and the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits they may bring; and**
- **b. that the development of the proposal and its design process have been informed by an understanding of the significance of the conservation area and that harm to its significance has been avoided or where it's not possible, any harm has been minimised through thoughtful design; and**
- **c. that, in cases where development would result in harm to the significance of a conservation area, including its setting, the levels of harm has been properly and accurately assessed and understood, that it is justified because alternative possibilities or design arrangements have been explored and that measures are incorporated into the proposal, where appropriate, that mitigate, reduce or compensate for the harm.**

Where the setting of a conservation area is affected by a proposed development, the heritage assessment should include a description of the extent to which the setting contributes to the significance of the conservation area, as well as an assessment that the impact of the proposed development would have on the setting and the setting's contribution to the significance of the asset.

Where a development proposal would cause less than substantial harm to a conservation area, this harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Clear and convincing justification for this harm should be set out in full in the heritage assessment. Substantial harm to or loss of significance of a conservation area should be wholly exceptional. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or loss of the significance of a conservation area, planning permission or listed building consent will only be granted if all of the criteria in paragraph 201 (or equivalent in any update) of the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) can be demonstrated, or unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, which should be set out in the heritage assessment.

Conservation areas are listed in Appendix 6.1 and defined on the Policies Map.

Listed Buildings

Oxford has a very high concentration of historic buildings. Oxford contains buildings of great rarity, group value and high aesthetic value, and with associations to people and events of history, that allows a visible understanding of the past of Oxford and the country, and that create a unique character and distinctiveness. Therefore, the impacts of alterations to listed buildings on the significance of listed buildings and their setting could potentially be very harmful if not fully informed by an understanding of the significance of the building.

Historic buildings need to be repaired and adapted to meet changing needs, which may be changing needs of occupants for example, or the need to respond to the climate emergency. It is important that this is carried out thoughtfully and in a manner that preserves the fabric of the building as well as notable features of the building or heritage asset that contribute to its significance and the reason it is protected.

Policy HD2 Listed Buildings

Planning permission or listed building consent will be granted for development that respects and draws inspiration from Oxford's listed buildings, responding positively to their significance, character and distinctiveness. For all planning decisions for planning permission or listed building consent affecting the significance of a listed building or its setting, great weight will be given to the conservation of that listed building and to the setting of the listed building where it contributes to that significance or appreciation of that significance.

An application for planning permission or listed building consent for development which would or may affect the significance of a listed building, either directly or by being within its setting, should be accompanied by a heritage assessment that includes

- **a. a description of the listed building and information sufficient to demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the listed building including**
  - **i. its rarity, group value and how it reveals its historic, architectural, archaeological and/or artistic interest and/or value for its associations to things that shape the identity and character of the area, the way it illustrates the past and helps our understanding of it, its aesthetic contribution to the area, and its importance to the community; and**
  - **ii. recognition of its contribution to the quality of life of current and future generations and the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits they may bring.**
- **b. an assessment of the impact of the development proposed on significance of the listed building and its setting, including on the integrity of the building, the impact on group value and Oxford's/the local area's identity should be explained, including:**
  - **i. that the development of the proposal and its design process have been informed by an understanding of the significance of the listed**

building and that harm to its significance has been avoided; or
ii. in cases where development would result in harm to the significance of a listed building, including its setting, the extent of harm must be properly and accurately assessed and understood, and clearly and convincingly justified.

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to a listed building, clear and convincing justification must be provided within the heritage assessment. This should explain what alternative proposals have been considered and how measures have been incorporated into the proposal, where appropriate, that mitigate, reduce or compensate for the harm. Only then will the harm be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Substantial harm to or loss of Grade II listed buildings should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of Grade I and II* listed buildings should be wholly exceptional. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or loss of the significance of a listed building, planning permission or listed building consent will only be granted if all of the criteria in paragraph 201 (or equivalent in any update) of the NPPF can be demonstrated, or unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, which should be set out in the heritage assessment.

The use of a listed building may be part of its significance. Changes of use should:
c. be to a use which would not be harmful to the special interest of the building or its setting; and
d. be suitable without harmful extensive reconstruction

Where the setting of a listed building is affected by a proposed development, the heritage assessment should include a description of the extent to which the setting contributes to the significance of the listed building, as well as an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the setting and its contribution to significance.

Registered Parks and Gardens

Many parks and gardens in Oxford contribute significantly to its townscape and are an important part of appreciating and understanding its heritage. Historic England's National Heritage List includes 15 parks and gardens in Oxford, 5 of which are Grade I, 1 is Grade II* and 9 of which are Grade II. These are designated heritage assets. The majority of these are related to colleges, but they also include High Wall in Pullens Lane, Park Town and St Sepulchre's Cemetery. Because of their heritage value as well as other functions as Green Infrastructure, these sites are protected as part of the Core Green Infrastructure Network under Policy G1. Many more parks and gardens are not registered but nevertheless contribute to local significance. The registered parks and gardens all have associated listed buildings and form a significant part of the setting of those listed buildings, so the impact of any proposals on associated heritage assets will also be a key consideration. Because the nature of Registered Parks and Gardens in the city is that they

are not stand alone heritage assets, but part of a wider heritage asset that includes listed buildings, so of the criteria in paragraph 201 of the NPPF referred to in Policy HD3, those about viable uses, grant-funding and bringing the site back into use are unlikely to apply.

The designation requires local authorities to consult Historic England on development affecting Grade I and II* Registered Parks. It also requires local authorities to consult the Garden History Society on works to all grades of parks and gardens. The effect of proposed development on a registered park or garden, or its setting, is also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Policy HD3 Registered Parks and Gardens

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to a registered park and garden, clear and convincing justification must be provided within a heritage assessment. Substantial harm to or loss of Grade II registered parks and gardens should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of Grade I and II* registered parks and gardens should be wholly exceptional. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or loss of the significance of a park or garden, planning permission (or other planning consents where relevant) will only be granted if all of the criteria in paragraph 201 (or equivalent in any update) of the NPPF can be demonstrated, or unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, which should be set out in the heritage assessment.

Any proposals that would result in harm to, or loss of, the significance of a Registered Park and Garden requires clear and convincing justification in a Heritage Assessment. Substantial harm to or loss of grade II Registered Parks and Gardens should be exceptional, and of grade I and II* registered should be wholly exceptional.

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a Registered Park and Garden unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or the criteria in paragraph 201 (or equivalent in any update) of the NPPF can be demonstrated. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Scheduled Monuments

A heritage asset is only made a Scheduled Monument if it is of national importance and also if that is the best means of its protection. It is a national designation, so designation is by Historic England. Scheduled Monuments may nor may not be visible above ground. There are 9 Scheduled Monuments in Oxford, which are varied in age and type. They are

the remains of Osney Abbey and Rewley Abbey, Oxford Castle and the City Walls, Seacourt Medieval Settlement, Old Abingdon Road Culverts, Grandpont Causeway, Port Meadow, and the Swing Bridge near Oxford Station. Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) is required for any works that will affect a scheduled monument, through an application to Historic England, in addition to any application for planning permission.

Policy HD4 Scheduled Monuments

An application for planning permission for development which would or may affect the significance of a Scheduled Monument, either directly or by being within its setting, should be accompanied by a heritage assessment that includes a description of the Scheduled Monument and its significance and an assessment of the impact of the development proposed on the listed building's significance.

The submitted heritage assessment must include information sufficient to demonstrate:
a. an understanding of the significance of the Scheduled Monument, including recognition of its contribution to the quality of life of current and future generations and the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits they may bring; and
b. that the development of the proposal and its design process have been informed by an understanding of the significance of the Scheduled Monument and that harm to its significance has been avoided or minimised; and
c. that, in cases where development would result in harm to the significance of a Scheduled Monument, including its setting, the extent of harm has been properly and accurately assessed and understood, that it is justified, and that measures are incorporated into the proposal, where appropriate, that mitigate, reduce, or compensate for the harm.

Where the setting of a Scheduled Monument is affected by a proposed development, the heritage assessment should include a description of the extent to which the setting contributes to the significance of the listed building, as well as an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the setting and its contribution to significance.

Where a development proposal would cause less than substantial harm to a scheduled monument, this harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Clear and convincing justification for this harm should be set out in full in the heritage assessment. Substantial harm to or loss of significance of a scheduled monument should be wholly exceptional. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or loss of the significance of a scheduled monument, planning permission or listed building consent will only be granted if all of the criteria in paragraph 201 (or equivalent in any update) of the NPPF can be demonstrated, or unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, which should be set out in the heritage assessment.

Archaeology

Much of Oxford's history lies buried beneath the ground and so Oxford has a rich archaeological heritage that has been progressively built up from prehistoric times to the modern day. This archaeology has the potential to aid understanding of our heritage. Archaeological remains can't be renewed so it is essential they are managed carefully and treated with respect.

New development has the potential to harm or destroy these assets where their presence is not appropriately investigated, and impacts are not carefully mitigated. New development should seek to find creative innovative ways to conserve and protect Oxford's exceptional and irreplaceable archaeological legacy from cumulative harm and loss. Building designs should therefore aim to preserve significant archaeology in situ. Where the loss of archaeological assets is warranted by the merits and public benefits of the development then archaeological investigation and recording, public outreach, storage of artefacts and the publication and dissemination of results may be an acceptable alternative. In these cases, the potential for design that makes some acknowledgement of the understanding of the past that is gained through the archaeological discoveries should be considered. Understanding and incorporating archaeological remains into current designs will add interest and local distinctiveness.

The unique archaeological heritage of the city encompasses a wide variety of asset types. A few of these are formally designated heritage assets such as Scheduled Monuments, however many assets of comparable significance are not currently designated and warrant appropriate protection through the planning system. Notable assets include prehistoric domestic, ritual, and funerary sites located across north Oxford and the remains of an important Roman pottery manufacturing industry to the south and east of city. The town is also distinctive for its middle-late Saxon urban remains, its emergence as a major cloth trading town in the Norman period and for the numerous assets associated with Oxford's development as an international centre for academic study including the remains of multiple religious institutions, academic halls and endowed colleges. Other assets of note include the town defences, the distinctive remains associated with the medieval Jewish Community and the Royalist Civil War defences.

The City Centre Archaeological Area (defined on the Policies Map) has an exceptionally high concentration of archaeological remains, as do some allocated sites. Any significant breaking of the ground in these locations will require an archaeological assessment. An archaeological assessment may also be required outside of these areas where it is suspected there are archaeological remains. There are known concentrations of past human activity in many parts of Oxford, and early discussion with the City Council to ascertain whether an archaeological assessment is required is strongly advised.

Owing to the richness of archaeological remains in Oxford, especially in the historic core, there is a danger that allowing the recording of deposits rather than preservation in situ for several individual developments will lead to significant degradation of the archaeological record. In those cases, further work to ensure adequate contextual assessment and mitigation may be required, that takes into account cumulative impacts.

The City Centre Archaeological Area contains archaeology it is essential to preserve and understand. Development within the medieval core has a high potential to harm the

heritage value of the sites, if not carried out sensitively. There are many things to consider as part of the design of developments at these sites, so a comprehensive approach is essential that ensures archaeology, and cumulative impacts on archaeology, is part of wider considerations of how to develop a site.

Policy HD5 Archaeology

Within the City Centre Archaeological Area, on allocated sites where identified, or elsewhere where archaeological deposits and features are suspected to be present (including upstanding remains), applications should be accompanied by a Heritage Assessment. A Heritage Assessment should include and be informed by:

a. a description of the impacted archaeological deposit or feature (including where relevant its setting), information to define the character, significance and extent of such deposits or features; and

b. an explanation of how early assessment and field evaluation has informed design that aims to preserve deposits and features in situ avoiding adverse effects from poor siting of foundations, drainage features and hard landscaping; and

c. an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the deposits of features, using a proportionate level of detail that is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal. The assessment should reference appropriate records (including the information held on the Oxford Historic Environment Record,); and

d. if appropriate, a full archaeological desk-based assessment and the results of evaluation by fieldwork. This should be produced by an appropriately qualified contractor. Pre- application discussion is encouraged to establish requirements. In the City Centre Archaeological Area, where significant archaeological asset types can be shown to be subject to cumulative impact from development, the desk-based assessment should contain appropriate contextual assessment of this impact. The desk-based assessment in the City Centre Archaeological area should also include a whole site plan (which may be beyond the red line to include a whole campus site, for example) that shows current understanding of any basement and underground servicing, likely locations of hidden archaeology, other heritage assets (including settings) to be considered and explain how this whole-site understanding has helped inform decisions about the layout and location of the development.

Development proposals that affect archaeological deposits and features will be supported where they are designed to enhance or to better reveal the significance of the asset and will help secure a sustainable future for it.

Proposals which would or may affect archaeological deposits or features that are designated as heritage assets will be considered against the relevant policy approach (HD2 Listed Buildings, HD4 Scheduled Monuments).

Subject to the above, proposals that will lead to harm to the significance of non-designated archaeological deposits or features will be resisted unless a clear and convincing justification through public benefit can be demonstrated to outweigh

that harm, having regard to the significance of the deposits or features and the extent of harm. Where harm to an archaeological asset has been convincingly justified and is unavoidable, mitigation should be agreed with Oxford City Council and should be proportionate to the significance of the asset and impact. The aim of mitigation should be where possible to preserve archaeological remains in situ, to promote public enjoyment of heritage and to record and advance knowledge. Appropriate provision should be made for investigation, recording, analysis, publication, archive deposition and community involvement.

Non-designated Heritage Assets

The term 'heritage asset' describes valued components of the historic environment, which may include buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes that have been positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. Some heritage assets are designated, such as listed buildings. However, not all heritage assets are designated. These non-designated heritage assets may or may not be identified in the Oxford Heritage Asset Register. These are assets that have a local relevance that do not merit a national-level designation, but which are still important to consider in determining planning applications (and in developing proposals).

Policy HD6 Non-designated Heritage Assets

A non-designated building or group of buildings, monument or site, place or landscape will be considered a local heritage asset if it is found to have local interest, value, and significance. These assets may be identified through the Oxford Heritage Assets Register, conservation area appraisals, or the planning application process. Planning permission will only be granted for development affecting a local heritage asset or its setting if it is demonstrated that due regard has been given to the impact on the asset's significance and its setting and that it is demonstrated that the significance of the asset and its conservation has informed the design of the proposed development.

In determining whether planning permission should be granted for a development proposal that affects a local heritage asset, consideration will be given to the significance of the asset, the extent of impact on its significance, as well as the scale of any harm or loss to the asset as balanced against the public benefits that may result from the development proposals.

Recording should take place to advance understanding of the significance of any assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and that is publicly accessible. The ability to provide publicly accessible recording will not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably

of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the requirements of Policy HD4.

High Quality Design

A rigorous design process and design-led solutions are crucial to achieving new developments of high quality. Design should have a clear rationale and be informed and inspired by the unique characteristics of the site and its wider setting, including an understanding of heritage. To enable decision makers to properly understand and assess the final design, the design process must be clearly explained and justified. Policies are intended to set out requirements for following a design process that will ensure development that responds to context including the immediate and wider surrounding and that works well for its intended use. Requirements for explaining the design process, including how early consideration of context has informed design, are also set out.

Principles of High-Quality Design

The value and benefits of good design and improvements to quality of life are so significant that good design is not a nice extra, it is essential. A successfully designed scheme will be a positive addition to its surroundings. It may blend in or stand out, but it should not detract from existing significant positive characteristics in the area, and it may add interest and variety. A well-designed scheme will meet the needs of all users and will stand the test of time.

Context and Built Form

Oxford has a rich legacy of buildings from iconic architectural set pieces to smaller domestic, medieval houses in the historic core and locally distinctive buildings within the many villages that now form part of the city. There is therefore a wealth of inspiration in terms of building form and character and great opportunity for creative, high quality complementary character to enhance the existing built form.

New buildings and alterations to existing buildings should be of high-quality design. They should respond appropriately to the existing form, materials and architectural detailing and should not have adverse impacts on existing and neighbouring buildings. Placement, style and proportions of doors and windows will be important, as will the choice of materials.

All new development should be informed and inspired by the unique characteristics of the site and its setting, and these considerations should go beyond the red line of the application site to adopt a true placemaking approach. The contextual analysis should consider the history and development of the site and surrounding area, landscape structure, biodiversity, the pattern, character and appearance of streets, buildings, and spaces. The level of detail in the analysis should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the development proposals.

As part of the contextual analysis, a constraints and opportunities plan should be created which will help visually draw out these crucial elements of the design development. Unique site features identified will present an opportunity to shape design and offer the opportunity for reinforcing existing character or creating an individual character drawing on the context. Constraints identified will help provide clarity about potential issues and open up the opportunity to explore imaginative solutions to them.

Holistic View for High Quality Design

High quality design should be seen as part of a holistic view of looking at a place. It is not just a matter of scrutinising the external visual appearance of a building, although that is important in itself, but also the spaces around, and between buildings, and open spaces, whether public or private. Following this approach means there will be areas of crossover/synergy with other policy areas. The most obvious of these linkages are sustainable design and construction, health and well-being impacts, and management of natural resources. What would be ingrained in good design is not only the visual and spatial impacts arising from the creation of a building or open space, but also the long term impact in terms of the capacity for adaptability in response to changing needs, types of users and climate, but also in terms of the long term impact on the identities and socioeconomic well-being of the communities development occurs in.

Other Points of Reference

- National Model Design Guide
- The national design guide sets out and illustrates the governments priorities for well-designed places. It is based on national planning policy, practice guidance and objectives for good design as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. It is a useful introductory guide to the principles of good design and the design process in general, and it provides a useful template from which specific local guidance and policy can be written. The 10 characteristics of well-designed places outlined by the guide has greatly informed the development of the assessment framework/checklist used by the City Council.

- Secure by Design
- As well as considering principles of good placemaking, developers are also encouraged to have due regard for the principles and physical security standards of the police's Secure by Design scheme in proposals for new development. Secure by Design is proven to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and provides a well-established approach for designing developments to minimise opportunities for criminal and anti-social behaviour, and for creating spaces that reduce the fear of crime.

- Building for a Healthy Life
- Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the latest edition of one of the most widely used design guides used in England and has as its emphasis healthy placemaking. It is a collaborative work between Homes England, NHS England, and NHS

Improvement. It comprises of 12 considerations organised under the headings (integrated neighbourhoods, distinctive places, and streets for all) to apply to development schemes to assess how well they match against the qualities of successful places. The guide may be useful in assisting local communities to set clear expectations of new developments by offering a series of easy to understand considerations that will also allow local communities to identify the qualities (or deficiencies) of development proposals more easily.

Design Review and preapplication process:
Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design of emerging schemes will help clarify expectations and allow the opportunity for creative ideas and problem solving to add value.

The Council has a Design Review Panel which operates under the nationally accepted Design Review Principles and Practice guidance document published by the Design Council. It is encouraged that all major development proposals are assessed by the Council's in-house design team and then by the Panel as part of the pre-application and then application process, in order that designs can be reviewed and improved at the informative stage prior to the formal determination of the application. In assessing applications, the Council will have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by Design Review Panel. However, the Design Review Panel will always remain as an advice panel and will not fetter it's the Council's discretion in the determination of a planning application.

Policy HD7 Principles of High-Quality Design

Planning permission will only be granted for development of high-quality design that is responsive to its context, creates or enhances local distinctiveness, and ensures that the amenity of the natural environment is protected.

All developments - other than changes of use without external alterations and householder applications - will be expected to be supported by a constraints and opportunities plan with supporting text and/or visuals to explain their design rationale in a design statement proportionate to the proposal (which could be part of a Design and Access Statement, Planning Statement or other demonstration of compliance with other plan policies that may be relevant), which should address the relevant checklist points set out in Appendix 1.1.

Planning permission will only be granted where proposals are designed to meet the key design objectives and principles for delivering high quality development as set out in Appendix 1.1.

Using context to determine appropriate density

Using scarce resources efficiently is vital to ensuring Oxford's sustainable growth and development. Oxford is a small, constrained city with a growing population. Oxford has

some very densely developed parts of the city and it is a city with an effective record for re-using previously developed land efficiently. However, there is also capacity to increase density in some parts of the city particularly in transport hubs such as the city centre and the district centre, along main arterial roads, and in parts of the suburban area that are less sensitive in terms of heritage and particularly heights (as set out in Policy HD9).

Making efficient use of land and delivering high quality design within new development requires a holistic understanding of a site's context, and this will need to be demonstrated through any application. Understanding of site context includes consideration of the natural and historic environment and any sensitivities present in the local area.

Opportunities should be taken to thoroughly understand these sensitivities so that design can preserve and enhance valued features, whilst mitigating negative impacts that could exacerbate challenges. Whilst the context of each site will be different, such opportunities could include:

- the potential for valuable archaeological remains to be present on the site which should be safeguarded through careful positioning of foundations;
- whether there are sensitive views through the site which building heights should be tailored to avoid interrupting;
- whether there are deficiencies in particular types of green space which the proposal could help to address through provision on site;
- whether there are opportunities to orient layout/roof tops to maximise solar gain on photovoltaics solar panels for renewable energy generation.

Contextual considerations as set out within this policy are closely linked with the requirements of a range of policies elsewhere in the local plan and reference should be made to these where relevant, table HD1 sets out the key linkages:

Contextual consideration	Relevant policies
a. Appropriate for use	Site allocation policies
b. Context of heights/massing	HD9 and Area of Focus policies
c. Heritage assets	HD1-HD6
d. Biodiversity and green infrastructure	G1, G2, G3
e. Energy and carbon	RE1, RE2, RE3
f. Flooding	G7, G8

Policy HD8 Using Context to Determine Appropriate Density

Planning permission will only be granted where development proposals make efficient use of land, appropriate for the context of the site and its surroundings.

Development proposals must make best use of site capacity, in a manner compatible with the site itself, with a full understanding of the context of the site and its place in Oxford and the surrounding area. Balanced against the

need for development, it should be shown how the built form, scale, layout, and overall density:

a. is appropriate for the use proposed;
b. is informed by an understanding of context, with building heights and massing that should conform to other policies in the plan;
c. is informed by an understanding of the impacts on heritage, including the presence of listed buildings or their setting, conservation areas or their setting, registered parks and gardens, likely or known archaeological deposits, etc; and
d. protects significant green infrastructure features such as biodiversity habitats, public open spaces and mature trees and considers existing provision of these in the local area as well as opportunities to enhance greening and biodiversity on the site; and
e. considers the opportunities for net zero carbon design, including energy efficiency measures, maximising renewable energy generation, reducing carbon dioxide emitted through construction process, and preserving carbon sinks;
f. considers presence of flood risk and, where relevant, locating more vulnerable uses in locations with reduced flood risk, less vulnerable uses in areas of higher risk;

It is expected that sites at mobility hubs and within the city and district centres will be capable of accommodating development at an increased scale and density, although this will also be encouraged in all other appropriate locations where the impact of so doing is shown to be acceptable. High-density development (for residential development this will indicatively be taken as 100dph) is expected in the highly accessible locations of the district centres, and in the city centre where feasible in the context of the impacts on heritage.

Views and building heights

Taller buildings may be an appropriate built response to existing context, but successful design of taller buildings requires a particular range of considerations. Design choice about height of buildings should consider a range of factors. The context of the immediate surroundings and the impact on surrounding amenity is one consideration, the impact on views and heritage is a key consideration and design to ensure a good and sustainable living environment is another. In some contexts, a relatively low building of an additional storey above the existing prevailing height may be considered a tall building.

Particular care needs to be taken over the design and placement of taller buildings in Oxford because development might be in the setting of the buildings that create the iconic 'dreaming spires'. These buildings are a collection of nationally and internationally important buildings of historic and architectural significance. They sit in a compact area in the core of Oxford, which is raised slightly on a gravel terrace, giving more prominence to

these historic buildings, and meaning that Oxford's unique skyline can be viewed as a single entity whose composition varies according to the direction of viewing. Taller buildings should not negatively impact on views of the iconic skyline.

Quality design of high buildings

If it is established that a taller building is appropriate in a particular location, it is important it is designed to ensure it contributes positively to the character of the area, that it does not detract from the amenity of its surroundings, that it is sustainable and creates a good internal environment. Certain aspects of the design of high buildings require particular and specific consideration. Whether a building is considered a high building will depend on the context. The High Buildings Guidance Technical Advice Note (TAN) should be referred to. This includes guidance on differing heights across the city where the impacts from those heights will be minimal. Higher buildings may still be appropriate, and the TAN also sets out design considerations for exceeding those heights. Policy HD9 sets out the requirements for technological representations of the visual impact of high buildings to aid decision making; non-technical representations may also be appropriate. Higher buildings will often be appropriate in district centres and on arterial roads.

Areas of Greater Potential

The High Buildings Study identified three areas of Oxford where proposals for new high buildings are more likely to be appropriate (Areas of Greater Potential shown in Figure 7 of the High Buildings TAN). These areas are less constrained by heritage considerations and represent areas where there is more potential for them to contribute to regeneration opportunities, and that have good connectivity and availability of existing facilities of district centres. The identified Areas of Greater Potential are the northern suburbs, the eastern suburbs, and the south-eastern suburbs.

Heritage

The addition of a high building in the setting of a heritage asset needs particular attention. A new high building adjacent to a heritage asset could cause harm for reasons including obstruction of valued views to or from the asset, visual competition, and incongruous design. Even at some distance from an asset a new high building may cause harm by obstructing a valued view towards that asset, or by changing the historic character of informative views towards or from an asset with visual competition in the foreground or background.

The historic core area

Although from certain points of view the towers and spires that make up the historic skyline seem to be spaced very widely, the area from which the silhouette emerges is, in fact, very compact and does not extend far beyond the old city wall within the central core. The area within a 1,200 metre radius of Carfax tower (defined on the Policies Map as the Historic Core Area) contains all the buildings that comprise the historic skyline. New buildings within the Historic Core Area have high potential to interfere with the character of the skyline, especially if their height is above that of Carfax Tower. These will be developments that exceed 18.2 m (60 ft) in height or ordnance datum (height above sea level) 79.3 m (260ft) (whichever is the lower).

The fragility and small height and volume of the spires means the character of the skyline is particularly vulnerable to change. The aim of any design within the historic core area should be to maintain the unique character and significance of views of the spires and to

ensure that variability and interest in the skyline is maintained. Design of development in the foreground of views is also important. As well as not intruding through height, the design of foreground buildings should aid appreciation of view of the spires, rather than harming it through too great a level of uniform building height, bulk and massing that creates a flat and uninteresting foreground view that detracts from appreciation of the spires.

View cones

View cones are drawn as triangles from important viewing points to encompass the width of the area containing buildings that constitute Oxford's historic skyline. The 10 identified view cones do not represent an exhaustive list of viewing points that provide an important view of Oxford's skyline. There may be glimpses of the famous skyline in other locations, and tall buildings in particular that are proposed outside of the view cones might still have an impact on the historic skyline.

Within view cones, proposed new buildings must not detract from the skyline and composition, and even where they will not intrude directly on to it their effect as a frame to it must be considered. However, it is not just a bulky intrusion into the skyline that might be damaging; the foreground is also an important element of a view. Development of a low and uniform height that does not recognise the importance of rooftop detailing and modulation can detract from the view of the skyline in the whole, as well as having a negative effect on townscape.

A View Cones Assessment (2015) has been endorsed by the City Council and is published on the City Council's website. It examines the contribution and significance of views, identifying their special qualities and elements. The View Cones Assessment sets out a methodology for heritage assessment of the Oxford views and applies this to each of the 10 view cones. The Study enables a greater understanding of the significance of all parts of the view, not just the skyline. It is designed to aid understanding of the impact of proposals on views, and should be referred to, understood, and reflected in designs within the view cones and the setting of view cones that might impact on the experience and heritage significance of the view. It should be remembered that, while some protected views are partly obscured by tree cover (especially in the summer), trees may become managed in the views in the future, so protection of the views is still important. Some views are from points outside the City Council's administrative boundaries. The City Council will work with Vale of White Horse to ensure these views are protected.

Roofscape and views

Views into the historic core from the surrounding landscape, including from the view cones, views out from the historic core, revealing the landscape setting of Oxford, and views across the core and from its edge to the green hills and floodplains are also important to consider. Even where buildings do not intrude directly into the skyline they may form a frame to it, and design choices should respond to this. To create more visual diversity that enhances the experience of the skyline, articulation of roofscape, and relatively short units of building are encouraged, with features to create a break in the line. A maximum ridge or parapet length of 25 metres without either a substantial vertical or horizontal break or interrupting features is a rule-of-thumb guideline that will be followed for Oxford's skyline. The City Council will resist the loss of any features, such as chimneys, if the loss would result in a simplification of the skyline.

Policy HD9 Views and Building Heights

Planning permission will not be granted for development that will not retain the special significance of views of the historic skyline, both from within Oxford and from outside.

Planning permission will be granted for developments of appropriate height or massing. Any proposal for height that is above the prevailing heights of the area and that could impact on character should be fully explained by the following criteria, all of which should be met:

a. design choices regarding height and massing have a clear design rationale; and

b. regard should be had to the guidance on design of higher buildings set out in the High Buildings Study TAN. In particular, the impacts in terms of the four visual tests of obstruction, impact on the skyline, competition and change of character should be explained; and

c. it should be demonstrated how proposals have been designed to have a positive impact on important views including both into the historic skyline and out towards Oxford's green setting, through their massing, orientation, the relation of the building to the street, and detailed design features including roofline and materials (including colour);

d. taller buildings have been designed and orientated to avoid potential negative impacts, including on neighbouring amenity, such as overshadowing, overbearing and overlooking, reduced internal daylight and sunlight and wind-tunnel effects.

The area within a 1,200 metre radius of Carfax tower (the Historic Core Area) contains all the buildings that comprise the historic skyline, so new developments that exceed 18.2 m (60 ft) in height or ordnance datum (height above sea level) 79.3 m (260 ft) (whichever is the lower) are likely to intrude into the skyline. Development above this height must be limited in bulk and must be of the highest design quality.

Applications for any building that exceeds 15 metres (or the height that the High Buildings TAN says may be impactful in that area if that is higher) will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts of any proposals can be understood and assessed, including:

e. a Visual Impact Assessment, which includes the use of photos and verified views produced and used in a technically appropriate way, which are appropriate in size and resolution to match the perspective and detail as far as possible to that seen in the field, representing the landscape and proposed development as accurately as possible (produced in accordance with the Landscape Institute's GLVIA 3d Edition and Technical Guidance note TGN 06 19 or updated equivalents); and

f. use of VuCity 3D modelling (or equivalent if updated by the City Council in future), shared with the City Council so that the impact of the development

can be understood from different locations, including any view cone views that are affected; and

g. if harm is caused to a heritage asset or its setting, a full explanation of other options that have been considered that may be less harmful, a justification that the benefits outweigh the harm and open book viability assessment if relied upon in the explanation.

Any proposals within the Historic Core Area or the View Cones that may impact on the foreground of views and roofscape (including proposals where they are below the Carfax datum point, for example plant) should be designed carefully, and should meet the following criteria:

j. they are based on a clear understanding of characteristic positive aspects of roofscape in the area; and

k. they contribute positively to the roofscape, to enhance any significant long views the development may be part of and also the experience at street level.

Planning permission will not be granted for development proposed within a View Cone or the setting of a View Cone if it would harm the special significance of the view.

The View Cones and the Historic Core Area (1,200m radius of Carfax tower) are defined on the Policies Map

Ensuring the wellbeing of occupants of new and surrounding buildings

It is important to ensure that new buildings create spaces that are of an adequate size and layout, with sunlight and daylight so that they provide a high quality, well-functioning environment for occupiers. The impact on the amenity of surrounding occupants of existing buildings must also be considered. Buildings should provide an internal space that is flexible to meet the needs of a wide range of people and takes account of how needs may change over time.

Health Impact Assessment

The built and natural environment is a key determinant of our health and wellbeing, and therefore it is crucial that through the planning system we plan for and design healthier built environments. Healthy built environments encourage and support good physical and mental health, and also help to reduce health inequalities. To ensure that development in Oxford promotes and contributes to healthy place shaping, proposals should consider health outcomes from the outset.

Applications for major development are expected to undertake and submit a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) in support of their application. The scope of assessment for the HIA, including the issues it needs to cover, will vary with the nature of the development, however the structure of the assessment will need to follow a logical format that addresses the key steps outlined in the policy.

The HIA should include relevant contextual analysis to help inform an assessment of impacts on the health environment. This will include a description of the physical characteristics of the proposed development site and surrounding area, as well as identification of the key population groups and the geographical area that will be affected by the development (which may extend beyond the boundaries of the development itself). It should also consider the local health issues, inequalities and priorities with reference to published evidence/data where relevant, such as public health statistics. These steps are important in enabling the HIA to be as targeted as possible and appropriately scoped to provide the most benefit in terms of the key issues of relevance to the development.

Alongside the contextual analysis, the HIA should include an assessment identifying how the proposed development will impact upon the relevant population groups and the key health issues, inequalities and priorities in the local area. It should detail any alterations to design that have been incorporated to address these. Impacts identified may be positive, for example through including measures in the design that seek to improve the health environment such as through provision of facilities for physical recreation. Equally, the assessment may identify potential negative or neutral impacts on health which could be addressed through changes to design or other mitigations that will avoid or reduce these impacts. Where mitigations are proposed, it is important that the assessment considers how the effectiveness of these actions will be monitored going forward.

The analysis presented within the HIA should be of a sufficient level of detail to allow the Council to make a clear determination as to impacts the development will have on the health environment of the city. The analysis should be evidence based and set out how design of the development has taken into consideration the relevant health concerns and how it addresses these including where opportunities have been taken to achieve positive impacts and to avoid or mitigate negative impacts that could exacerbate issues and inequalities.

Supporting information for how to undertake a HIA including helpful resources can be found in Appendix 6.2 and within the Council's Health Impact Assessment Technical Advice Note.

Policy HD10 Health Impact Assessment

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is required to be submitted as part of the planning application for major development proposals.

The analysis within the submitted HIA should be of a sufficient level of detail to allow the Council to assess the potential impacts of the development on the health environment of the city and its residents. As a minimum, the assessment should include the following:

a. A description of the physical characteristics of the proposed development site and surrounding area, including the current use;
b. Identification of relevant population groups that could be affected by the

development and associated health issues, inequalities and priorities in the area, which should be supported with appropriate evidence/data;
c. An assessment of the impacts of the proposal on the identified population groups and local health issues, inequalities and priorities, including any potential positive and negative impacts, along with any mitigation measures incorporated into the design to reduce identified negative outcomes.
d. Details of monitoring which will be undertaken in relation to the proposed mitigation to be implemented.

The level of detail should be proportionate to the development and agreed with the relevant case officer. Applicants should refer to the additional information and guidance contained in Appendix 6.2 and the Council's Technical Advice Note.

Privacy, daylight and sunlight

Ensuring all homes are built with adequate privacy, daylight and sunlight (internal and external) helps to ensure the wellbeing of residents. It is also important to consider the impacts on neighbouring residential properties to ensure they do not lose their sense of privacy. This is particularly important in the context of Oxford, where high density development is expected in some areas of the city to make efficient use of land.

When planning new developments, regard should always be paid to the impact of windows overlooking other homes' windows (including French windows and patio doors) and gardens. Potential for unacceptable overlooking will depend on the proximity of windows to neighbours' habitable rooms and gardens and the angles of views and gardens.

New homes' access to daylight and sunlight will depend both on the way new and existing buildings relate to one another, and the orientation of windows in relation to the path of the sun. Windows that are overshadowed by buildings, walls, trees, or hedges, or that are north facing, will receive less light. The policy approach will ensure that new development provides adequate daylight and privacy and will not reduce privacy and daylight in existing development to an unacceptable level.

Policy HD11 Privacy, Daylight and Sunlight

Planning permission will only be granted for new development that provides reasonable privacy, daylight and sunlight for occupants of both existing and new homes and sensitive workplaces such as schools. Proposals should demonstrate consideration of all of the following criteria:

a) **Whether the degree of overlooking to and from neighbouring properties or gardens resulting from a proposed development significantly compromises the privacy of either existing or new homes (or existing other uses where there might be a safeguarding concern, particularly schools); and**
b) **The size and orientation of windows in both existing and new developments in respect of access to daylight, sunlight, and solar gain (i.e., natural heating**

from direct sunlight); and

c) **Room depths in relation to maximising natural light; and**

d) **Existing and proposed walls, hedge, trees, and fences, in respects of protecting or creating privacy and also in respect of their impact on overshadowing of both existing and new development.**

To assess access to privacy, sunlight, and daylight in residential developments, the 25 degree and 45-degree guidelines will be used as illustrated in Appendix 6.3, alongside other material factors. On constrained sites with proposals for specialist accommodation, developers may use other methods to demonstrate that dwellings will receive adequate daylight.

Planning permission will not be granted for any development that has an overbearing effect on existing homes.

Internal space standards for residential development

It is important to ensure that new homes are of an adequate size and layout to provide high quality, functional homes that meet the needs of a wide range of people and take into account how those needs might change over time. This should apply to development at all scales, from large strategic sites to infill development, which represents an important contribution to meeting Oxford's housing need.

The pressure to deliver more homes leads to increased pressure to deliver smaller homes. This could result in housing that is unacceptable in terms of internal space because it doesn't offer occupiers appropriate living standards or meet the national aim that everyone should have access to a decent home. The pressure to make efficient use of land, and the fact that dense development is to be encouraged, makes it particularly necessary to ensure that the internal living environment of new homes is adequate.

The City Council has carefully considered the local need for space standards and the viability impact of taking such an approach and decided to adopt the optional nationally described standards. In addition, minimum bedroom sizes for HMOs are governed by the Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018.

This will ensure that new developments are designed and built to provide adequate space for occupants. It will be important to ensure that designs maximise the useable space within housing, through functional layout, and provide scope to adapt and modify housing to meet future requirements. The demand for housing in Oxford means that a small proportion of larger and family homes will be provided in the form of flats or apartments; ensuring adequate space and quality environments will play a crucial role in changing the perception of apartments and their suitability as family homes.

Policy HD12 Internal Space Standards for Residential Development

Planning permission will only be granted for new dwellings that provide good quality living accommodation for the intended use. All proposals for new build market and affordable homes (across all tenures) must comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards.

In flatted schemes, communal areas must be designed to enable neighbours to meet and interact, for example some fixed seating, and wider areas of corridor or lobby space.

Outdoor Amenity Space

The adequate provision of outdoor amenity space is a key factor in supporting the physical and mental health and wellbeing of residents. It provides a space to dry clothes, grow plants and vegetables, and can provides shade and limit urban heat-island effects. In addition, if the space is designed with permeable surfaces it can contribute towards flood risk management.

Where high density development and subdivision of properties are expected and where many sites are infill development, high standards for the delivery of good quality outdoor amenity space becomes increasingly important to ensure the health and wellbeing of residents.

New homes should provide some open space that allows the occupants to enjoy fresh air and light in privacy. Where appropriate, balconies or private terraces should be provided for flats. A private garden can be shared between flats, although all 3-bedroom flats should have direct access to an area of private amenity space. Houses with 2 or more bedrooms should provide direct access to outdoor amenity space with adequate space for children to play in, and for family activities. This should be equivalent in size to the footprint of the dwelling as it was built originally. It could be provided as shared amenity space, although there should always be an area of private amenity space.

It is important that both public and private amenity and garden spaces are well designed, to ensure that it is clear how each of the spaces are used without the need for extensive signage, avoiding narrow pathways to link spaces, optimising sunlight, and ensuring principles of good landscape design are incorporated.

Policy HD13 Outdoor Amenity Space

Planning permission will only be granted for dwellings and the subdivision of dwellings (including HMOs) that have direct, well-related and convenient access to an area of private open space (in addition to bin or bike storage space), to meet the following specifications:

a. 1- or 2-bedroom flats and maisonettes should provide either a private balcony or terrace of usable, level space, or have direct and convenient access to a private or shared garden.

b. flats and maisonettes of 3 or more bedrooms must provide private outdoor areas

with space for outside dining and/or clothes drying, with reasonable circulation with a minimum dimension of 1.5 metres depth by 3 metres length. This may be either a private balcony or terrace of useable level space, or, in the case of ground floor flats, direct and convenient access to a private garden or shared garden with some private space (which should not feel isolated).

c. all houses should provide a private garden, of adequate size and proportions for the size of house proposed, which will be at least equivalent in size to the footprint of the dwelling as built originally. Where a directly accessible private outside area is provided, the remaining requirement for outdoor amenity space could be met by provision of shared private amenity space that can be directly and conveniently accessed. The private outdoor areas should allow space for outside dining and/or clothes drying, with reasonable circulation, which will require a minimum dimension of 1.5 metres deep by 3 metres long.

It should also be shown how the following factors have been considered in order to ensure an outdoor space that is adequate and attractive to use:

d. the location and context of the development, in relation to the layout of existing residential plots, and proximity to public open space; and

e. the orientation of the outdoor area in relation to buildings and the path of the sun so that the whole outdoor space will not be continuously in shade or over-exposed;

f. the degree to which enclosure and overlooking impact on the proposed new dwellings and any neighbouring dwellings; and

g. the overall shape, access to and usability of the whole space to be provided; and

h. clear delineation between public and private space; and

i. for communal spaces that there is a variety of space, including provision of space to sit and to play, and that space is adaptable to the changing needs of residents, being easy to maintain with resilient materials, but with opportunities for communal gardening or food growing.

Accessible and Adaptable Homes

Housing provision across the city should meet the needs of everyone and new homes need to be accessible to all, including those with disabilities. As such, it is important to consider the demands and requirements people will have from their homes and how this may change over time. Homes need to be built with the flexibility to be adapted to the changing needs of residents. Adaptability is important to respond to changes to the size and compositions of households, and an ageing population.

Providing opportunities for residents to maintain their independence is important and can help to alleviate pressure on health and social care if older people can remain in their

homes adapted for their needs. In addition, housing needs to be adapted to support those with chronic health conditions and specialist housing needs. Ensuring we build homes that can be adapted to meet people's longer-term needs is an important part of good design.

Local authorities can adopt a policy to provide enhanced accessibility or adaptability through Requirement M4(2) Accessible and adaptable dwellings and/or M4(3) Wheelchair user dwellings in 'Approved Document M: access to and use of buildings'. To ensure provision of housing to meet the range of needs that will exist in Oxford and because of the advantages of dwellings that can adapt to changing needs, requirements for accessible and adaptable dwellings are set out in the policy.

Oxford has a markedly young population compared to neighbouring districts and the UK, mainly because of the substantial number of students. The trend of Oxford having a younger population than average is set to continue; however, people are living longer and there will be an increase in the number of older people resident in the city. As it is likely that Oxford will have a greater proportion of older residents making up its population, there will be changing housing requirements over the Plan period. The Census 2021 showed 5.3% of the population of Oxford are 75 or over. This is lower than the national average, but that represents a section of the population more likely to need adaptable homes in order to remain living in them for longer. The Census 2021 shows that 29% of households in Oxford have one or more people with a disability. Some of those households will need specialist adaptations to their homes, so providing housing that is adaptable will play an important role in ensuring that these people have an adequate choice of homes available to them. The Government has found that 34% of disabled people have had to make adaptations to their homes https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-disability-survey-research-report-june-2021/uk-disability-survey-research-report-june-2021. Therefore, at least 10% of homes should be adaptable, but given the increasingly aging population and the proportion that are already over 75, the policy requires that 15% of market homes meet Category 2 Standards of Part M of the Building Regulations

Some typologies of development will not be suitable for providing homes that meet M4 requirements because these require level access to the front door, and so must have lifts. As well as installation costs they have ongoing maintenance costs (which are likely to affect residents' ground rents). This will affect viability and will not be feasible unless a certain number of units are served by one lift shaft. This will be less likely on lower blocks of flats. There may be other options, such as provision of one and two bed units in terraced houses instead of flats, maisonettes with accessible homes below and so on. But these options will often not be feasible, in which case the policy allows schemes with fewer or no dwellings that meet Part M of the Building Regulations.

Policy HD14 Accessible and Adaptable Homes

Proposals for residential development should ensure that all affordable dwellings and 15% of general market dwellings on sites of 10 or more dwellings are constructed to the Category 2 standard as set out in the Building Regulations

Approved Document M4. 5% of all dwellings for which the City Council is responsible for allocations or nominations on sites of more than 20 dwellings should be provided to Category 3 (wheelchair user) standards as set out in the Building Regulations Approved Document M4. These M4(3) dwellings should be able to be adapted to the needs of the household who will be occupying them, ahead of their occupation.

An exception will be made for flatted schemes that are of two storeys or fewer and/or that are smaller than 50 units, whereby planning permission will be granted when no dwellings meet the requirements of Building Regulations Approved Document M4, if the following conditions are met:

a. **it can be demonstrated that there are strong design reasons for providing blocks of flats with a small number of storeys, and it is not purely to circumvent the requirement; and**
b. **it can be demonstrated that options to provide affordable units in an alternative way that enables level access have been explored, including where possible providing the dwellings required to meet M4 standards on the ground floor.**

Bin and Bike Stores and External Servicing Features

Good design is not only important to the internal layout of development but for a home to function properly and look attractive. Attention needs to be given to the design and location of storage facilities for bikes and bins at the initial stages of the design process. As so many residents cycle in the city and we want to encourage more cycle trips instead of using the private car, new development must incorporate well designed, secure and easy to use bike storage facilities. Examples of good practice can be found in the Parking and Bike Parking Technical Advice Note.

As the number of households grow it is essential that new development optimises the opportunities for residents to recycle as much waste as possible. Ensuring that there is adequate, well-placed space for the range of bins required will enable this. The location of these bin stores needs to be accessible to be collected efficiently and attractively designed so as not to detract from the appearance and amenity of the area. Guidance on the numbers and sizes of bins that are required for different types of development and design and placement of stores is set out in the Technical Advice Note on Waste Storage.

Servicing features such as meter cupboards, pipes and gutters, flues, vents, and aerials can sometimes be designed as an integrated element of the architecture that can contribute positively to the overall design of the buildings or development. Chimneys and drainpipes can help to break up the monotony of a terrace, indicating the individual units within the whole. Detailing of these features can be an important contributor to the character of the area. However, servicing features can also create a cluttered appearance and detract from the design of the development.

As the city moves towards becoming net zero there will need to be infrastructure to

support this to include sufficient EV (Electric Vehicle) chargers, air source heat pumps, solar panels etc. All of this to needs to be carefully designed into new developments. The location and design of these developments need to be considered and ensure it meets the requirements of Policies C9, R3 and

The policy approach seeks to ensure that careful attention is given to the positioning, design and materials used for external servicing features in new development.

Policy HD15 Bin and Bike Stores and External Servicing Features

Bin and bike stores and external servicing features should be considered from the start of the design process and provided in new development. Planning permission will be granted only where it can be demonstrated that:

a) bin and bike storage is provided in a way that does not detract from the overall design of the scheme or the surrounding area, whilst meeting practical needs including the provision of electric charging points for e-bikes where applicable; and
b) external servicing features have been designed as an integrated part of the overall design, or are positioned to minimise their visual impact; and
c) materials used for detailed elements such as for stores or rainwater goods are of high quality so they enhance the overall design and will not degrade in a way that detracts from the overall design.

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Chapter 7: A Liveable City With Strong Communities and Opportunities for All

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Glossary

Active travel - Refers to modes of travel that involve a level of activity.

Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP) – This plan sets out the transport strategy for Oxford and travel connections between the city and Kidlington, Eynsham, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington and Wheatley.

CLOCs (ensure that this has been included) -

Critical infrastructure - Facilities, systems, sites, information, people, networks and processes, necessary for a country to function and upon which daily life depends.

Cultural venues -

Frequent bus service – Every 15/20 mins in both directions.

Infrastructure Develpoment Plan (IDP) - The IDP assesses the potential risks of infrastructure not being delivered in a timely manner to support development.

Liveable city - where essential needs can be met locally such as food, open spaces, cultural activities, community needs.

Liveable neighbourhoods – a neighbourhood where local residents can reach facilities such as samll shops, post office, primary school within a 15- 20 minute walk.

Local centres - Local centres include a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment. Typically, local centres might include, amongst other shops, a small supermarket, a newsagent, a sub-post office and a pharmacy. Other facilities could include a hot-food takeaway and launderette. Small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance are not classified as local centres.

Mobility hubs - An area in which a variety of transport modes and community assets are co-located for seamless interchange. These facilities provide added benefit to communities and combined they make up an easy-to-use transport network."

Parking Standards for New Developments -

Sui Generis - A term used to categorise buildings that do not fall within any particular use class for the purposes of planning permission. Such as petrol stations and cinemas.

Traffic filters – Cameras that are intended to reduce traffic levels in Oxford by managing the use of certain roads in the city by private cars.

Transport assessment - A thorough assessment of the transport implications of development.

Transport statement – A 'lighter-touch' evaluation to be used where this would be more proportionate to the potential impact of the development (i.e. in the case of developments with anticipated limited transport impacts).

Working drivers - Residents and drivers who are dependent on their vehicle more than 50% of their working day to earn a wage. Where the vehicle is required to undertake multiple journeys in the city (or wider) to deliver the service provided by the business. Examples include NHS community-based staff, carers working for private care companies, delivery drivers, plumbers, electricians and other trades, mobile hairdressers, dog grooming, food bank staff.

Zero Emission Zone – An area within Oxford that prevents vehicles that emit Carbon Dioxide for travelling through without an associated charge.

Introduction

7.1 Oxford is a very liveable and accessible city which, owing to its compact nature, means that most people have access to a range of services to meet their daily needs within a 15–20-minute walk or by a short cycle ride. If the facilities that people need to reach are not accessible on foot or by bicycle, then a good network of public transport runs across the city and can be used to reach locations which are further away such as the hospitals, the city centre or one of the other district centres not in your neighbourhood.

7.2 The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted to us all the importance and value of having a variety of easily accessible facilities and their role in helping create strong communities and "liveable cities". A range of policy tools can be used to help achieve, support and sustain liveable cities. These include, protecting certain facilities, maintaining the vibrancy of our centres, managing parking and requiring travel plans and transport assessments when new developments are proposed and implemented. This ensures traffic is well managed and that walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised, consistent with Oxfordshire County Council's adopted Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan and the transport user hierarchy policy it promotes.

Focusing town centre uses in our city centre and district centres

Policy C1 sets out the hierarchy of centres. The city and district centres are areas that are highly accessible mobility hubs and that include a broad range of facilities including shops, hospitality, community and leisure facilities. They have an important role to play in creating liveable neighbourhoods. The centres are: the city centre; Cowley centre; Cowley Road; Summertown; Headington; Blackbird Leys. The mix of these town centre uses varies in each location and whilst retail is an important element it is not necessarily the focus of all the centres.

Town centre uses should be directed to the city centre, district, and local centres, then edge of centre locations and only outside of these where no alternatives are available, and the site is suitable.

In these centres, Use Class E (commercial, business and service uses including retail, cafes and restaurants, leisure and entertainment and indoor sports uses (e.g. gyms, leisure centres), health centres, GPs and clinics, offices) are suitable and community facilities, student accommodation, visitor attractions (Sui Generis uses including cinemas, concert halls, dance halls), hotels are all suitable uses.

Local centres are: St Clement's; Walton Street and Little Clarendon Street; High Street east; Rose Hill; North Parade Avenue, New Marston and Underhill Circus. These are suitable for Class E (commercial) uses and local community facilities (Class F.2) but not student accommodation or hotels. Visitor and cultural attractions and institutional and educational uses may be suitable, depending on the existing character of the centre and the exact nature of the use proposed (see policy C4 and C5). The NPPF is clear that small parades of shops with a purely local function do not meet the definition of local centres, so most parades are not included in this category, but their local importance is still significant in terms of creating liveable cities.

Policy C1: Town Centre Uses

The city centre and district centres defined on the Policies Map are:

- **City centre**
- **Cowley centre**
- **Cowley Road**
- **Summertown**
- **Headington**
- **Blackbird Leys**

In the city and district centres, new Use Class E and other town centre uses will be permitted, which are:

- **Retail, cafes and restaurants;**
- **Leisure and entertainment and indoor sports uses (e.g. gyms, leisure centres);**
- **Health centres, GPs and clinics;**
- **Offices;**
- **Community facilities;**

- **Residential including student accommodation (where compliant with the active frontages policy);**
- **Visitor attractions (Sui Generis uses including pubs, cinemas, live music venues, concert halls, dance halls);**
- **Hotels.**

Local Centres are defined on the Policies Map are:

- **St Clement's;**
- **Walton Street and Little Clarendon Street;**
- **High Street east;**
- **Rose Hill;**
- **North Parade Avenue;**
- **New Marston; and**
- **Underhill Circus.**

In the Local Centres, new Use Class E uses will be permitted, including:

- **Retail, cafes and restaurants;**
- **Leisure and entertainment and indoor sports uses (e.g. gyms, leisure centres);**
- **Health centres, GPs and clinics**
- **Offices,**
- **Residential (except student accommodation)**
- **Community facilities**

In the local centres, other uses will be considered on their merits and according to the relevant policies of the Plan.

A sequential approach should be taken for locating new town centre uses. Applicants must demonstrate how the sequential approach has been applied if town centre uses are proposed outside the city centre, district and local centres, looking at edge of centre areas first and only out-of-centre locations where no alternative sites are available and where this is not contrary to other policies of the Plan. Where the applicant demonstrates an out-of-centre location is justified, planning permission will only be granted where all the following criteria are met:

- **It has good accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport; and**
- **impacts on the road network can be mitigated; and**
- **That no unacceptable harm or loss of amenity will be caused to adjoining land uses.**

Planning permission for retail and leisure proposals outside of a defined centre of greater than 350m2 floorspace, will only be granted if a retail impact assessment is submitted that demonstrates that there will be no adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the existing centres.

Maintaining vibrant centres

The city centre and each district centre have a distinct character, with a different mix of uses and different strengths and weaknesses. To maintain the strength of the centres, development should respond to and enhance the individual character of the centres. Policy C2 provides design principles for each centre, to guide future developments and ensure opportunities are taken to enhance and strengthen the character and attractiveness of the centres, helping maintain their robustness by encouraging people to visit and linger. This approach will help secure and support a liveable city.

Retaining active frontages in a centre is a key tool in achieving vibrancy, securing activity at ground floor level. Those streets where active frontage is to be retained are defined on the Policies Map for each centre. Within those defined active frontages a minimum threshold is set for the proportion of Class E (commercial, business and service uses) at ground floor level. The thresholds are set at a level that all centres are currently achieving so the focus of the policy is on retention. Blackbird Leys District Centre does not have a defined active frontage because the nature of that centre is as a vital community hub, with a wide range of important community functions, many of which are not Use Class E.

Any proposed new use, even when the overall frontage would remain above the threshold, will be expected to show how activity will be maintained. This can be done by demonstrating that it will attract footfall, retain an active window display, and not adversely affect the amenity, availability of services or appearance of the frontage.

Policy C2: Maintaining vibrant centres

The densification and growth of district centres and the city centre is encouraged. High density development is generally expected in the city centre and district centres as set out in Policy HD8, and this should be low car.

Planning permission will be granted for new development within the district centres and city centre where it takes opportunities to deliver the following, where relevant:

a. **improved permeability and connectivity to existing development and wider transport links;**
b. **intensification of development to create a high-density centre, including by more efficient use of land, by consolidating uses and through infill;**
c. **more residential development, including on the upper floors of existing commercial premises;**
d. **enhancement of existing buildings and improvement in their relationship to the street by creating active frontages;**
e. **rationalisation of public car parking so it is well-located, limits surface-level parking and is reduced where possible, and makes better use of workplace surface-level car parking;**
f. **public realm improvements for cyclists and pedestrians and public transport users and rebalancing of the space within streets from vehicles to pedestrians;**
g. **improved pedestrian connections across the main roads through the centres;**
h. **enhancement and new opportunities for public realm and landscaping such as tree planting, including incorporation of small green spaces where people can stop, dwell, socialise and play;**
i. **better integration of the landscape setting and surrounding green spaces;**
j. **enabling of the continued successful operation of any street markets;**
k. **improvements to shopfronts and signage;**
l. **enhance and better reveal heritage assets and their setting.**

Active frontages

Planning permission will be granted at ground floor level of the defined Active Frontages (as set out on the policy map) for town centre uses that promote the vitality of the centre, and where the proportion of units at ground floor level does not fall below the threshold percentages of Use Class E set out below. Proposals for any new use within the defined active frontages of the city, district and local centres, even when the overall frontage would remain above the threshold, will be expected to promote the vitality of the centre. Planning permission will be granted if it can be demonstrated how activity will be maintained by:

m. attracting footfall; and
n. creating and retaining an active window display; and
o. not adversely affecting the amenity, availability of services or appearance of the frontage.

Centre name	Threshold % of Use Class E
Headington District Centre	80%
Summertown District Centre	80%

Cowley Road District Centre	**75%**
Cowley Centre District Centre	**80%**
City Centre primary frontage	**90%**
City Centre secondary frontage	**70%**

Planning permission will only be granted for development of upper storeys of the Active Frontages for housing, student accommodation and other uses appropriate to a town centre, as long as the functioning of the ground floor unit(s) in the active frontage is not undermined.

Local Centres

Planning permission will only be granted at ground floor level within the Local Centre Active Frontages for town centre uses that promote the vitality of the centre and where the proportion of units in the Local Centre at ground floor level in Use Class E does not fall below 80% of the total number of units.

Planning permission will only be granted for development of upper storeys of units in the Local Centres for housing and other uses appropriate to the location.

The City Centre, District Centres, Local centres and Primary and Secondary Active Frontages and Local Centre Active Frontages are all defined on the Policies Map.

Community, institutional, social and cultural facilities and attractions

7.3 It is important that our communities are supported by the appropriate infrastructure and community facilities. Providing and improving access to educational, health and community facilities greatly improves the quality of life for residents, builds strong communities and helps to address inequalities.

7.4 Cultural and community facilities can be very wide ranging and fall within different use classes. In seeking social inclusion and a high quality of life, the City Council's approach is to make accessible a diverse range of facilities, from performance venues to libraries. Sometimes co-locating multiple facilities on a single site can be an efficient way to improve accessibility and support the principles of a liveable city. Facilities important to local communities may include community centres, schools, children's centres, meeting venues for the public or voluntary organisations, public halls and places of worship, leisure and indoor sports centres, pavilions, stadiums, public houses, club premises or arts buildings that serve a local community. These are important in meeting social, economic, health, leisure, cultural and religious needs of Oxford's diverse communities.

Protection, alteration and provision of new local community facilities

The City Council will seek to protect existing local community facilities and will support

improvements and more intensive use of existing sites. Sometimes facilities might not be fit-for-purpose, or they may provide poor accessibility, so that improvements on site or nearby might be more sustainable. Co-locating multiple facilities on a single site can be an efficient way to improve both quality and accessibility.

Some local community facilities may have scope to provide some affordable workspace in accordance with Policy E3 to support small startup businesses whose location complements these local community uses.

Local community facilities fall into Use Class F.2 of the Use Classes Order. This includes a hall or meeting place mainly for the local community, indoor and outdoor pools, and skating rinks, and the policy applies to these. However, Policy C3 does not apply to places for outdoor sport and recreation (which are within the Use Class F.2), because these are dealt with in Policy G1.

Shops of no more than 280m2 in size and 1km from a similar facility are classed as having a local community use within Use Class F.2. All other shops are Use Class E and can change freely to any commercial use. To protect these local community shops, their expansion to a size where they would fall outside of Use Class F.2 will not be permitted.

Policy C3: Protection, alteration and provision of local community facilities

Planning permission will be granted for new local community facilities, including those within schools and colleges, where opportunities are taken to secure community use and joint user agreements.

Planning permission will be granted for new local community facilities and the improvement and expansion of existing facilities where the City Council is satisfied that the following criteria are met:
a) the location is easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport; and
b) the proposal will not result in an unacceptable environmental impact or loss of amenity.

Planning permission will not be granted for development that results in the loss of such facilities unless:

- **Suitable replacement can be provided on-site, or at a location equally or more accessible by walking, cycling and public transport; or**
- **There are facilities nearby and within the neighbourhood that can be enhanced to ensure none of the local community function and accessibility is lost; or**
- **The proposal is for an alternative community facility for which there is greater need or demand.**

Planning permission will not be granted for the expansion of shops that meet the definition of a local shop within Use Class F.2 if they would become large enough to become Use Class E rather than F.2.

Protection and alteration of existing learning and non-residential institutions (including schools, libraries and places of worship)

Schools, libraries and places of worship all play an important part in servicing the needs of Oxford's communities. As such they will be protected, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that they are no longer required to meet the community's needs. When a facility is to be redeveloped it must not conflict with existing uses but complement and enhance them. These facilities can attract large numbers of people, sometimes from quite a wide area, so it is important that new facilities are in accessible locations that minimise any potential traffic impacts and that there is no loss of amenity to existing surrounding uses. The City Council welcomes the opportunity to see the most effective use of buildings and supports the use of joint user/shared user agreements where possible.

The City Council has been working closely with partners including the County Council as the Local Education Authority to plan the educational needs of the city and will continue to work in partnership to ensure that new development is provided with access to school places, and that existing access is enhanced and improved when opportunities arise. Close partnership working will be essential to ensure that communities continue to have the best possible access to facilities.

Policy C4: Protection, alteration and provision of learning and non-residential institutions

Planning permission will be granted for new learning and non-residential institutions (use Class F.1) and redevelopments to make more intensive use of the site or extend capacity where the following criteria are met:

- **The development will be accessible to those who will use it by walking, cycling and public transport and will not create unacceptable traffic impacts; and**
- **The proposal will meet local needs or an existing deficiency in provision or access, or the proposal will support regeneration or new development; and**
- **The proposal will not result in an unacceptable environmental or local amenity impact; and**
- **Where possible, joint user and shared user agreements are made.**

Planning permission will be granted for the redevelopment of learning and non-residential institutions (Use Class F.1) where it can be demonstrated that:

- **If there are any new uses to be introduced, these will not conflict with the existing use and any loss of floorspace of the existing use will not result in it not being able to function and meet needs;**
- **The development will be accessible to those who will use it by walking, cycling and public transport and will not create unacceptable traffic impacts; and**
- **The proposal will not result in an unacceptable environmental or local**

amenity impact; and

- **Where possible, joint user and shared user agreements are made.**

Planning permission will not be granted for development that results in the loss of learning and non-residential institutions (Use Class F.1) from a site unless it can be demonstrated that:

- **There is no longer a need or foreseeable need, or there is overriding demand for an alternative use on the site that is of benefit to the local community; or**
- **Suitable replacement provision can be provided on-site, or within an alternative suitable location that would continue to be easily accessible to its users by walking, cycling or public transport; or**
- **It can be demonstrated that the use can no longer feasibly be provided in its location**

Protection of existing cultural venues and visitor attractions

Oxford has a wide range of cultural and visitor attractions and venues ranging from large places that attract people from far and wide to more local facilities important to local communities. These venues include theatres, cinemas, pubs, museums and music venues. These locations attract visitors from within the city and beyond including tourists. The events held at these places are the cultural lifeblood of the city for many people and as such should be celebrated and protected.

It is important that the city's social, cultural and visitor attractions are protected as they often add a unique vibrancy to the city. Many contribute to the evening economy while others bring social benefits and provide a meeting place for different groups of people as well as providing locations for events and for showcasing the work of different artists.

Most cultural venues and visitor attractions such as theatres, nightclubs, pubs, casinos and concert halls are classed in the planning system as 'Sui Generis', which means use cannot switch to or from them without planning permission and proposals can all be considered on their own merits. The criteria in Policy C5 provide a framework to determine applications for these cultural venues and visitor attractions against. In some instances, there may be scope to explore opportunities to improve the operation and management of the business and this need to be demonstrated that it has been fully explored as part of the marketing expectations as set out in Appendix 7.1.

Policy C5: Protection, alteration and provision of cultural venues and visitor attractions

Planning permission will be granted for new cultural, social and visitor attractions that add to the cultural and social scene of the city and district centres, provided that:

- **the use is located in compliance with the sequential test in Policy C1 and is appropriate to the scale and function of the centre; and**
- **they are realistically and easily accessible by walking, cycling or public transport for most people travelling to the site; and**
- **they will not cause unacceptable traffic harm or adversely affect residential amenity; and**
- **there is no negative cumulative impact resulting from the proposed use in relation to the number, capacity and location of other similar uses (existing or committed) in the area; and**
- **they are well related to any existing or proposed tourist and leisure related areas.**

Applications to increase capacity, improve access and make more intensive cultural/community use of existing sites will be supported. This may include diversification of pubs or similar through the provision of short stay accommodation on upper floors where it does not detract from the operating capabilities of the business and where it does not conflict with other policies of the Plan.

The City Council will seek to protect and retain existing cultural venues and visitor attractions. Planning permission will not be granted for the loss of existing cultural venues and visitor attractions, except in the following circumstances:

- **A suitable new or improved cultural venue or visitor attraction meeting similar needs will be provided on the site or at a location equally or more accessible by walking, cycling and public transport; or:**
- **Evidence is provided to support the application which demonstrates all the following criteria have been met:**
    - **There has not been wilful neglect that has resulted in the venue being unattractive to market; and**
    - **All reasonable efforts have been made to market the premises for its existing use, or an alternative cultural or visitor attraction use that meets similar needs (according to Appendix X); and**
    - **it is demonstrated that suitable alternative facilities exist to meet the needs of the local community that may be met by the existing facility.**

Transport and movement in Oxford to help create a liveable city

7.5 The transport and movement strategy of the Plan is based upon reducing the need to travel, the promotion of active travel and public transport, the support for and implementation of the county council's core schemes, reduction in car parking yet ensuring the retention of appropriate level of disabled and servicing needs including taxi access, the support for car clubs, the support for well-designed electric vehicle charging provision and ensuring suitable levels of bicycle parking are provided in new development. During the Plan period it is anticipated that trial traffic filters will be introduced. These are predicted to have a transformational impact on congestion-reduction. This should lead to public transport and active travel options being more attractive to people for both accessing, passing through and getting to places across the city.

7.6 An effective transportation system is fundamental to the vitality and liveability of the urban area, yet movement of people and goods into and around Oxford continues to be a huge challenge. These policies are aimed at ensuring transport impacts of development are comprehensively assessed and mitigated in new development through transport measures, prioritising active travel and ensuring high quality public transport access for future occupants. As the sites around the edge of Oxford are built out it is essential that there is good connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and by public transport to and from these sites to ensure future residents have good access to destinations across the city.

7.7 Oxford City Council in its capacity as the Local Planning Authority has a key role to play in ensuring development is sustainable in both design and location. As such, it seeks to work with Oxfordshire County Council, the local highways authority, to ensure that new development incorporates the principles and encourages sustainable and active travel that offers joined up travel options. Local plan policies on density, design and the location of new development are drafted to support the implementation of sustainable city transport projects resulting in more sustainable travel across and into the city.

7.8 Due to the tight nature of the street structure there is limited potential to increase space on the roads (for example to provide bus priority or segregated cycleways) and so the space available must be managed carefully to optimise capacity whilst also enhancing the sense of place. The Plan will support the county council's measures set out in the Local Transport Connectivity Plan and Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan. Local plan policies related to motor vehicular and bicycle parking, support for car clubs and EV charging infrastructure, combined with ensuring robust transport assessments, travel and servicing and delivery plans are submitted and complied with as part of a new development, all support and encourage the move away from private vehicle journeys where possible and seek to support active travel options of walking and cycling and public transport.

7.9 Oxford has an ongoing challenge to improve air quality and cut carbon emissions from the transport sector, as well as reducing the volume of traffic and the need for land being used for vehicular parking. An integrated approach is required to redress the balance in favour of space efficient, low emission transport modes across the area. Supporting people to shift away from a reliance on private vehicles will be essential to achieving this goal. . alking (or use of a mobility aid on the pavement) is almost universal, and therefore good access by walking is the number one priority. Cycling is also an active travel mode with a range of benefit. . It provides health benefits, is without air quality impacts, and it enables people to travel further than walking

would. With the increasing development and popularity of e-bikes and cargo e-bikes the ability to travel further and carry packages is greatly extended. EV car clubs also provide an important role in shared transport solutions. Public transport use in Oxford is at a relatively high level and is already vital in Oxford, allowing people to access the city from outside and to move around the city to work and facilities more easily. . ocating city-wide or regional facilities on good public transport routes enables people from other parts of the city or county to reach them by sustainable modes.. eople would not generally expect to have facilities such as hospitals, theatres and cinemas within walking distance, but good bus access to them helps reduce the need to drive. Protecting facilities locally and at public mobility hubs, so that people can access them quickly and easily will help to achieve the objective of reducing car use and also promote healthy lifestyles and strong communities. Taxis also play an important role in inclusive transport and their need for road space and parking across the city, particularly at mobility hubs in the city and district centres is a key consideration when planning how street space is used and allocated.

Scheduled coaches and tourist coaches

7.10 Coach travel is also important as a sustainable mode of travel. Oxford has several scheduled long-distance coach routes to the centre of London, and to Heathrow, Gatwick, Stanstead, Luton, and Birmingham airports, which provide a popular alternative to car travel. The council will support the county council in achieving the optimum routes within the city centre to reduce the negative impacts of these coaches on both the public realm and air quality, whilst ensuring good access to the service remains.

7.11 Tourist coaches continue to present a challenge to the city in terms of the numbers entering the city, particularly during the summer months. Coach parking facilities will continue to be at Redbridge Park and Ride site. Drop off points for coaches will continue to be needed to the north and south of the city (St Giles and St Aldates, south of Speedwell Street). Coaches will only drop off and pick up in these locations and must then leave the city centre and go to a long-stay parking area. To ensure coaches adhere to these arrangements enforcement is required to prevent the city from becoming an unauthorised coach parking area. Both councils will work together to strategically plan for coach parking in the city.

Rail network, reopening of the Cowley Branch Line (CBL)

7.12 There is the potential to deliver several transformational railway projects within the Plan period. These range from the pan-regional East West Rail project which aims to reduce travel time and improve rail accessibility across the partnership area by introducing new train services connecting Oxford, Milton Keynes, and Cambridge. This is an ambitious project which aims to unlock the area's "potential to create jobs, grow the economy and attract investment for the entire country".[1]

7.13 A transformation of Oxford Railway Station is also required to facilitate the introduction of the rail infrastructure needed to introduce new train services (passenger and freight) connecting the key cities and economic areas across the country. The transformation of Oxford Station

[1] East West Rail – Route Update Report (May 2023)

provides the opportunity to accommodate growing numbers of passengers and deliver local benefits such as public realm improvements to the area and an interchange that enhances first-last mile connectivity by sustainable modes. The delivery of a high-quality gateway to the city matches Oxford's international reputation for excellence and develops capabilities to bolster both the local and UK economy.

7.14 There is also the potential to deliver more localised railway improvements in the form of the re-introduction of passenger services on the Cowley Branch Line (CBL) linking Oxford Station with two new stations in the south of the city. The introduction of these two branch line stations will transform how people access jobs across the city and is likely to reduce traffic congestion as commuters have increased public transport accessibility to a wider range of jobs in this part of the city. The Cowley Branch Line and Littlemore Area of Focus Policy includes a fuller discussion of this issue.

Local Cycle Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

7.15 The Oxford LCWIP sets out a series of measures and programmes with the aim of promoting and increasing the level of walking and cycling in Oxford. The Active Travel Strategy focuses on active travel modes (walking, wheeling, and cycling). It sets out cycling targets, the Oxford target is that 450,000 cycle trips are made per week by 2031 (from the baseline of 300,000 – 50% increase).

Active travel has many benefits for both society and the individual which include health and fitness, reduced congestion on the road by private cars and in turn less car journeys means less pollution and hence improved air quality. Figure 7.1 shows the existing and proposed cycling and walking network in the city. This is key infrastructure that needs to be delivered over the Plan period if the target of modal shift away from the private car is to be realised.

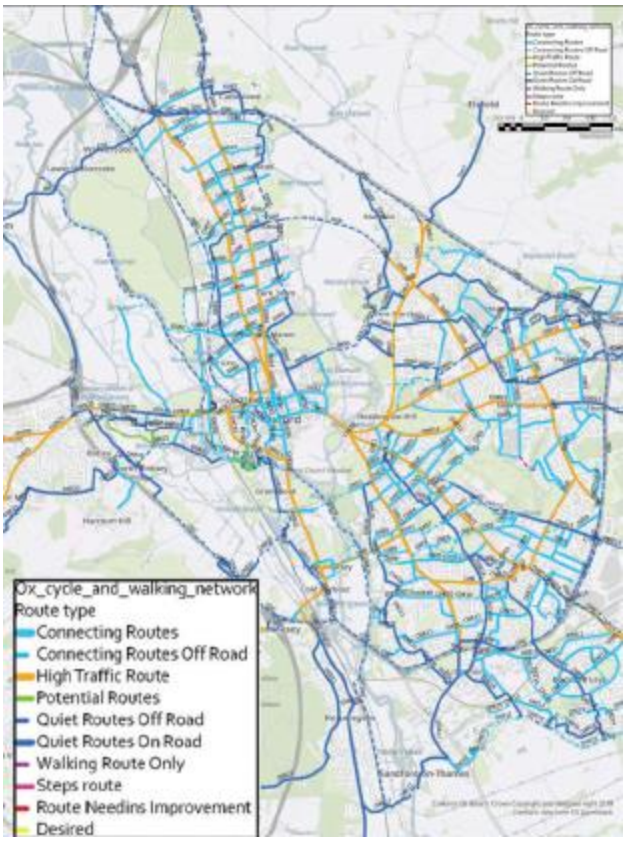


Figure 7.1 Oxford-Cycling and Walking Network from the Local Cycling and Walking (LCWIP)

Transport Assessments, Travel Plans and Servicing and Delivery Plans

It is important that new major development proposals seek to optimise active travel and public transport opportunities and aim to limit the increase in car journeys which would add to air pollution and congestion across the city.

Key tools used to appraise and determine the transport impacts of a development proposal are transport assessments (TA), transport statements and travel plans (TPs). The requirements for the transport assessment and travel plans are set out in the county council's document Implementing Decide and Provide in Transport Assessments. New development proposals must all ensure the layout takes into consideration the principles set out in the county council's Street Design Guide. All major applications must be accompanied by a transport assessment (TA) and a travel plan (TP).

A TA is a comprehensive and systematic process to ensure that the transport impacts of the development are properly considered and where appropriate includes measures to help mitigate development impact. A transport statement is a shorter version of a TA.

A TP is a package of measures tailored to the needs of an individual site and focused on reducing dependence upon the private car. TPs should demonstrate how the occupants

of the building are actively encouraged to establish use of sustainable modes of transport. TPs, to be effective, need monitoring, managing and where necessary enforcing. If the proposal is for employment uses, employers need to ensure that employees abide by the TP with appropriate sanctions for non-compliance. Developers must demonstrate in their TPs what incentives are being offered to facilitate the shift of travel mode from the private car. The TP will be reviewed, monitored and enforced as required (to be set out in a legal agreement). For some developments further assessments and/or plans may be required such as student accommodation plans or car parking plans.

The movement of goods and materials by road can have a significant impact on the quality of the environment and the health and wellbeing of residents, in terms of noise, congestion and air pollution. These impacts are severe in Oxford and the city centre in particular. If the Zero Emission Zone expands from beyond the pilot zone which was introduced in February 2022, some of these impacts would be reduced. However, commercial deliveries will always need to be made to Oxford and this should be done in the most sustainable way to reduce negative impacts.

Specific Delivery and Servicing Management Plans (DSPs) are required to be submitted for proposals that will affect the city centre or district centres and for sites near residential areas.

A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) must be submitted as part of the planning process and should incorporate the CLOCS standard (Construction, Logistics and Community Safety).

Consideration should be given to the County Council's Mobility Hub Strategy where appropriate in new development proposals. These requirements will be expected to relate to rail and bus stations, town and district centres, hospitals and university campuses and Category 1 employment sites.

Policy C6: Transport Assessments, Travel Plans and Service and Delivery Plans

Planning permission will only be granted for development proposals if the City Council is satisfied that adequate and appropriate transport-related measures will be put in place.

A Transport Assessment (TA) or Transport Statement (TS) must be submitted for development that is likely to generate significant amounts of movement, in accordance with the thresholds set out in Appendix 7.2.

Transport Assessments must assess the multi-modal impacts of development proposals and demonstrate the transport measures which would be used to mitigate the development impact to ensure:
a) there is no impact on highway safety to be assessed on a case-by-case basis;
b) there is no unacceptable residual cumulative impact on the road network;
c) pedestrian and cycle movements are prioritised, both within the scheme and within neighbouring areas;
d) access to high quality public transport is facilitated, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
e) the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport are addressed;
f) the development helps to create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards as set out in the Oxfordshire County Council Street Design Guide;
g) the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles is allowed for; and
h) charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles is enabled in safe, accessible and convenient locations with designated bays and priority for car clubs

A Travel Plan, which has clear objectives, targets and a monitoring and review procedure, must be submitted for development that is likely to generate significant amounts of movement in accordance with the thresholds set out in Appendix 7.3. Travel Plans must support outcomes (a) to (h) set out above.

Where a Travel Plan is required under this policy and a substantial amount of the movement is likely to be in the form of delivery, service and dispatch vehicles, a Delivery and Service Management Plan will be required.

Small sites where servicing space is restricted will be required to submit a service and delivery plan.

Where a Delivery and Service Management Plan is provided this should set out how deliveries will be managed and demonstrate how impacts will be minimised including congestion, safety, noise and how zero or ultra-low emission and last mile opportunities will be considered.

A Construction Traffic Management Plan must be submitted for development that is likely to generate significant amounts of movement during construction. This CTMP must incorporate the CLOCS standards where applicable (Construction, Logistics and Community Safety).

Bicycle Parking and Powered Two Wheelers Parking

If Oxford is to realise its ambition to become a world class cycling city where more people feel confident to cycle, it is essential that safe, secure bicycle parking is adequately provided in new developments.

Increasing the uptake of cycling further will be an important tool in helping Oxford to achieve its ambitions of improving air quality, reducing congestion, enhancing the public realm and encouraging healthy lifestyles. To encourage uptake of cycling it is important to ensure that those people who are cycling in Oxford are well provided for in terms of the provision of bicycle parking at both ends of their journey. Policy C7 sets out the requirements to ensure that bicycle parking in new development is well designed, secure and accessible.

It is anticipated that there will be a continued rise of ownership of E-bikes over the plan period. The need for secure bicycle parking to be provided in residential, employment areas and the city and district centres is an important consideration in the design of both the private and public realm.

Bicycle parking standards set out in the document Parking Standards for New Developments are minimum standards, which reflect the need for bicycle storage shown by research evidence –Oxfordshire Cycling Design Standards - A guide for Developers, Planners and Engineers Summer 2017. Sufficient high-quality bicycle parking is especially important for developments which are seeking to reduce the amount of car parking as set out in Policy C8.

Appendix 7.4 sets out the parking standards for bicycles and powered two wheelers.

To encourage and support people who cycle to work appropriate facilities are needed in terms of changing rooms, showers and locker facilities in new non-residential/commercial developments. The standards are set out in Appendix 7.5.

Policy C7: Bicycle and Powered Two Wheelers Parking Design Standards

Planning permission will only be granted for development that complies with or exceeds the minimum bicycle parking provisions and the parking provision for powered two wheelers as set out in Appendix 7.4.

Provision of bicycle parking lower than the minimum standards may be acceptable for new student accommodation if it is:
a. located close to the institution where most of its occupants will be studying; and/or
b. where it is adequately demonstrated through a transport assessment that there is existing unused bicycle parking capacity available, in appropriate locations and of an appropriate design standard on site, to accommodate the increased number of bedrooms.

Bicycle parking should be well designed and well-located, convenient, secure, covered (where possible enclosed) and provide level, unobstructed external access to the street. Bicycle parking should be designed to accommodate an appropriate amount of parking for the needs of disabled people, bicycle trailers and cargo bicycles, as well as facilities for electric charging infrastructure to charge batteries for E bikes.

Changing room, showers and lockers should be provided at commercial/non-residential new development in accordance with the standards set out in Appendix 7.5.

Motor Vehicle Parking Design Standards

Alongside the range of measures to reduce the need to travel and to encourage active travel modes, the policies in the Plan also seek to reduce the opportunities for parking across the city. Over time this will help to reduce car use leading to improvements in congestion, air quality and the environment for walking and cycling. In addition, with fewer private car trips on Oxford roads, public transport services can flow more freely further enhancing the attractiveness as an alternative to using a private car for journeys in and around the city.

The Council may refuse planning permission for development where additional parking pressure arising from the development would compromise highway safety and/or restrict the ability of existing residents to park. The County Council's Parking Standards for New Development should be referred to when considering parking levels in new development

The City and County Councils are working towards covering the whole city with Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) during the plan period. A CPZ is an area where parking is only permitted in designed parking bays and the rest of the kerbside space is restricted by yellow lines. Any illegally parked cars are issued with a parking ticket. The introduction of CPZs across the city are mainly used to tackle the problems caused by commuter parking. Residents, their visitors and local businesses can park in designated bays when displaying a relevant parking permit for that zone which is acquired from the County Council. Some spaces are also available for short-term parking and blue badge holders can park without restriction.

Motor vehicle parking in residential developments

The level of car ownership is expected to decline in future generations with the expansion of car clubs and the emergence of new technologies such as automated cars which alongside public transport and walking and cycling should all see a reduction in the number of trips made by private car in the city.

There are many opportunities to deliver successful low car housing developments in Oxford because of the coverage of CPZs, the availability of quality walking and cycling routes and facilities, and the provision of reliable public transport options.
For residential schemes located in the city centre or near district centres, low car developments are expected. Low car development means that no car parking spaces are provided within the site other than those reserved for blue badge holders, car clubs and for operational uses including spaces dedicated for working drivers for example NHS community staff and carers making home visits. The use of car clubs is actively encouraged by both councils as it is recognised that this shared transport solution gives people access to a vehicle as and when required without needing to own one.

On new residential schemes which are delivering 100 or more residential units it may not be appropriate to provide one parking space for each unit. As such the developer may wish to consider introducing a permit scheme to help prioritise who would be eligible for the parking spaces with higher priority given to residents who are essential vehicle users, who may require a vehicle for their work such as care workers, trades people etc.

Policy H9 Location of New Student Accommodation states that the City Council will secure an undertaking that students do not bring cars to Oxford. However, some limited blue badge holder and operational parking spaces should be provided for service and delivery vehicles, which should also be available, purely as a pick-up/drop off facility, for students and their families arriving and departing at the start and end of term.

Parking and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

Some types of residential development may require the provision of parking spaces. The number of adult drivers, who own a car, occupying an HMO will often be higher than for a single household. The City Council will expect that where a Sui Generis HMO (6 or more occupants) is proposed outside CPZ areas, parking must be available to reflect the standard set out in the county council document Parking Standards for New Development. Where there is a realistic possibility of a CPZ coming forward during the plan period no off-street parking would be required. HMO developments are excluded from the permit scheme.

Parking in non-residential developments and district centres

Major development of non-residential sites is expected across Oxford during the Plan period. Many of these sites already have substantial amounts of parking. Additional parking will not be allowed in the event of the redevelopment of a site and the reduction of parking will be sought.

Any new developments for B1 use in the city centre and district centres do not require any

parking provision except operational need, because the centres have good access to public transport, cycling and walking routes.

Public parking

The Local Plan recognises the need for some on and off-street parking to meet the requirements of those using the city centre and district and local centres for both business and leisure. However, to achieve a modal shift in the way people travel into and around Oxford, away from the private car to public transport, cycling and walking, the Plan does not support a growth in either on or off-street public parking spaces in the city centre and district centres. As the County Council introduces changes to the movement of vehicles around the city with the introduction of three major transport proposals which are traffic filters, an expanded zero emission zone and work place parking levy, there is an expectation that on-street parking places in the city centre and along key transport corridors may be reduced in number and/or be reorganised to enable more efficient flow of vehicles and to reclaim road space for the benefit of cyclists and pedestrians. Where retained or created, parking for blue badge holder vehicles must be accommodated in a way that does not detract from other functions of the street.

The City Council will continue to work with the County Council as the highways authority to facilitate measures such as the actions set out in the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan, to maintain and enhance Oxford's overall accessibility to ensure people have realistic options other than to drive into the city and district centres.

Policy C8: Motor Vehicle Parking Design Standards

Residential developments

Where the following circumstances apply, planning permission will only be granted for residential schemes* that are low car:

a. in Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs); and

b. where the site is located within a 400m walk to frequent (15-20 minute) public transport services; and

c. within 800m walk to a local supermarket or equivalent facility with a minimum floor area of 130m^2 of retail space which sells essential items such as milk, bread, pasta and fruit and vegetables

(measurements taken from the midpoint of the proposed development)

In low car residential developments, no car parking spaces allocated to a particular housing unit are to be provided, but only a small number of shared spaces and spaces for blue badge holders, servicing and delivery vehicles including, for working drivers, and for pooled cars/car club cars. The numbers of blue badge holder spaces and servicing spaces, pooled car/car club spaces required in all residential developments is set out in Appendix 7.6

On large residential schemes of 100+ units, car club or pooled cars should be made available according to the standards set out in Appendix 7.6.

In all other locations planning permission will only be granted where the relevant maximum standards as set out in Appendix 7.6 are met.

Parking spaces should be located to minimise the circulation of vehicles around the site and so that they are well integrated into the landscaping scheme.

Non-residential developments

The parking requirements for all non-residential development, whether expansions of floorspaces on existing sites, the redevelopment of existing or cleared sites, or new non-residential development on new sites, will be determined in the light of the submitted Transport Assessment (TA) or Travel Plan (TP) , which must take into account the objectives of this Plan to promote and achieve a shift towards sustainable modes of travel. The requirements for a TA and TP are set out in Appendices 7.2 and 7.3 of the Plan. The presumption will be that vehicle parking will be for blue badge and servicing only. Any additional provision being kept to the minimum necessary to ensure the successful functioning of the development, the need for which should be demonstrated through the submitted Transport Assessment/Travel Plan. This should set out measures introduced to maximise use of sustainable transport modes and that demonstrates there will not be unacceptable impacts on the transport network.

In the case of the redevelopment of an existing or previously cleared site, there should be no net increase in parking on the site from the previous level and the Council will seek a reduction where there is good accessibility to a range of facilities.

Where the proposal is for the expansion of an existing operation on an existing large site, a comprehensive Travel Plan should be submitted that looks at the development in the context of the whole site. The Travel Plan will be kept under review to ensure that future opportunities to encourage a shift towards public transport and active travel are taken.

**** For the purposes of this policy, residential development includes C3 dwellings, C4 and Sui Generis, HMOs, and all C2 development (residential institutions).***

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging

Part S of the Building Regulations (effective from June 2022) addresses the delivery of infrastructure for charging electric vehicles. Part S covers the provision of charging points in both residential and non-residential developments, with specific levels of requirements set out for uses. As such Policy C9 seeks to ensure that chargers are well located and designed for ease of use.

To ensure that electric vehicle charging infrastructure (EVI) provision is future proofed and remains competitive it is important that city residents who cannot charge their car at their own property are within walking distance of a minimum of two EVI providers.

Considerations set out in Policy HD15 Bin and Bike Stores and External Servicing Features should be referred to when considering the location of EV charging points.

Policy C9: Electric Vehicle Charging

The location of charging points in development proposals should allow for easy and convenient access to the charge point from the parking space. Both the charge point and auxiliary electric infrastructure should be designed and located so that they can be maintained as required. To minimise negative impacts on the electricity grid, charge points and associated electric infrastructure must meet PAS 1878/9 Smart, interoperable and flexible Energy Appliances standards.

On new developments, planning permission will only be issued for installations that meet both the parking standards set out in Policy C8 and Appendix 7.6 as well as accessible charging PAS standards, currently PAS 1899:2022 Electric vehicles – Accessible charging. Where passive only infrastructure is provided, handover documentation must specify compliant hardware to ensure that the above standards are fully met once charging bays are activated.

All new blue badge parking bays and all car club parking bays must be electrified.

New build residential development

All dwellings with a dedicated parking space must provide access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Where on street parking is proposed in the new residential development it should incorporate infrastructure to enable the charging of elective vehicles on the streets in accordance with the Oxfordshire County Council Street Design Guidance.

New build non-residential development

In all non-residential development providing one or more car parking bays, access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure must be provided.

All new blue badge parking bays and all car club parking bays must be electrified.

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Introduction

A development site allocation is a planning policy that describes what type of land use, or mix of uses, would be acceptable on a specific site or whether the site is protected for certain types of development. These policies are important because they give guidance and certainty to developers and landowners, and they help local people understand what may happen in their neighbourhood in the future. Such policies provide a positive approach to the development of a site by ensuring that the right type and amount of development happens in the right place, in accordance with the strategy of this Local Plan and the NPPF.

The development site allocation policies include a high level of comprehensive detail which aims as far as possible to provide more certainty to both developers and local residents about the proposals and the considerations for a site. The development site allocation policies have been informed by a thorough process building upon urban design appraisals that were carried out for each site. To ensure that the minimum densities housing numbers are as robust as possible the policy team undertook detailed urban design assessments to ensure that the constraints within the site allocation are fully considered and the appropriate calculation of minimum housing numbers is included in the policy. Other policies of the plan relevant to site allocations were also considered. The detail contained within the policies in this chapter is intended to help set out key policy requirements of the Plan relevant to the site allocations, and to set out key considerations and give detailed guidance about the policies may apply to the site allocations. The policies cross-referred to within the site allocation policies do not represent an exhaustive list. The site allocations do not supersede the other policies of the Plan, and all other policies remain relevant.

The minimum number shall be exceeded where it is possible to do so consistent with the other policies in the Plan. The homes should be delivered as general market and affordable housing in accordance with Policy H2 unless it is expressly stated in the site allocation policy that student accommodation or employer-linked affordable housing are suitable on the site. Other specialist forms of housing will be considered on their merits. If communal accommodation is to be provided, the minimum quantum shall be calculated on the basis of the national policy ratio (or any amendment or replacement thereof). The ratio at the time of adoption of the Local Plan is that 2.5 new student bed spaces is considered as the equivalent of 1 new home and for other communal accommodation 1.8 bed spaces is considered as equivalent to 1 new home. On mixed-use sites, if only part of the site is being brought forward and the proposal does not include residential development, the potential to achieve the minimum housing capacity on remaining parts of the site when they come forward for development will be considered.

This chapter also outlines five “Areas of Focus” across the city. These are areas where changes are anticipated over the Plan period resulting from new development - either development within the city or adjacent to the city boundaries.

Infrastructure to support new and existing development to 2040

New development across the city results in additional social, community and transport infrastructure needs[1]. It is important that there are sufficient facilities to meet the needs of existing and future residents. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) provides a summary of infrastructure needs across Oxford and sets out the infrastructure schemes to meet the needs, taking into consideration the level of housing and employment growth over the Plan period. The IDP has divided the city into four quadrants as shown in Figure 8.1.

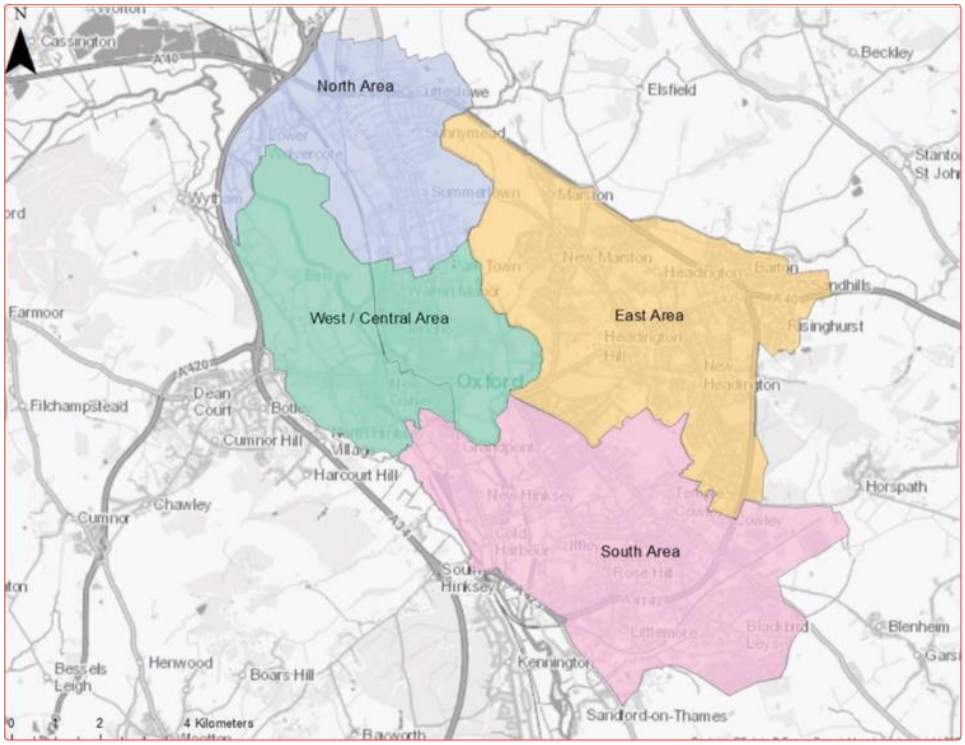


Figure 8.1 The four quadrants of the city for considering infrastructure, as set out in the IDP

Sites beyond the city boundary for Oxford’s unmet housing need

Chapter 2 of The Plan, A Healthy Inclusive City to Live In, explains Oxford’s urgent need for more homes, the constrained supply in Oxford, and why we have a capacity-based housing target. There are several sites around the edge of Oxford which are allocated for housing in the

[1] Infrastructure includes schools, hospitals, utilities, digital communications, transport provision, and community facilities

most recent adopted local plans of neighbouring districts, to help deliver the unmet housing needs for Oxford for the period up to 2036 (corresponding with the Oxford Local Plan 2036). Development has commenced on several of these sites and planning applications have been submitted for others.

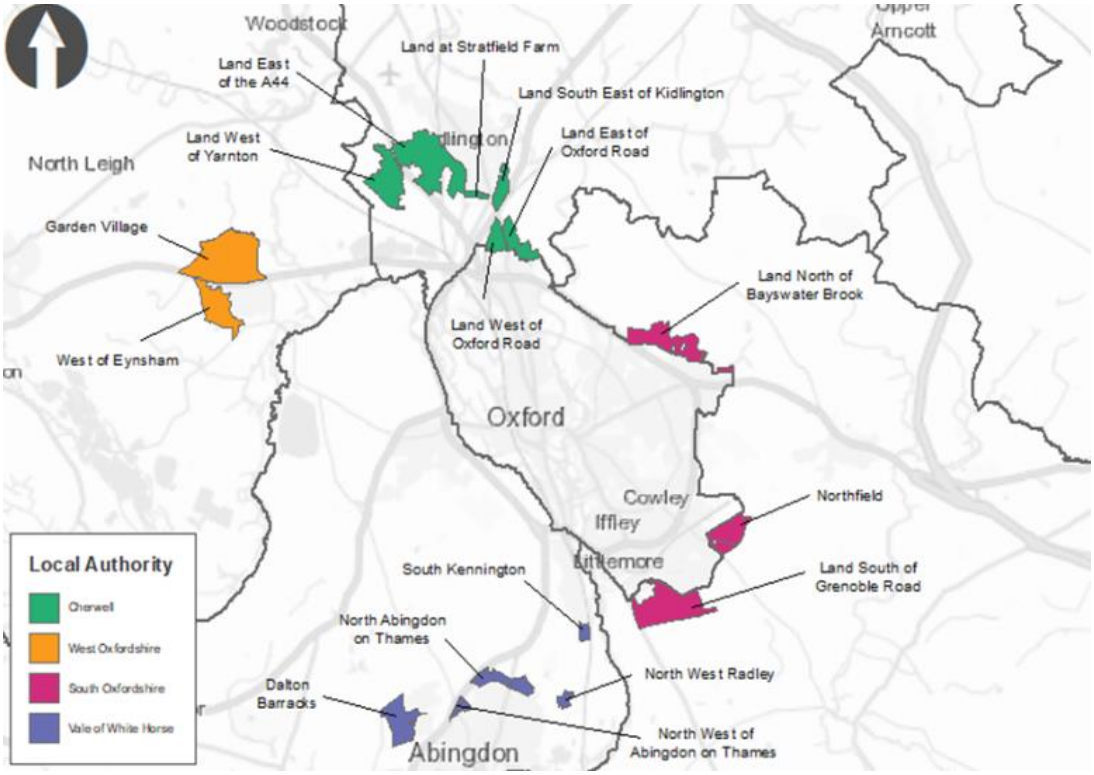


Figure 8.2 Allocated unmet need sites outside of Oxford boundary

This Plan covers the period to 2040 so there is an additional four years of unmet need to consider between 2036-2040. The HENA identifies the level of housing need for Oxford to 2040, whilst the HELAA assesses the capacity of Oxford: together these assessments indicate the level of need which cannot be met in Oxford – the unmet need. During the Plan's preparation work has continued with neighbouring districts whereby discussions were held about how to accommodate the additional unmet need beyond that already agreed to 2036. In several instances the sites identified in Figure 8.2 above are already indicating a greater capacity than previously estimated, so it may be that the additional unmet need to 2040 can be met this way.

The City Council continues to work with the neighbouring districts about delivery of the housing sites on the edge of Oxford. Whilst each of the neighbouring authorities is responsible for the delivery of these sites, the City Council wishes to ensure that they are developed in a sustainable manner and that they are well-connected to Oxford because the unmet need is from people who need to access Oxford regularly for work, family, or other reasons. For example, in terms of infrastructure this means that they should be well connected into existing transport networks to optimise opportunities for active travel and public transport (such as dedicated

pedestrian and cycle routes and public transport stops). The City Council is also working to agree nomination rights for the social rent homes on these sites.

Areas of Focus (AoF)

The Plan includes five Areas of Focus which have been identified as areas across the city where change by way of new development is likely to occur during the Plan period. The Areas of Focus contain some key policy principles which relate to all development that comes forward in that specific AofF. This aims to ensure the cumulative impacts are adequately considered to optimise opportunities for infrastructure delivery, high quality design and place making. The Areas of Focus also each include development site allocation policies.

The Areas of Focus (AoF) and how they relate to the IDP quadrants are as follows:

- North Infrastructure Area quadrant includes the Northern Edge of Oxford AoF, and North Area proposed development sites;
- South Infrastructure Area quadrant includes the Cowley Branch Line, Littlemore and Leys Area of Focus, and South Area proposed development sites;
- East Infrastructure Area quadrant includes the Marston Road and Old Road Area of Focus, and East Area proposed development sites; and
- West and Central Infrastructure Area quadrants containing the North of the City Centre Area of Focus, West End and Botley Road Area of Focus, and West and Central Area proposed development sites.

North Infrastructure Area (including Northern Edge of Oxford Area of Focus and site allocation policies)

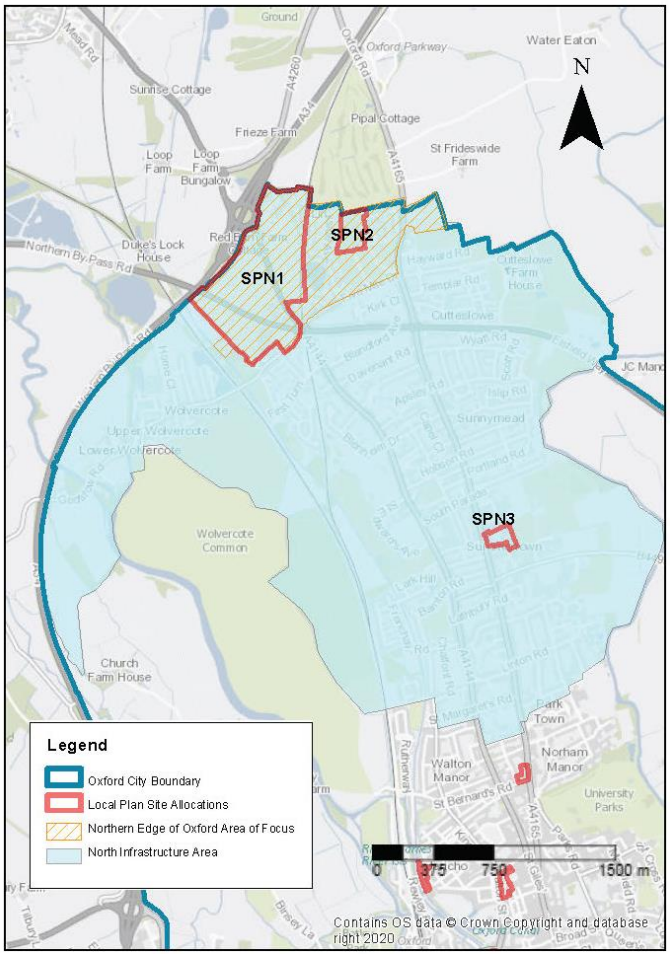


Figure 8.3 North Infrastructure Area, Northern Edge of Oxford Area of Focus and site allocation policies

The North Infrastructure Area includes development sites such as Northern Gateway, which are adjacent to the Cherwell District Council (CDC) development sites, PR6a – Land East of Oxford Road, PR6b – Land West of Oxford Road and PR6c Land at Frieze Farm, which is the reserved site for the replacement Golf Course extension areas within CDC. Good transport connectivity via public transport, walking and cycling is a key need for this area if people are to be able to move easily between these residential areas and the city. As the northern entrance to the city, it is also important to have high quality urban design and good place making and to ensure views into and out of the city are protected.

Key considerations for infrastructure and design common across the area are:

- Improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes, and public transport accessibility, including
    - safe crossing at desire lines across the major roads in the area
    - Ensure connectivity by foot and cycle to sites adjoining the city
    - Connectivity of local facilities and services (that may be in Cherwell) and communities
    - Connectivity to Oxford Parkway
- Increase public access to green spaces
- Reduce air pollution to protect the SSSIs/SAC at Port Meadow
- Retain the integrity of the Green Belt by careful design at its edges
- Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan.

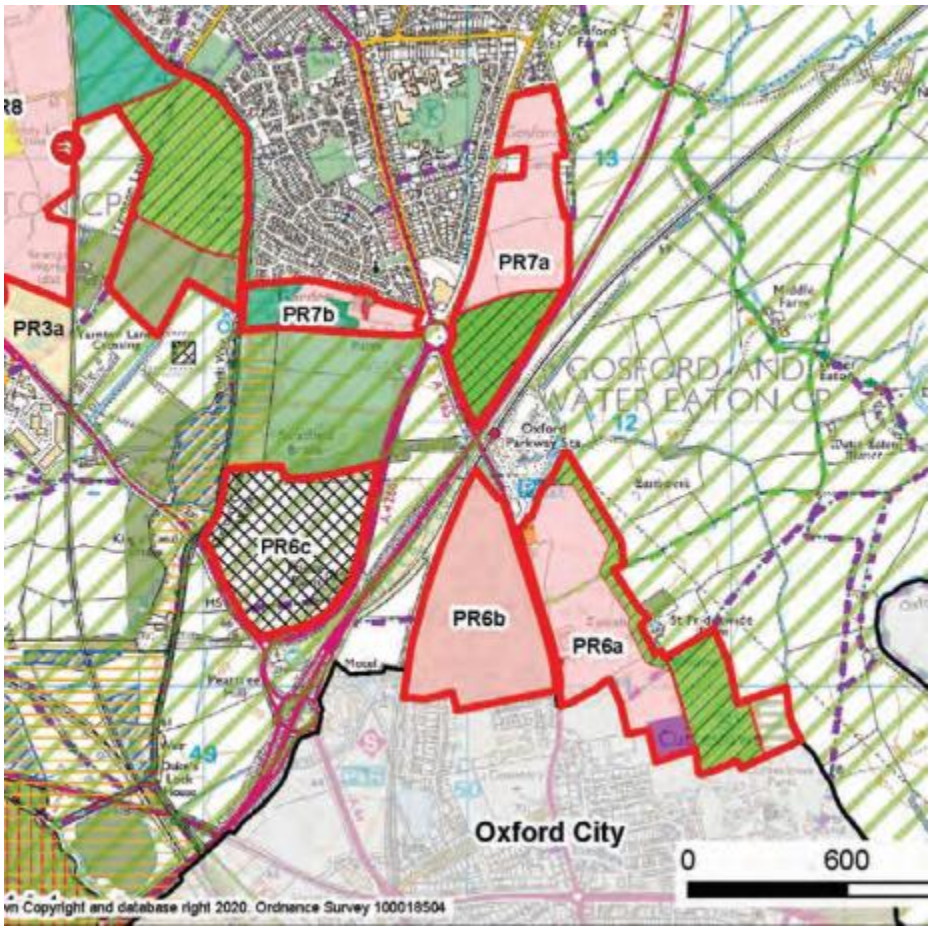


Figure 8.4 Location of the Cherwell site allocations for Oxford's unmet need, near to Oxford's boundary: PR6a, PR6b, PR7a, PR7b

Policy NEOAOF– Northern Edge of Oxford Area of Focus

Planning permission will be granted for new development within the Northern Edge of Oxford Area of Focus where it would ensure that opportunities are taken to deliver the following (as applicable):

a) Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure improvements must be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the Oxfordshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. All opportunities to optimise connectivity and permeability for people wishing to walk or cycle in the area to other parts of the city and/or to destinations in the neighbouring districts of Cherwell District Council and West Oxfordshire should be taken;
b) Public transport provision enhancements;
c) Good urban design and place making opportunities to be incorporated into new residential areas including enhancing both existing and the introduction of new public open space; and
d) Enhanced landscape planting and increased tree cover.

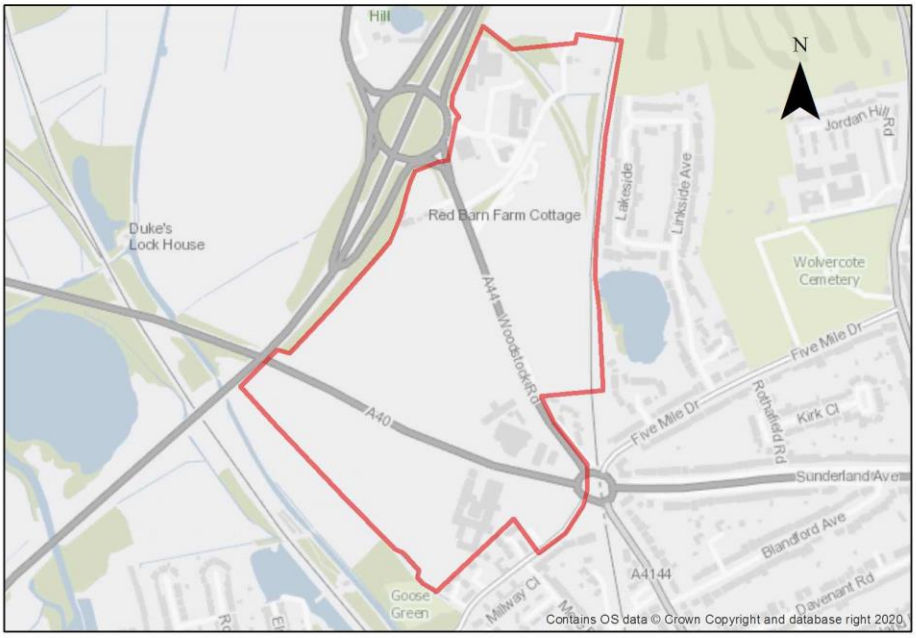
Development proposals that exceed the height that the High Buildings TAN states may have an impact on the historic core will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts can be understood and assessed as listed in Policy HD9.

North Area site allocation policies within the Area of Focus

- Northern Gateway
- Oxford University Press Sports Ground

Northern Gateway

Site area: 45.2 hectares
Ward: Wolvercote
Landowner: St John's College (Thomas White Oxford), Merton College, Oxford City Council
Current use: majority under construction plus existing park & ride, service station, hotel, greenfield/farmland, car showroom and petrol station.
Flood Zone: FZ1



This is one of the largest sites for housing and employment growth in Oxford. Development here will have a significant positive impact on the supply of specialised employment floorspace and new homes, and it is crucial to ensure the optimum use is made of the area.

This site was the subject of the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan (NGAAP) and there is an extant planning permission for a significant part of the site ("Oxford North"). In addition, there is substantial further capacity for growth in the remaining parts of the site: around Red Barn Farm, Pear Tree Farm, and Land off Goose Green Close, as well as key infrastructure needed to unlock the area especially capacity of junctions in the area. In response to the City's pressing need for housing, the main use for remaining areas at the Northern Gateway is residential alongside the Category 1 employment uses as defined by Policy E1.

The NGAAP is superseded by this site allocation policy reflecting the contextual changes that have occurred since the AAP was adopted in 2015 namely: the granting of planning permission for Oxford North, the allocation of unmet need housing sites in adjoining Cherwell district; delivery of highways/junctions improvements through Growth Deal and Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) funding; and the opening of Oxford Parkway railway station.

The planning permission for Oxford North covers a significant part of the site, and a comprehensive approach to the development of the remaining parcels of land is needed. This site allocation will help to ensure the efficient delivery of development across the area. Coordinated infrastructure delivery and protection of environmental assets are key to the success of the site, including protecting the SAC at Port Meadow, and prioritising good connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists and access to public transport from this area to the new residential developments on the unmet need housing sites in the adjoining Cherwell district.

Northern Gateway includes a Category 1 employment site which is delivering key innovation and research facilities and plays a role in the wider "Knowledge Spine" in Oxfordshire.

The Oxford North planning permission 18/02065/OUTFUL makes provision to deliver 480 homes and 87,300sqm (B1) employment, as well as a 180-room hotel, 2500sqm retail (A1 A2 A3 A4 A5), and 500sqm community uses. Construction has commenced on site for the first phases. The remaining areas of the Northern Gateway area (land at Pear Tree Farm, Pear Tree Services area, the Pear Tree Park & Ride facility, Land off Goose Green Close and Red Barn Farm) are yet to be developed/redeveloped. This policy seeks to make efficient use of the whole site subject to environmental constraints.

Pear Tree Farm is suitable for **residential development (minimum number 122)**. Vehicle access to the site is a constraint as the current single-lane track would not be suitable for this development in its current form and an alternative access would be required. The layout and design of this area must also facilitate pedestrian and cycle access through the site, over the footbridge across the railway line to Oxford Parkway station.

The site is contained by the railway line and by a belt of trees, and there is substantial existing tree coverage of the site, so design will need to consider the potential impacts on biodiversity and urban greening factor. The quality of all existing trees should be assessed against the criteria in table 1 of BS5837:2012 (or its latest iteration). High quality trees must be retained unless there is a robust over-riding policy-based justification. Moderate and low-quality trees should be retained where it is feasible to do so. Opportunities exist to plant new trees to benefit public amenity in the area. Retaining trees along the railway line and A34 could also help act as a buffer with noise and screening. The parcel was formerly in the Green Belt so compensatory improvements should be made to surrounding areas of remaining Green Belt. The site is part of a larger field which is severed by the administrative boundary with Cherwell district, and the geometry of the part within Oxford means the design and layout of the site could benefit from being developed holistically with the rest of the field which lies within Cherwell (and all under the same landowner).

This site is of archaeological interest for potential prehistoric and Roman remains. This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment. A part of the site to the west is in the Wolvercote Conservation Area.

The **Pear Tree services area** performs an important function at its location on the A34 Pear Tree interchange, however it makes inefficient use of land and forms a visually low-quality gateway to Oxford. There has been investment by the landowner in recent years so it is not anticipated that the area will change significantly in the earlier part of the plan period but may offer longer term opportunities for either **redevelopment or refurbishment** during the plan period and may offer access opportunities to Pear Tree Farm development. Proposals to further enhance the urban design of this strategic approach to the city will be supported.

Part of the site currently operates as **Pear Tree Park & Ride** facility, which is important in

supporting modal shift and the zero-emission zone in the city centre and its future will also be influenced by the countywide Park and Ride strategy. However, the present layout with a large area of surface car parking does not make most efficient use of the site, nor does it contribute towards the urban design of the area. There is a lease on the site to operate the Park & Ride but if the whole or part of this site were to become available for development during the plan period due to the consolidation of the facility or making more efficient use of the site (eg introducing decked parking) it would be suitable for **residential development**. This would also have the potential to create capacity for other mobility hubs uses as set out in the County Council's COTP.
Between the A34 and A44 is **Red Barn Farm** which is currently used by Oxfordshire Projects (TRAX) with office/workshop/classroom buildings and a motorcross track. This is an important community facility to support young people, so whilst the area is suitable for redevelopment, the loss of this community facility needs to be addressed as per Policy C3. The site is most suited for high quality **employment uses** due to the location adjoining the convergence point of the A34 and A44 and this would complement the adjoining employment uses in the Oxford North development. Vehicle access to this site needs to be addressed because the current access onto the A44 is unlikely to be suitable for any significant increase in traffic. There is the potential for access to Red Barn Farm through the Oxford North site around the balancing ponds, or low car development may be an option.

The Red Barn Farm parcel is at a prominent location of the Northern Gateway site, and a key entrance to the city, so design should be high quality whilst also considering the impact on views, particularly the view cone from Port Meadow. There is opportunity to orientate employment blocks towards the adjoining balancing ponds for more pleasant views for occupiers and to benefit from passive solar gain. There is substantial existing tree/hedgerow coverage along the edge adjoining the A34 which could help to provide screening and act as a buffer against noise and pollution from the A34.

The land to the north of Northern Gateway site lies in Cherwell district and is a site allocation for Oxford's unmet need in the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review for 1,360 homes (PR6a and PR6b). Development in this side of the Northern Gateway site should make provision for future connectivity with development of the site in Cherwell and onwards to Oxford Parkway Rail Station, with potential for vehicular, pedestrian and cycle links.

There is also remaining land in the southern part of the Northern Gateway site. This is mainly the **Wolvercote services, car showroom, hotel area**. This part of the site, next to the Wolvercote roundabout, has existing buildings in the form of a hotel, car showroom, petrol station and BT facility. There has been investment in those buildings in recent years and for that reason the area is unlikely to change significantly in the earlier part of the plan period but may offer longer term opportunities for either **redevelopment or refurbishment** during the plan period, and opportunity to enhance the contribution to urban design of this gateway site.

There is also a parcel of greenfield land by **Goose Green Close** which is suitable for **residential use (minimum number 20 dwellings)**. The proximity of this site to the SAC

means the potential recreation and dog-walking impacts will need to be addressed in any proposal, and the HRA may need to be revisited to satisfy the Habitat Regulations requirements. Appropriate levels of open space should be provided within the development as compensatory measures.

The southwest side of the Northern Gateway lies within 500m of the internationally protected Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC), so development must not affect the integrity of the SAC in terms of recreational pressure, hydrological regime, or air quality. The main risk to the SAC is from potential increased recreational pressure (including dog walking) from additional residents, and from potential increased air pollution from additional vehicle movements. As such, an increased level of open space provision should be made within residential developments to provide local alternative recreation areas in the southwest part of the site.

Residential development in the northern parts of the site at Pear Tree Farm or Pear Tree P&R is not anticipated to present the same risk to the SAC due to the distance to access to the SAC for recreation, so open space requirements would be as per Policy G2.

Vehicle movements related to the employment development at Red Barn Farm could also present a risk to the SAC in terms of air quality, so proposals will need to demonstrate that the Habitats Regulations have been satisfied, which may include limited parking provision within Red Barn Farm to within the limits already tested through Appropriate Assessment.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means that parts of, or all of the site, are likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum.

A coordinated and comprehensive package of transport measures is required to facilitate development at Northern Gateway so that Oxford remains accessible and well-connected for residents, visitors, and businesses. Since the AAP was adopted key infrastructure is being provided up front via HIF[2]/Growth Deal funding, City Deal funding, and the Oxford North development including: bus lane and bus stop upgrades around Pear Tree; junction signal improvements on A44; pedestrian access and crossings improvements around Pear Tree; cycle lanes; junction improvements at Canalside and central parcels of Oxford North; cycle lane and bus lane improvements on A40; and pedestrian crossings and footpaths to connect the south of the site with Wolvercote.

Further infrastructure related to development at the Northern Gateway is likely to include:

- Improved bus services and facilities

[2] Homes England Housing Infrastructure Funding

- High quality cycle routes into Oxford
- Improved pedestrian and cycle links to Oxford Parkway rail station
- Potential expansion of Wolvercote Primary School*
- Further A44 works at southern end (beyond that already secured via Oxford North)
- SEN and disability provision in SEN schools serving the development
- Provision of an enhanced Pear Tree P&R facility with additional parking spaces, improved waiting facilities, and installation of a decked car park.

Because of the land use there are potential contamination risks near the farm area. Site investigations will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary.

*2023 pupils data indicates currently not needed but may change during plan period

Policy SPN1– Northern Gateway

Planning permission will be granted for development of the remaining areas[3] at the Northern Gateway for the following uses:

- **Residential development at: Pear Tree Farm (min 122 dwellings) and other complementary uses will be considered on their merits; Pear Tree Park & Ride; and Goose Green Close (min 20 dwellings); and**
- **Employment development and ancillary uses to support the employment at Red Barn Farm; and**
- **Redevelopment and/or refurbishment of Pear Tree Services, and Wolvercote services area.**

Area-specific requirements

- **Development at Pear Tree Farm must ensure pedestrian and cycle access through the site to encourage and support connections between Oxford Parkway Station and the wider Northern Gateway development. Development must also take into consideration the potential presence of prehistoric or Roman archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.**
- **Red Barn Farm provides an important community function by providing education and training to disadvantaged and vulnerable young people, so any proposal will need to demonstrate that the facilities can be re-provided in accordance with policy C3, which may be outside of the city.**
- **Goose Green Close – the proximity of this parcel to the Oxford Meadows SAC means that any proposal for residential development will specifically need to address the impacts of potential increases in dog-walking and recreation use and will need to demonstrate that the Habitats Regulations requirements are satisfied.**

As a Category 1 employment site it is important that employment development at Northern Gateway directly supports the knowledge economy of Oxford. At Red Barn Farm permission will only be granted for employment development where the intended uses directly relate to the knowledge economy of Oxford: science and technology, research, bio-technology, spin-off companies from the universities and hospitals, or other intended uses that make a measurable contribution to those sectors. Applicants will be required to demonstrate how their proposals contribute to the knowledge economy of Oxford. The City Council will ensure that these uses are maintained into the future, using legal agreements/conditions.

Open space, nature and flood risk

- **The southwest part of the site (Canalside and Goose Green Close) lies less than 500m from the internationally protected Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC). To help protect this site from recreational pressure,**

[3] Beyond the Oxford North permission 18/02065/OUTFUL

a minimum of 15% publicly accessible green open space for the enjoyment and benefit of residents should be provided onsite as part of any residential development in this part of the Northern Gateway. Unless the proposal can demonstrate that the development is not likely to have a significant effect on the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation, the application will be subjected to appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations and permission will be granted only if it is ascertained that the development will not adversely affect the integrity of that Special Area of Conservation.

Vehicle movements related to the employment development at Red Barn Farm could also present a risk to the SAC in terms of air quality, so proposals will need to demonstrate that the Habitats Regulations have been satisfied, which may include limited parking provision within Red Barn Farm to within the limits already tested through Appropriate Assessment.

Landscaping along streets and in public open space should help introduce high quality green features into the site, which will contribute to biodiversity net gain and achieving the required Urban Greening Factor score. Parts of the site which are currently fields/green open space will also need measures to retain permeability of surface water.

Compensatory improvements should be made to surrounding areas of remaining Green Belt in accordance with the Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of Green Belt Land Report (LUC, 2018).

The level of POS provision if not specifically stated must be delivered in compliance with Policy G2.

Urban design and heritage

The design of new development in this area must be accessible, permeable and legible to ensure easy access to and through the site for all users with priority for pedestrians and cyclists. Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impacts on the significance of the Wolvercote Conservation Area (in accordance with HD1). Design of new development must respect the character of the natural features of the site and create a sense of place which has its own identity and with continuous and well-connected streets with well-defined building frontages. Development must ensure that there is a clear distinction between the public and private realms to ensure both private and public spaces are well designed and defined. Careful consideration must be given to the positioning of windows and lighting in this development to ensure there is good surveillance of the public realm.

Movement and access

Accessibility within the area must also be considered in the design and layout of any proposals, and where necessary included in legal agreements associated with planning permissions, so that the development of remaining land is not prejudiced.

The land to the north of Northern Gateway lies in Cherwell, part of which is site allocations for Oxford's unmet need in the Cherwell Local Plan partial review (site allocations PR6a&b). Development should make provision for future connectivity with any development of the sites in Cherwell, which should give potential for vehicular, pedestrian and cycle links. This should include designing the development to ensure it shall not compromise the delivery of the pedestrian and cycle improvements or the potential future direct cycle link to Oxford Parkway. It is important that the unmet need sites are well-connected to Oxford, and development at Northern Gateway must facilitate access and integration for those communities with existing north Oxford communities.

A coordinated and comprehensive package of transport measures is required to facilitate development at Northern Gateway. Strategic developments within the Northern Gateway area will be expected to provide proportionate financial contributions directly related to the development, to secure necessary improvements to, and mitigations for, the highway network and to deliver necessary improvements to infrastructure and services for public transport. Where necessary the provision of land will be required to support the implementation of relevant schemes to enable the area to be developed comprehensively.

Further transport infrastructure for the Northern Gateway includes:

- **Improved bus services and facilities**
- **Improved cycling routes into Oxford and to Oxford Parkway rail station and destinations in neighbouring districts of Cherwell and West Oxfordshire in accordance with the LCWIP.**

Natural Resources

The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site. Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Owing to previous uses on the site there are some areas of potential contamination present on the site so site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary and must demonstrate compliance with Policy R5.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from adjacent roads including the A40 and A34.

Oxford University Press Sports Ground

Site area: 3.65 hectares

Ward: Wolvercote
Landowner: Oxford University Press
Current use: Private sports ground
Flood Zone: FZ1



This site is currently open-air sports facilities for Oxford University Press and is adjacent to existing residential properties and Jordan Hill Business Park. Outside groups are able to use the pitches on an ad hoc basis. The pitches are in use and are not surplus sports pitches, so development that leads to any loss of pitches will need to demonstrate that the capacity will be replaced. The loss of the majority of the sports facility is considered justified due to the need for and benefits of new housing, and because there is scope within this large site to re-provide the sports provision at the same capacity but within a smaller space, leaving potential for development. Therefore, sports provision must be retained on the site unless an alternative provision is made, or contributions can be made to improving a local facility such that its capacity increase replaces what is lost. If an alternative site is found, then 10% of the site will be required for new public open space which should be sited to make existing residents feel welcome to use it.

Residential development would be an appropriate use on this site and some complementary employment uses may be suitable due to the site being adjacent to the Jordan Hill Business Park. However, given the strategy of the plan to prioritise residential use on new development sites, the site should be residential led.

The minimum housing number assumes the cricket pitch remains on the site, which will also need some buffering from residential development. A density varying from 50-60 dwellings per hectare has been assumed. If the cricket pitch is replaced with an alternative sports facility or off-site, then the minimum housing capacity will be higher. The City Council's Active Communities team should be consulted about needs for different sports fields.

This site is within 1900m of the Oxford Meadows SAC. There should be access from the site to the Five Mile Drive Recreation Ground to help ensure minimal additional recreational pressure on the SAC.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that this score is maintained (no net loss) as a minimum, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. To do this, new development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained and enhanced where possible, such as the hedgerows at the boundary, as well as areas of the open green space. Sufficient replacements will also need to be incorporated into the new design, including as part of the new open space provision, to help mitigate features which are removed as part of development.

Policy SPN2: Oxford University Press Sports Ground

Planning permission will be granted for residential development and public open space at Oxford University Press Sports Grounds. The minimum number of homes to be delivered is 90 if the cricket pitch is retained on the site, rising to 130 if it is not. Some complementary employment use would also be suitable. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature and flood risk

The capacity of the sports provision must be retained unless it can be demonstrated there is not demand for the facility (which is not the case at the current time) or the loss of the sports provision can be otherwise compensated for (Policy G1). If an alternative site is found, the City Council must be satisfied that it will be delivered and operational prior to the occupation of residential development on the site. The Active Communities team should be consulted about whether their cricket pitch needs to be retained or an alternative sporting use would better meet needs. In addition, the Oxford University Press Sports Ground site will still be expected to provide 10% new public open space as part of the residential development, if that is above the 1.5ha threshold set in Policy G2.

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. It is expected that those requirements can be met in the following ways. Opportunities should be taken to create wildlife corridors through the site by enhancing the biodiversity of the hedgerow to the west of the site and connecting it to existing mature trees in the corner of the Wolvercote cemetery. The southern part of the site should be retained as open green space, connecting to the existing recreation ground and maintaining the green setting of the Wolvercote Cemetery, which is the main asset of historic interest in the area. The surrounding area is characterised by wide streets and set-back buildings in large plots, which contributes to a high-quality public realm. Gardens and landscaping along streets should help introduce high quality green features into the site, which will contribute to biodiversity net gain and maintaining the Urban Greening Factor score.

Development should be designed to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the Port Meadow SSSI (Policy G6) and will be subject to appropriate traffic mitigation measures.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development should line and face the key streets and including greening features alongside such as verges, planting and swales would help achieve the urban greening factor. Development should encourage active frontages onto the new public open space. There is potential for higher density than the surroundings, with some flats set within grounds. To the west and the centre of the development near the business park and with a significant gap from the Wolvercote cemetery for open space and replacement facilities, will be most suitable for higher densities.

Movement and access

The relationship between development on this site and the neighbouring urban extension site in Cherwell District Council's area must be carefully considered. The hedgerow that divides the sites adds important greening, but there should be high Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. quality links through to the neighbouring development site for pedestrians and cyclists. This should provide a safe and clear linkage all the way through the site to the recreation ground, and through on to Jordan Hill, improving permeability through the area for pedestrians and cyclists.

Vehicular access to the site should be from Jordan Hill. This is likely to be the only exit and entrance so the road layout will need to allow easy circulation around the site. Any significant increase in traffic is likely to impact upon the nearby Wolvercote and Cutteslowe roundabouts, so appropriate mitigation measures will be required, and traffic generation should be limited, with low parking.

North Area site allocation policies outside of the Area of Focus

- Diamond Place and Ewert House

Diamond Place and Ewert House, Summertown

Site area: 1.73 hectares
Ward: St Margarets
Landowner: Oxford City Council and Oxford University
Current use: Public car parks, academic offices
Flood Zone: FZ1



This site comprises car parks, offices and academic use. The University of Oxford

propose to relocate the Examination Halls of Ewert House to an alternative site, and the City Council is seeking to make better and more efficient use of the car parks.

The site lies within the designation of the Summertown District Centre, so a mix of town centre uses should be provided. A comprehensive redevelopment of the site is required through a masterplan to make more efficient and effective use of this land, secure greater permeability and connectivity through the site, a high standard of design, achieve place-making and good public realm to maximise community benefits. The delivery of the approved development could however come forward in phases but should not compromise the operation of existing uses on this site.

The site lacks good quality urban design owing to the dominance of the open surface car parking. It slopes significantly from south to north, which offers design opportunities.

The City and County Council are seeking to promote sustainable travel and reduce public car parking within the city. There is however a recognition that some public parking on this site is important to serve the district centre, Community centre and the Ferry Pool leisure centre, but this should be reduced to meet only these requirements. The City Council will undertake this through a review of its current parking usage and in the context of public transport services. A safe and secure pedestrian and cycle route from north to south linking to Cherwell School and Ferry Pool Road is required to be provided.

New residential and student development could be designed in blocks to allow public spaces to flow through the site and areas of public realm created. There could be scope for some supporting uses such as retail, cafes, service uses to provide active frontages in the centre of the site, and alongside community centre and possible medical / health centre. The eastern boundary abuts Summerfield School playing fields, which affords attractive views to the east from the site. There is a hedgerow on the eastern boundary and some trees on the site, opportunities to retain these features and to enhance links where possible to the open fields beyond should be taken where deliverable.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

New green features could be incorporated as part of the public open space to be delivered on the site as part of the development proposal, which could be located in the centre of the scheme. Opportunities should be taken to link with existing green corridors adjacent to the scheme, as well as to deliver ecological enhancements through habitat creation linking through with the open playing fields to the east. The site contains existing trees which are important to public amenity and of value to the green ecosystem. The existing trees and those adjacent to the boundary will influence the developable area of the site and its potential capacity.

The potential for protected species on the site is likely to be limited to roosting bats in existing buildings.

This site is of archaeological interest as it is adjacent to an area of cropmarks of

prehistoric or Roman era. This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

Policy SPN3: Diamond Place & Ewert House

Planning permission will be granted for a mixed-use development and the minimum number of dwellings to be delivered is 180 dwellings. A minimum of 100 dwellings should be delivered on Diamond Place and 80 dwellings on Ewert House, of if delivered as non-self-contained student accommodation, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied.
A range of other uses would also be suitable, including the following:

a) **a replacement community centre, if existing one is demolished; and/or**
b) **town centre supporting uses of an appropriate scale to a district centre, which could include additional shops / cafes / services / Class E uses to provide services for local people and new workers / residents / students; and/or**
c) **other complementary uses such as a medical centre will be considered on their merits.**

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. It is expected that those requirements can be met in the following ways. The hedgerows which connect the school playing fields to the wider landscape will be protected and opportunities for enhancements to the ecology should be promoted. An assessment of the condition of the existing trees should be undertaken and those of good quality retained where feasible and opportunities taken to plant new trees to benefit public amenity, support green infrastructure and enhance place making. The development must provide 10% open space.

Opportunities exist to reduce the overall amount of hard surfacing in favour of increased considered landscaping and green features such as bushes and hedgerows, or other forms of GI for ecological purposes.

Urban design and heritage

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impacts on the setting of the North Oxford Victorian Suburb conservation Area, the setting of the Grade II listed Diamond Place cottages and the character of the Summertown District Centre. Proposals must demonstrate compliance with polices HD1 and HD2.

Development must take into consideration the potential presence of prehistoric or Roman archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

Vehicular access to the development should be carefully considered and from Banbury Road (either Ewert Place or Diamond Place) and Ferry Pool Road. A new safe and secure pedestrian and cycle access should be provided through the site from the north to the south-east, connecting to Cherwell School and to Ferry Pool Road, together with pedestrian and cycle access safeguarded for any future development of the adjacent Summerfield School ground. The new route should

explore the scope for potential improvements to the restricted width of the existing footpath/cycle way adjacent to the Bowls Club, which links to Cherwell School.

Residential development and student accommodation elements should be low car and the City Council will seek to minimise public car parking on the site to a level which is reasonable to serve the area bearing in mind the public transport connections and its location within a district centre.

Natural resources

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how any contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

South Infrastructure Area (including Cowley Branch Line and Littlemore Area of Focus)

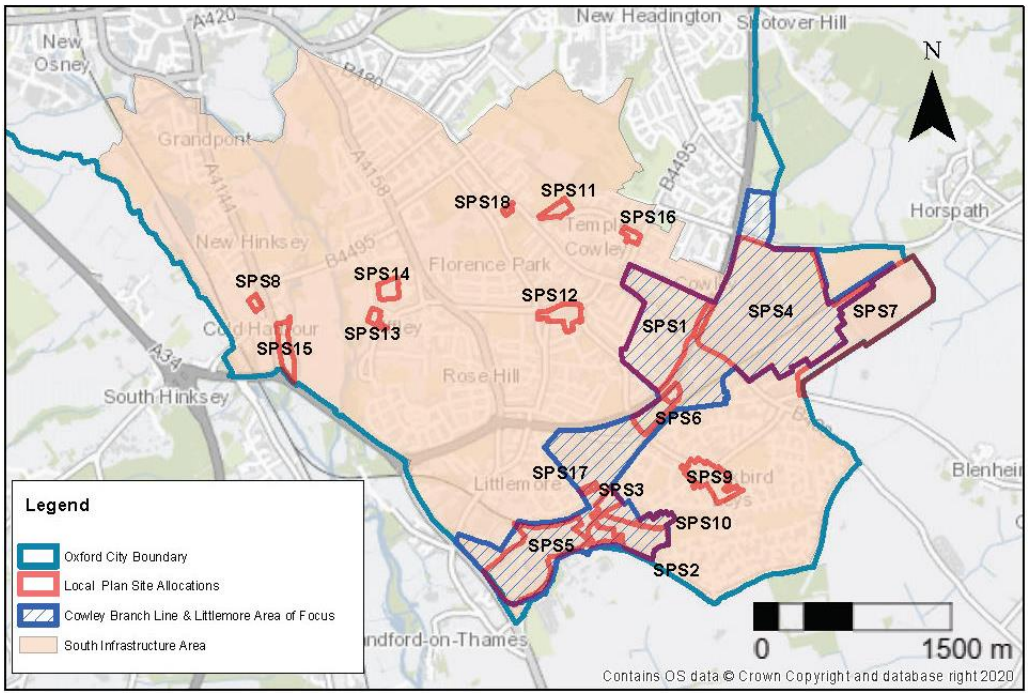


Figure 8.5 South Infrastructure Area, Southern Edge of Oxford Area of Focus and site allocation policies

The South Infrastructure Area includes development sites such as Kassam Stadium, which are adjacent to the South Oxfordshire development sites, Land South of Grenoble Road (Policy STRAT 11) and Land at Northfield (Policy STRAT 12)16. The area also includes large

employment sites such as ARC Oxford and the Oxford Science Park. Enhanced public transport to these sites will be important as they grow, to provide a realistic alternative to car use for people travelling to the sites.

The opening up of passenger services along the Cowley Branch Line would provide a welcome public transport alternative for this area of the city. The branch line currently extends over three miles eastwards from Kennington Junction. The potential area of influence of the Cowley Branch Line, including where its passengers may come from, extends across this area. Two stations are proposed along the line at Littlemore/Oxford Science Park and in the vicinity of Oxford Business Park/Oxford Retail Park and Blackbird Leys and Cowley. Major new developments coming forward in this area will be expected to make financial contributions towards the delivery of the Cowley Branch Line to mitigate the impact of their development.

Good transport connectivity via public transport, walking and cycling is a key need for this area if people are to be able to move easily between bus stops, potential stations, residential and employment areas and other facilities. This area includes the significant centres of Blackbird Leys and Cowley, which have many facilities essential to their local communities. The vibrancy of these centres needs to be maintained so they can continue to be gathering places offering a range of facilities and services.

Oxfordshire County Council's proposals to introduce an enhanced public transport service as part of the measures made possible through the proposed traffic filters will play an important contribution to this area.

Key considerations for infrastructure and design across the area are:

- Ensure good connectivity by foot and cycle and public transport across the area, including to the proposed locations of Cowley Branch Line stations
- Consider the connectivity of the urban extension area to the rest of the city and some sites in the city to the rest of the city.
- Enhanced public transport connectivity to help enable a reduction in car parking across the area
- Ensure land is safeguarded for stations and access for the proposed CBL.
- Increase public access to green spaces
- Ensure good urban design and place making opportunities are taken for the new residential areas to be brought forward
- Support the vibrancy of district and local centres in the area to ensure the facilities and services they include continue to be available
- Increase opportunities to enhance existing tree cover which is the lowest canopy cover across the city.

Cowley Branch Line and Littlemore Area of Focus

This Area of Focus includes the area around the Kassam Stadium and the proposed Cowley Branch Line (CBL) where several of the city's key employment sites lie, including MINI Plant Oxford, Oxford Science and the ARC Business Park, which all employ large numbers of people.

Key objectives for this area include improving and enhancing connectivity to this part of the city by modes other than by private car.

There is the potential for the re-instatement of passenger trains along the Cowley Branch Line (CBL) within the Plan period. The opening up of passenger services along the CBL would provide an additional public transport alternative for this area of the city. The branch line currently extends over three miles eastwards from Kennington Junction. Two stations are proposed along the line at Oxford Science Park and in the vicinity of ARC Business Park on the site of the Sandy Lane Recreation Ground to the rear of the Tesco Superstore.

The CBL would enable a wider catchment area of workers to be able to access important employment sites such as ARC Oxford and the Science Park by rail, which will help support the local, regional and national economy. There are secondary benefits of rail travel, such as the potential for reduced reliance on the private car, which brings with it the potential for improvements in air quality and reduced traffic congestion on the local highway network.

As well as delivering benefits for some of Oxford's key employers, the delivery of the CBL has the potential to enrich the lives of residents by providing an accessible rail route into and out of the area. Any infrastructure delivery associated with the CBL must therefore be accessible for residents as well as workers who may be commuting into the city from across the county and region. This transformational infrastructure will require significant investment from a number of sources including developer contributions. Development sites within this Area of Focus will be expected to make financial contributions towards public transport, the delivery of the CBL including upgrading pedestrian and cycle access to the proposed stations to mitigate the impact of the developments.

In addition to changes resulting from the delivery of the CBL, the area will experience considerable transformation over the plan period as developments on the edge of the city in adjoining South Oxfordshire are built out as allocated strategic sites, particularly the Land South of Grenoble Road (Policy STRAT 11) and Land at Northfield (Policy STRAT 12)[4]. It is important that all opportunities are taken to ensure that these strategic developments on the city's boundaries are well connected for both pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, these new developments must support existing public transport routes and the expansion of these routes where required to ensure people have the option to use public transport to move around the whole city not just routes that go to the city centre.

Oxford Stadium lies within this AoF, and Littlemore Conservation Area is near this AoF and must be properly considered in any development proposals that come forward. The height, scale and massing of new development in this AoF must be of a height, scale and mass that responds positively to the area. A degree of variation in height, scale and mass of any single proposal or its relationship to adjoining development is encouraged to promote an interesting and diverse townscape, provided it does not conflict with the surrounding context, appears incoherent, or leads to the fragmentation of townscape resulting in poor legibility.

[4] South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035

Policy CBLLAOF: Cowley Branch Line and Littlemore Area of Focus

Planning permission will be granted for new development within this Area of Focus where it would ensure that opportunities are taken to deliver the following (where applicable):

a) **Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure improvements must be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the Oxfordshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. Development proposals must take the opportunity to increase connectivity and permeability through developments so people can walk or cycle across the area and to other parts of the city including from the site allocations adjacent to the city which are in South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (Strat 11 Land South of Grenoble Road and Strat 12 Northfield)**
b) **Development sites coming across the area should seek to reduce car parking in line with Policy C8;**
c) **New development must incorporate safeguarded land for pedestrian and cycle access to the proposed CBL railway stations as referenced in Policies SPS 5 Oxford Science Park and SPS6 Sandy Lane Recreation Ground and connections to bus stops;**
d) **Enhancements to public transport both improving existing bus services and towards the proposed CBL. Improved accessibility in the southeast of the city is needed to support the anticipated intensification of existing employment use and to improve accessibility to new residential development. The CBL would enable a reduction in car use to this area, supporting this employment use. Financial contributions from trip-generating uses on all major sites within a 1,500m buffer zone of the proposed CBL stations will be expected in order to achieve these enhancements and mitigate the impact of their development. Figures 8.5 and 8.6 shows the extent of this buffer zone around both proposed railway stations and the site allocations that lie within it;**
e) **Good urban design and place making opportunities are taken for new residential areas to be brought forward across the area of focus which would include delivering new residential development on redundant retail parks; and**
f) **Enhanced landscape planting and opportunities taken to increase tree cover and enhance existing public open space and develop new ones across the area.**

Due to the nature of sites in this area, it is expected that some larger scale development proposals are likely to come forward within this AoF. As such, careful consideration must be given to the design and height of new buildings to ensure that their impact does not have a detrimental upon views from the historic core, or on surrounding low-rise residential areas. Development proposals must be developed in accordance with Policy HD9 and the site-specific allocation where applicable. Development proposals that exceed the height that the High Buildings TAN states may have an impact on the historic core (which says skylining impacts from this area may be possible from 21m and above) will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts can be understood and assessed as listed in Policy HD9. When large scale buildings are proposed in the area, planning permission will only be granted where careful design mitigates the impacts of these large buildings upon the Oxford skyline and on existing neighbouring uses in terms of overbearing, overlooking and overshadowing, including:

a. **Setting back buildings away from the site boundaries and neighbouring residential areas/gardens boundaries; and**

b. Stepping back the upper storeys of proposals; and
c. Ensuring windows in the proposal are angled away from the existing dwellings to reduce scope for overlooking into both houses and gardens; and
d. Reinforcing or introducing landscape planting around the site boundaries to provide more screening and sense of separation between residential and non-residential uses; and
e. Careful choice of materials including colour to mitigate glare and soften the visual impact of the proposal; and
f. Varying the roofscape of the proposals to reduce scope for the merging of several taller buildings which prevent views across the city to the hills beyond; and
g. Demonstrating consideration of the cumulative impacts of the proposal on views from the historic core area to the historic core area and across the historic core area.

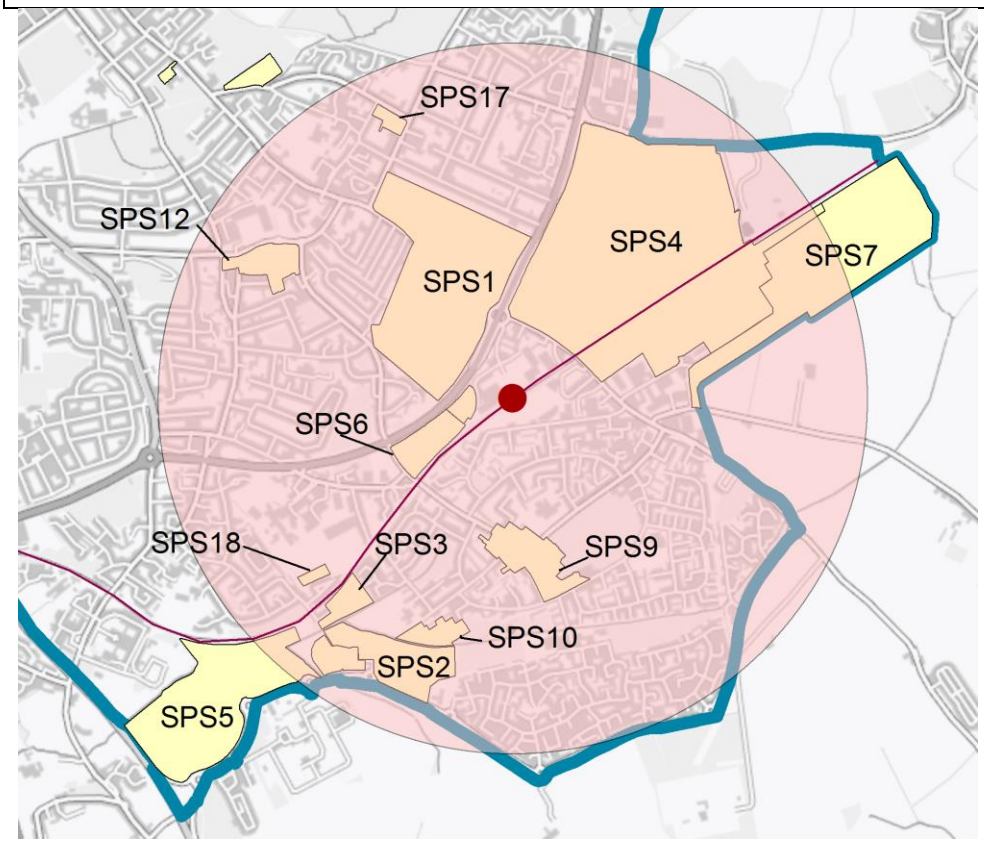


Figure 8.6 Site allocations within 1,500m buffer from proposed Oxford East station.

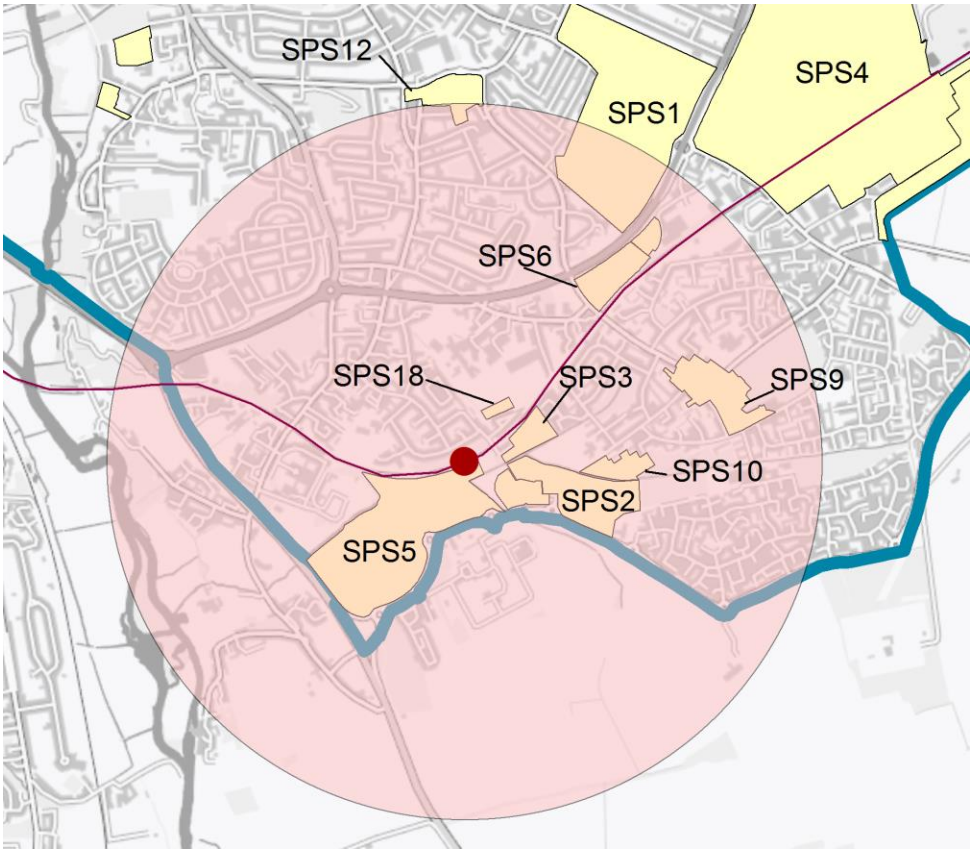


Figure 8.7 Site allocations within 1,500m buffer from proposed Oxford South station.

South Area site allocation policies within the Area of Focus

- ARC Business Park
- Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Complex
- Overflow Car Park, Kassam Stadium
- MINI Plant Oxford
- Oxford Science Park
- Sandy Lane Recreation Ground
- Unipart Group

ARC Oxford

Site area: 35.4 hectares
Ward: Cowley
Landowner: ARC (majority)
Current use: Business Park
Flood Zone: FZ1



ARC Oxford is a Category 1 employment site home to a number of businesses and companies that make an important contribution to the regional and national economy (formerly known as Oxford Business Park). Several of these focus on science and innovation, individually and collectively contribute to building on Oxford's key strengths in research and development, life sciences and the knowledge economy.

The Oxford City Employment Land Needs Assessment Report July 2023) identified the site as one of the best performing locations in the city for Class E (g) uses. Strong demand for research and development and laboratory space has prompted a shift from traditional offices to spin-out research and development, as well as several existing sites capable of intensification and modernisation to satisfy future employment needs of the city in these sectors.

Whilst there are few heritage assets in the area, the site does lie adjacent to Temple Cowley Conservation Area and Oxford Stadium Conservation Area, as well as a grade II listed building to the west (The Nuffield Press) and development proposals need to ensure they do not detrimentally impact upon these heritage assets.

The existing buildings are generally 2-3 storeys in height. The site lies within what has been identified as an Area of Greater Potential as referenced in the High Buildings TAN. These areas have scope for intensification of the land use with the introduction of more high buildings alongside new development on the remaining vacant plots The High Buildings TAN suggests that heights above 15 metres may have some level of impact on the skyline as viewed from the St Mary's Church vantage point, a key sensitive viewpoint in the city. Other viewpoints across the city should also be considered when assessing proposals for high buildings on this site. While going beyond this threshold does not automatically preclude proposals from being acceptable, such schemes will be expected to strongly demonstrate that there has been

an understanding of the context and the impact of the likely effects with regard to the High Buildings TAN.

Notwithstanding the increase in working from home, the office market remains strong in Oxford. Demand is being led by research and development and laboratory spaces, which has prompted a shift from traditional offices to spin-out research and development for life science companies. The ARC Oxford site has some plots of land available for future development and scope within the park to support intensification and modernisation of existing sites, and as such can help to meet some of the future employment needs of the city in these key sectors.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. To help meet the UGF target, development proposals should seek a reduction in hard surfacing and car parks, which could release land for pocket parks, landscaping and SuDS. There is also the potential for wildlife corridors through the site.

The opening up of the Cowley Branch Line to passengers has the potential to deliver a sustainable transport solution, which will help to support the ARC Oxford and its opportunities for the future modernisation and intensification of this site. This will positively promote sustainable travel within this area and create better links to the city centre and to the wider area. ARC Oxford has already contributed to the detailed design phase of the CBL. It would be one of the most significant beneficiaries from a passenger service, it is expected to make a financial contribution towards the implementation of the CBL and its related infrastructure including pedestrian and cycling access to the proposed station and to support existing public transport services.

This site is of archaeological interest for potential Roman remains (although with some previous disturbance). This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

Policy SPS1: ARC Oxford

Planning permission will be granted for new development, modernisation and intensification for research and development, offices and light industrial uses (Class E) and general industrial (Class B2) employment uses at ARC Oxford. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits, such as amenity uses which support occupiers and the local area. An element of residential development within the defined threshold as specified in Policy E1 will also be supported.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Open space should be provided to contribute to green infrastructure and access for public use encouraged. Biodiversity on any vacant plots and between buildings should be improved. Proposals to develop vacant plots will be expected to be accompanied by a biodiversity survey to assess the biodiversity value of the site, and it should be demonstrated how harm will be avoided, mitigated or compensated. New developments should incorporate proposals for greening. An assessment should be undertaken of the quality and condition of existing trees and hedgerows with the aim to retain species of high-quality and medium / low wherever feasible and to introduce new planting in accordance with an agreed landscape and planting scheme.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. New development proposals should seek to improve both the place-making on this site, connectivity and the permeability and recognise its relationship to the wider area as part of a comprehensive master plan. Opportunities should be taken through the masterplan and as individual schemes come forward to enhance the external appearance of this site, its landscape setting and create new public open spaces for occupiers of the park and community use.

Development proposals that exceed the height that the High Buildings TAN states may have an impact on the historic core (which says skylining impacts may be possible from 15m and above) will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts can be understood and assessed as listed in Policy HD9.

Development must be designed with consideration of its impact on the adjoining Temple Cowley and Oxford Stadium Conservation Areas and nearby listed building (in accordance with Policies HD1 and HD2).

Development proposals must also take into consideration the potential presence of Roman archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

Pedestrian, cycle and bus links to and from the ARC Park and improved sustainable transport links should be promoted and supported, which may include the future re-opening of the Cowley Branch line to passengers. The implementation and wider use of the Cowley Branch Line, with a stop near ARC Oxford, would bring significant benefits and improve both sustainability and accessibility to this area of the city. As such, contributions will be required towards the provision of a pedestrian/cycle bridge over the railway if the opportunity for this to be delivered arises.

Natural resources

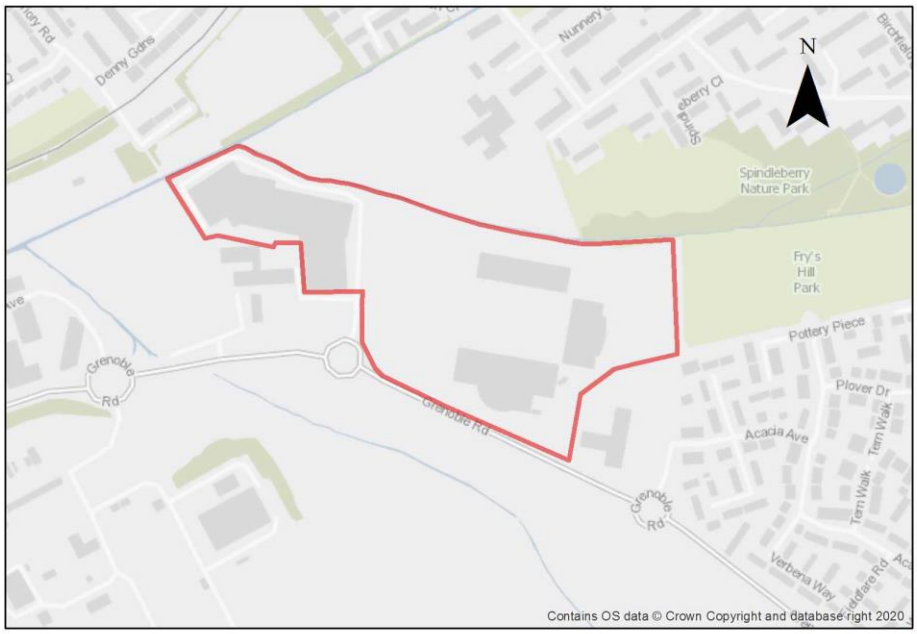
The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site. Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering a layout that places habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from the surrounding roads including the Garsington Road and John Smith Drive.

Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Park

Site area: 8.48 hectares
Ward: Littlemore
Landowner: Firoka Ltd
Current use: Football stadium, commercial, leisure, food and drink, retail and car parking
Flood Zone: FZ3b but FZ1 for sequential test



Northfield Brook runs along the northern edge of the site, and feeds into the Littlemore Brook in the northwest corner of the site. The fragments of the rural landscape that weave through the area are characteristic and make the area relatively sensitive to change. These should inform design choices. Grenoble Road is at the southern edge of one of the sites, and to the south of this a large new development site in South Oxfordshire is allocated in their Local Plan, which will change the character of the area, and which will need to be responded to in the design of development at the Kassam Stadium. Improvements to the road may also be needed because of developments on both sides. The site is largely flat, with few topography changes.

Currently access to the site is largely by car. The sustainability of the site at present is poor and enhancements for active travel modes as well as for public transport will be required.

The Ozone leisure facility is a dominating feature on the stadium site, which is a building of large mass, with the main active edge facing the Kassam stadium and Ozone car park, and blank faces on other sides. The three stands of the Kassam football stadium are also dominating. Hedges and trees line much of the site, especially alongside the Northfield Brook and the Littlemore Brook, which is adjacent to a short side of the Ozone Leisure Complex. A narrow strip of flood zone 3 lines the Northfield Brook and should be avoided by development. To the north east of the site is the Spindleberry Park Oxford City Wildlife Site, and any potential impacts of the development on this site should be considered.

The minimum housing number applies if the Kassam Stadium is moved to an alternative site and therefore frees up the area for alternative development, which should be residential development. The Ozone leisure facility is largely in Use Class E, so that is the lawful use of that part of the site. The assumed appropriate density is relatively high and around 70 dwellings per hectare on the Grenoble Road edge and Ozone and dropping to around 60 dwellings per hectare in the northern eastern corner. If residential development

is enabled by the Kassam Stadium moving, this would be a large enough area if residential development to require 10% open space. A buffer around the watercourse has also been assumed.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

The EA has data/records on site investigation(s) adjacent to this site. Any proposal for development should make enquiries to understand the land quality issues and impacts on groundwater.

The mix of uses on this site, a small part of which is in Flood Zone 2, has been justified through the sequential test. A Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out for this site to examine part b) of the Exception Test (which relates to whether the development is safe). The Level 2 SFRA considered the proposed development was appropriate and additional mitigation and/ or analysis may be required to demonstrate compliance with the Exception Test at the planning application stage. This is to be undertaken through a site-specific FRA supporting the planning application. The site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate how the development will be safe otherwise planning permission will not be granted.

Both this site and the other Kassam site (SPS3) have potential for prehistoric, Roman and medieval archaeology. Both sites were evaluated in 1996 but the mitigation was never completed. The archaeology is dispersed and mostly focused around the fringes of the car park (peat with potential for prehistoric pollen sequences near northwestern corner of the Ozone, dispersed Roman pottery manufacturing activity, burials and other features east and north of the standing Nunnery dormitory range). This will need to be explored as part of any redevelopment.

Policy SPS2: Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Park

Planning permission will be granted for residential development, public open space and replacement community and/or sport and leisure facilities, and for commercial uses within the existing area of the Ozone Leisure Park only, on the Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Park site. The football stadium should remain (unless it has been replaced elsewhere in Oxford or in proximity to Oxford). If the Kassam Stadium is replaced elsewhere and that part of the site becomes available for development, the minimum number of homes to be delivered is 275. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. The existing tree lined edges and green buffer along the Northfield Brook should be retained (with a minimum 10 metre width). There is an opportunity to enhance these features to create a strong wildlife network that connects to the wider countryside. A minimum of 10% of the site should be used for public open space, which should be accessible for existing residents of neighbouring areas. The opportunity should be taken to weave this green space through the site, creating a green corridor that links Fry's Hill Park and Spindleberry Nature Reserve and the surrounding landscape, with enhanced walking, cycling links and pocket parks along the green corridor. The development should be designed to ensure active frontages face onto the open space. Development should not have an adverse impact upon the Oxford City Wildlife Site.

Proposals will be expected to provide additional protective and enhancement measures for Northfield Brook, with wetland restoration and an ecological buffer zone (min 10m from bank top). Any development should also assess and take account of hydrological and connectivity issues that could be impacted by work in the corridor of the main river and avoid any new crossing structures on the Northfield Brook.

A sequential approach should be taken to locating development on the site, with more vulnerable uses away from the highest flood risk. A drainage strategy will be required to manage run-off and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA.

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>
Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Within the proximity of the Ozone Leisure Park, larger plot sizes would be appropriate to ensure they are not dominated. Closer to the Northfield Brook and existing low-rise development of Greater Leys, development will need to be lower to avoid dominating this and to reflect the rural landscape fragments. In these locations, a smaller plot size will also be more appropriate.

The form and layout of development should respond to the South Oxfordshire allocated development site to the south. A set-back may be necessary to minimise noise and air quality impacts from Grenoble Road, but there should be an opportunity to face and address the road, with relatively high-density development. More vulnerable development will be expected to be directed away from the small area of Flood Zone 3.

The 15th Century (remodelled around 1600) Grade II* listed Minchery Farmhouse adjoins the site in the southwest corner by the edge of the Ozone complex (within the Science Park, Policy SPS5). Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the listed building and its setting and demonstrate compliance with policy HD2.

Development must take into consideration the potential presence of prehistoric, Roman and medieval archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

Publicly accessible footpaths wrap around the North (Northfield Brook) and East of the Stadium site, linking up with Minchery Lane to the West and Littlemore/Blackbird Leys to the north. Development of the site must be designed to allow easy pedestrian and cycle movement east to west and north to south across the site and into the surrounding areas. There are frequent bus services from Pegasus Road, and the pedestrian access to these via the public footpaths should be enhanced to support new commercial and residential uses. Public transport enhancements will be required to ensure that the site does not remain car-dependent. The vehicular access will continue to be in the same location from Grenoble Road.

Natural resources

The site includes areas of filled ground which may be unsuitable for housing without protection measures. A land contamination survey must be submitted in compliance with Policy R5.

Potential effects of odour from the nearby wastewater treatment works along Grenoble Road will need to be assessed and mitigated in compliance with Policy R7

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement submitted in accordance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from surrounding roads including Grenoble Road.

Overflow Car Park at Kassam Stadium site

Site area: 2.29 hectares
Ward: Littlemore
Landowner: Firoka Ltd
Current use: Car parking
Flood Zone: FZ3b but FZ1 for sequential test



Hedges and trees line most of site, currently in use as an overflow car park for the Kassam Stadium on match days, with rarely more than a handful of cars parked at other times. Littlemore Brook runs along the southern edge of the site. To the east of the site is the Spindleberry Park Oxford City Wildlife Site, and any potential impacts of the development on this site should be considered. The steep railway embankment of the Cowley Branch line runs along the long northern edge of the site and creates a significant boundary/barrier. The surfacing is a mix of tarmac and gravelled areas, with some low hedges breaking up the parking spaces. The site is largely flat, with few topography changes.

The site is suitable for residential development. The minimum housing number given assumes minimum appropriate suburban densities of 50-60 dwellings per hectare, higher density being most appropriate to the north and in the centre of the site. The far southwestern part of the site is at higher flood risk, and the assumption has been made that built development will not take place on this part of the site. The assumption is also made that 10% of the site will need to be delivered as public open space, according to Policy G2. The public open space could be distributed across the site, with green links and pocket parks, and planting and types of space that appeal to a range of senses, a range of ages, including children and provide corridors for wildlife that link existing features.

There are limited access points because of the brooks and the railway embankment. There is currently informal pedestrian access from Falcon Close into the site, but this is via a muddy bank under trees.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development

to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

Residential use on this site, a very small part of which is in Flood Zone 3b, has been justified through the sequential test. A Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out for this site to examine part b) of the Exception Test (which relates to whether the development is safe). The Level 2 SFRA considered the proposed development was appropriate and additional mitigation and/ or analysis may be required to demonstrate compliance with the Exception Test at the planning application stage. This is to be undertaken through a site-specific FRA supporting the planning application. The site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate how the development will be safe otherwise planning permission will not be granted.

Both this site and the other Kassam site (SPS2) have potential for prehistoric, Roman and medieval archaeology. Both sites were evaluated in 1996 but the mitigation was never completed. The archaeology is dispersed and mostly focused around the fringes of the car park (peat with potential for prehistoric pollen sequences near the Bingo Hall, dispersed Roman pottery manufacturing activity, burials and other features east and north of the standing Nunnery dormitory range). This will need to be explored as part of any redevelopment.

Policy SPS3: Overflow Car Park, Kassam Stadium

Planning permission will be granted for residential-led development and public open space on the Overflow Car Park, Kassam Stadium site. The minimum number of homes to be delivered is 77. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. A minimum of 10% of the site should be used for public open space, which should be accessible for existing residents of neighbouring areas. The opportunity should be taken to weave this green space through the site, creating a green corridor that links Fry's Hill Park and Spindleberry Nature Reserve and the surrounding landscape, with enhanced walking and cycling links and pocket parks along the green corridor. The development should be designed to ensure active frontages face onto the open space.

Development should not have an adverse impact upon the Oxford City Wildlife Site. A buffer should be retained along the railway corridor to allow for the movement of protected species such as slow worms. The fragments of the rural landscape that weave through the area are characteristic and make the area relatively sensitive to change. The existing treed edges and green buffer along the watercourses should be retained. There is opportunity to enhance these features to create a strong wildlife network that connects to the wider countryside. A minimum 10m buffer should be left alongside the watercourse.

A sequential approach should be taken to locating development on the site. More vulnerable development will be expected to be located away from the small area of Flood Zone 3 alongside the brook and in the southwestern corner. A drainage strategy will be required to manage run-off and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA.

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>
Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Closer to the Littlemore Brook and Falcon Close, terraced housing with front and rear gardens will be most appropriate, with an opportunity for larger plots to bookend rows, at road junctions, or facing buildings of similar size adjacent to the site. There is some potential for higher and larger plot buildings in front of the railway embankment, building in height from the other edges towards the centre and north of the site. The western part of the site near the access to Littlemore is too narrow for a row of two terraces in a block, and this also includes the area of Flood Zone 3, which built development should avoid. There should be a clear route through this corner, connecting to the path. There is potential for variations in roofscape as there is no predominant roofscape type in the area and it is not a defining characteristic.

Plot boundaries within Littlemore and Blackbird Leys are varied and include hedges, low walls and railings. The proximity of the brooks and existing hedgerows create an opportunity for green connections, and to run this through the site, so green plot boundary treatments with low trees and hedges are the most appropriate plot boundary treatments.

Development must take into consideration the potential presence of prehistoric, Roman and medieval archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

There are frequent bus services from Pegasus Road, which are within 800m from the site, and pedestrian routes to access this need to be enhanced. Opportunities to enhance the informal pedestrian access from Falcon Close should be investigated to create a more attractive pedestrian and cycle link to the surrounding area and nearby bus stops. Pedestrian and cycle access should also be retained from the western corner of the site towards Littlemore, via Priory Road; the potential for a restricted access from this location for servicing and emergency vehicles could be considered. The main vehicular access will remain as the bridge over the Littlemore Brook from the Ozone complex and Grenoble Road.

To eliminate any risk to railway operations and to ensure the safe operation of the railway, applicants must demonstrate that the design of development considers guidance provided by Network Rail.

Natural resources

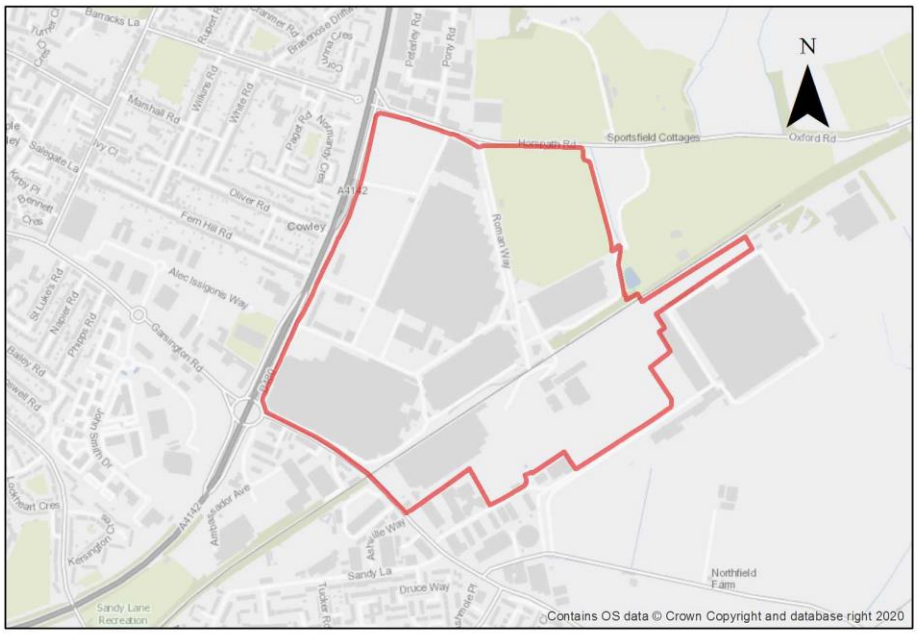
Because of the use as a car park, some areas of potential contamination are present on the site so site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary in compliance with Policy R5.

Potential effects of odour from the nearby wastewater treatment works along Grenoble Road will need to be assessed and mitigated in compliance with Policy R7.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement to be submitted in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from surrounding roads.

MINI Plant Oxford

Site area: 82.13 hectares
Ward: Lye Valley
Landowner: BMW Mini
Current use: Car Plant
Flood Zone: FZ1



The Mini Plant Oxford lies in a 'gateway' location on the corner of the eastern by-pass and the Garsington Road, to the immediate south-east of the ARC Oxford business park. The Mini Plant is a major employer in the city and forms an important part of a wider range of industrial and office developments in this area.

This site is identified as a Category 1 employment site, being significant to both the regional and national economy. The future development of this site needs to reflect the ambition of the Oxford Economic Growth Strategy together with the aims and objectives to support economic growth and the importance of this site to the national economy. In these circumstances the modernisation and intensification of this site is supported to make the best and most efficient use of land and promote sustainable development.

The site is served by the Cowley Branch Line, the railway line that transports freight to and from the Mini Plant. The proposals to open-up the Cowley Branch Line to passenger traffic would provide improved accessibility and sustainable travel options to both this site and the surrounding developments including ARC Oxford and the Oxford Science Park.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

This site is of archaeological interest as the Dorchester- Alchester Roman Road runs through the site and there is potential for roadside settlement. Archaeological remains from the Bronze Age and Roman remains have also previously been recorded.

Policy SPS4: MINI Plant Oxford

Planning permission will be granted for the intensification and modernisation of the MINI Plant Oxford site to make the most efficient and effective use of the land in accordance with Policy E1 and in recognition of its importance as a Category 1 employment site.

Development and/or changes of use of buildings to Class B2 (general industrial), Class E (offices and light industrial) together with Class B8 warehousing uses or other complementary uses will be supported in principle, even though they may result in a loss of jobs, where these uses are shown to be important to the successful operation of the MINI Plant.

An element of residential development within the defined threshold as specified in Policy E1 will be supported.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. New development should include some landscaping proposals to reflect the 'Gateway' location of the public frontages of this site. Opportunities for greening on this site should be explored as part of future development proposals.

Urban Design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. The MINI Plant Oxford site represents a 'gateway' location and therefore new development should positively respond to its setting and its relationship to key frontages adjacent to the Eastern By-Pass, Garsington Road and Horspath Road. There is scope to maximise the use of this site, with few constraints and an opportunity for new buildings to be of a modern innovative design that positively responds to its 'Gateway' location.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Development proposals that exceed the height that the High Buildings TAN states may have an impact on the historic core (which says skylining impacts may be possible from 15m and above) will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts can be understood and assessed as listed in Policy HD9.

Development must take into consideration the potential presence of Bronze Age and Roman archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

This site is located within the geographical area of the Eastern Arc. This is an area

where it has been identified that future travel demand will be focused. Opportunities should be taken through the development of this site to support sustainable travel by providing greater public transport links and services, including the re-opening of the Cowley Branch Line to passengers. Support should be provided for improved pedestrian and cycle links and enhancements to the existing network including key junctions and provide better connections to both existing and planned major developments in the area.

Natural resources

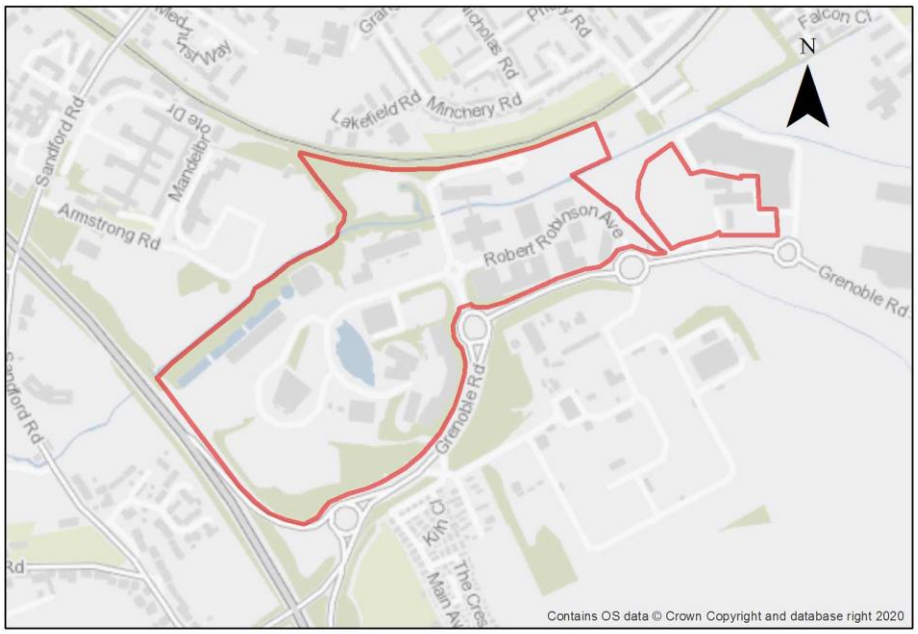
The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Because of the use of the site, some areas of potential contamination are present, so site investigation will be required, and remedial works may be necessary in compliance with Policy R5.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement to be submitted in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from traffic using surrounding roads and existing operations.

Oxford Science Park

Site area: 27.1 hectares
Ward: Littlemore
Landowner: Magdalen College and Oxford City Council
Current use: Science Park and Vacant
Flood Zone: FZ3b but FZ2 for sequential test



The Oxford Science Park is identified as a Category 1 employment site being of regional, national and global importance. It is one of the most influential science, technology, and business environments in Europe with 100 science and technology businesses employing some 3,200 people. These companies are often world leading and are having a significant impact on advanced science and research to improve human health. The companies range in size from small start-ups to large international firms.

The Oxford Science Park has six undeveloped plots with planning permission for 20,000 sqm, together with some master planning currently being undertaken for the remainder of the site to accommodate an additional estimated 25,000 sqm. This would provide for additional laboratories and offices, building on the city's key economic strengths in the field of science, technology and life science research.

The opening up of the Cowley Branch Line to passengers has the potential to deliver a sustainable transport solution, which will help to support the Science Park and its opportunities for the future modernisation and intensification of this site. This will create better transport links to the city centre and wider area.

The land at Grenoble Road which lies at the southern edge of this site is a major new development site in South Oxfordshire, allocated in their Local Plan as an extension to the Science Park and for housing. This will significantly change the character of the area, and will need to be responded to both in the design of the new development at the Science Park, its connectivity and permeability and the links to future transport infrastructure provision.

The site lies within an identified potential growth area in the city, where there is scope for intensification of use with more higher buildings. Previous assessments and modelling

have determined a threshold height of 21 metres beyond which built form will have some level of impact on the skyline as viewed from the St Mary's Church vantage point, a key sensitive viewpoint in the city. While going beyond this threshold does not automatically preclude proposals from being acceptable, such schemes will be expected to strongly demonstrate that there has been an understanding of the context and the impact of the likely effects.

The site lies adjacent to the Oxford City Wildlife Site (Littlemore Brook) which also passes through the site. There are records of peat deposits that follow the line of the Littlemore Brook, which runs through the northern part of the site and the potential for additional unrecorded deposits in the area which will need to be considered and avoided.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

The employment use of this site, a small part of which, near the brook, is in Flood Zone 3b, has been justified through the sequential test. A Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out for this site to examine part b) of the Exception Test (which relates to whether the development is safe). The Level 2 SFRA considered the proposed development was appropriate and additional mitigation and/ or analysis may be required to demonstrate compliance with the Exception Test at the planning application stage. This is to be undertaken through a site-specific FRA supporting the planning application. The site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate how the development will be safe otherwise planning permission will not be granted.

The 15th Century (remodelled around 1600) Grade II* listed Minchery Farmhouse is within the site and any development should be sympathetic to the setting of this heritage asset. The site is of archaeological interest as medieval and Roman remains have been recorded previously and there is high potential for further prehistoric, Roman and early Saxon archaeology. The remaining priory structures (above and below ground) and related features and burials should be preserved in situ.

Policy SPS5: Oxford Science Park

Planning permission will be granted for new development and modernisation for research and development and office employment uses (Class E) that directly relate to Oxford's key sectors of research-led employment at The Oxford Science Park. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

An element of residential development within the defined threshold as specified in Policy E1 will be supported.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Adjacent to Oxford City Wildlife Site (Littlemore Brook) which also passes through the site. The site and its perimeter contain significant existing trees, hedgerows and woodland which form the structural landscaping of the Science Park that are important to public amenity in the area and will provide valuable ecosystem services. A 10-metre buffer to the watercourse should be maintained.

An assessment of the trees and hedgerows is required to assess their quality and condition. High quality trees must be retained unless there is a robust over-riding policy-based justification. Moderate and low-quality trees should be retained where it is feasible to do so. Opportunities should be taken to both retain and plant new trees to benefit public amenity in the area as part of a landscaping scheme.

Development should not have an adverse impact upon the wildlife corridor. Opportunities should be taken to improve biodiversity and provide links through the site. New development should incorporate proposals for additional greening as part of new landscaping schemes. A buffer should be retained along the railway corridor to allow for the movement of the protected species.

A site-specific FRA will be required. A sequential approach should be taken to locating development on the site, with more vulnerable uses away from the highest flood risk. A drainage strategy will be required to manage run-off and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. New development proposals should seek to improve the place-making on this site and the permeability and recognise its relationship to the wider area as part of a comprehensive master plan. Opportunities should be taken to enhance the external appearance of the science park, enhance the landscape and create new public open spaces for occupiers of the park. The site would benefit from more areas of public realm between large buildings and a clear delineation between cyclists and vehicles which share the road space.

Development proposals that exceed the height that the High Buildings TAN states may have an impact on the historic core (which from this area says skylining impacts may be possible from 21m and above) will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts can be understood and assessed as listed in Policy HD9. Development proposals will be expected to mitigate impacts to the sensitive skyline and surrounding area by avoiding built forms with excessively overbearing scale and massing, and avoiding roofscapes that are excessively uniform.

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the setting of the Grade II* listed Minchery Farmhouse and demonstrate compliance with policy HD2.

Development proposals must take into consideration the potential presence of Medieval and Roman archaeological remains and preserve the setting of the nearby listed building. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5 and there should be no adverse impact on the buried remains of Littlemore Priory.

Movement and access

This site is located within the geographical area of the eastern arc. This is an area where it has been identified that future travel demand will be focused. Opportunities should be taken through the development of this site to support sustainable travel by providing greater public transport links and services, including the re-opening of the Cowley Branch Line to passengers. The Park strongly supports improvements to public transport provision in the eastern arc. Improved pedestrian and cycle links and enhancements to the existing network are required together with better connections to both existing and planned major developments in the area. Proposals to reduce car parking will be supported.

Natural resources

Due to the site's proximity to recorded peat reserves along Littlemore Brook and the potential for further deposits in the area, any development on currently undeveloped parts of the site will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm or loss of peat deposits in accordance with the requirements of policy R6. This may mean that where there is the potential for causing removal of peat, site layout has been designed accordingly to protect and mitigate any harm to identified peat deposits onsite.

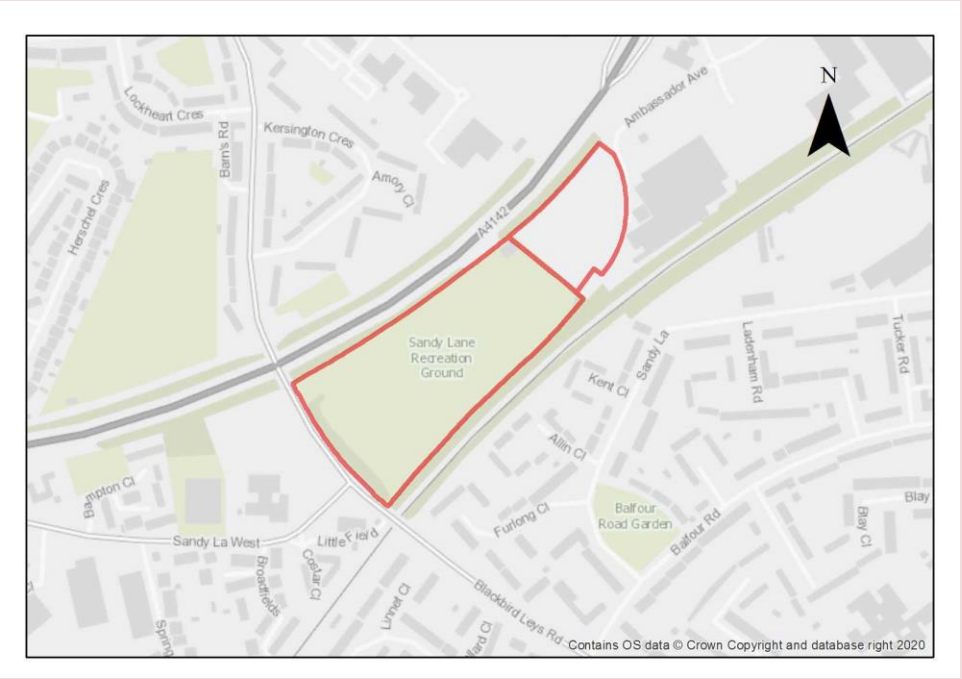
Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how any contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement to be submitted in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to environmental noise from traffic using surrounding roads.

Sandy Lane Recreation Ground

Site area: 5.15 hectares

Ward: Blackbird Leys
Landowner: Oxford City Council
Current use: Green open space with sports pitches; vacant car parking area off Ambassador Avenue currently used by a motorcycle training company.
Flood Zone: FZ1



The site includes a recreation space consisting of two adult and one junior grass surface football pitches. There is also a small pavilion on the site which incorporates changing facilities. There is an area of hardstanding (1.1 ha) in the northeastern corner which was once used for storage of cars from the production line and in 1995 permission was granted for use of the site as a car park for Rover employees. This part of the site is currently used by a motorcycle training company operating under a temporary permission.

The Eastern Bypass Road forms the northern/northeastern boundary and the Cowley Branch line (CBL) runs along the southeastern boundary. Access to the southwest onto Blackbird Leys Road is via a ramp. The Cowley Retail Park lies to the easterly end of the site. There is no vehicular access from the site onto Ambassador Avenue which runs through the retail park and leads onto the Garsington Road. The hardstanding area is accessed through the retail park. The site has a raised bank on the southeastern boundary covered in scrub.

Beyond the CBL to the southeast is an area of low density and low height development (2 storey) which is part of the Blackbird Leys estate. However, beyond the bypass to the northeast is an area of higher density and height in Kersington Crescent and at the ARC Business Park. Development proposals for this site must be sensitively designed to strike the right balance in terms of density and height of new development on this site, although the site is in an area identified in the High Buildings Study as being in an area of greater potential for height.

The proposed reopening of the CBL to passenger use offers a great opportunity for

sustainable transport options. An important element of the CBL project is the delivery of a station at this location. Although the proposed station will be located on land in the ownership of Network Rail, the land for access routes to and from the station must be safeguarded within this site to ensure there are access routes for pedestrians and cyclists to ensure future passengers have suitable access to the branch line. The station and other developments in the area may result in the opportunity for a pedestrian/cycle bridge over the railway line, and contributions towards delivery of this will be required. This site is very close to the ARC Business Park and could act as a gateway and important connection, especially if a station is present.

The minimum number of dwellings stated in the policy assumes that pitches remain on the site but are re-configured. A density of 60+ dwellings per hectare has been assumed for the site as it lies in this suburban area of the city where there is some potential for height. If pitches are relocated, then the minimum housing capacity will be higher, and a number has been included in the policy to reflect this too. In the event the pitches are to be relocated, the City Council's Active Communities team should be consulted to provide advice about the needs for sports fields in the area local to this site and should be satisfied with the proposed reprovision to ensure that the facilities are not lost to the local community.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. Proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss) and demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained including the semi mature trees along the boundary with the Eastern Bypass. There is the opportunity to plant a range of native species trees and shrubs along the bank to support biodiversity in providing habitats for birds and insects.

As the site consists of made up ground and potential fill it is likely that land contamination will be an issue on the site, as such, site investigations will be required to be undertaken as part of any development proposals.

Policy SPS6: Sandy Lane Recreation Ground

Planning permission will be granted for residential development and public open space at the Sandy Lane Recreation Ground. The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered is 120 dwellings although this would be expected to be higher if the outdoor sports facilities were relocated off site within the local area with a minimum number of dwellings of 300 dwellings. Land should be safeguarded on the site to allow for future access by pedestrians and cyclists to the passenger station for the Cowley Branch Line (CBL). Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. The site has limited biodiversity value as currently laid out to football pitches; the redevelopment of this site offers the opportunity to introduce more diversity in terms of the design of the public open space and enhancing the planting and natural vegetation across the site particularly along the southeastern boundary. The trees planted on the northwestern boundary should be retained and maintained within any scheme as this will help to provide a buffer against noise and pollution arising from the eastern by-pass. The trees along the northwestern boundary should be retained and regularly maintained to ensure this tree screen is protected and incorporated as part of the development.

Enhanced outdoor sports facilities should be provided in line with the requirements of Policy G1. The City Council's Active Communities Team must be consulted and in agreement with any relocation of these sports facilities.

Public open space provision must be integrated into the scheme and ensure good permeability on foot or by bicycle for all users of the site both residents and users of the proposed CBL station

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development proposals will be expected to mitigate impacts to the sensitive skyline and surrounding area by avoiding built forms with excessively overbearing scale and massing, and avoiding roofscapes that are excessively uniform. Development proposals that exceed the height that the High Buildings TAN states may have an impact on the historic core (which from this area says skylining impacts may be possible from 21m and above) will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts can be understood and assessed as listed in Policy HD9.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution

sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Movement and access

The site will be accessed from the Blackbird Leys Road although a pedestrian and cycle access should be provided from Ambassador Avenue to ensure good connectivity to the proposed station for the Cowley Branch Line. Access by pedestrians and cyclists to the station must be incorporated into any development proposals for the site. Contributions will be required towards provision of a pedestrian/cycle bridge over the railway if the opportunity for this to be delivered arises.

Natural resources

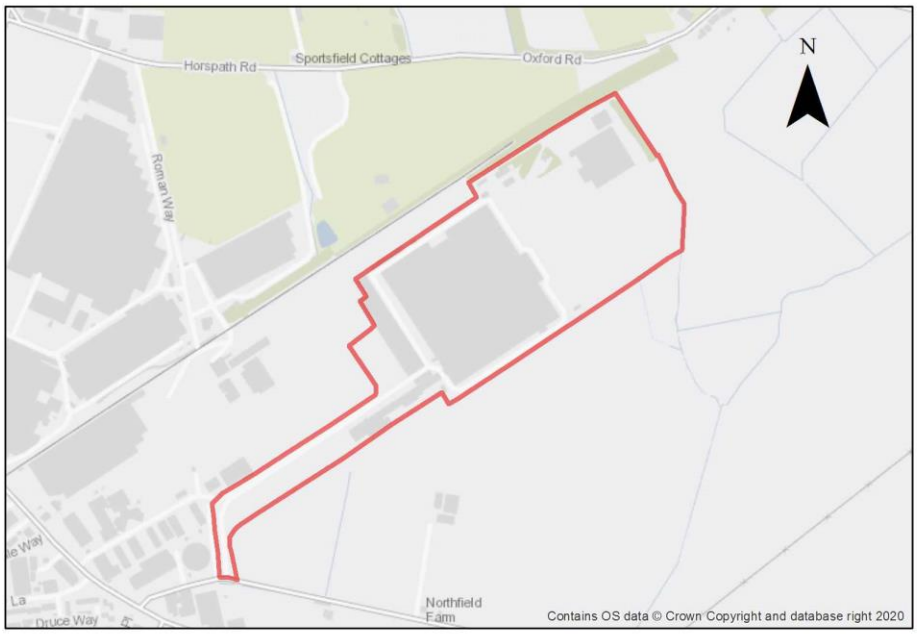
The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from the railway line and traffic on the Eastern bypass.

Unipart

Site area: 30.63 hectares
Ward: Lye Valley
Landowner: Logicor Europe
Current use: Warehousing, industrial uses, offices
Flood Zone: FZ1



This site is identified as a Category 1 employment site, occupied by a significant employer in the city and comprises a large area of industrial land which makes an important contribution to the city's employment land supply and can help to deliver the objectives of the Local Plan 2040.

The site comprises principally warehouses and industrial uses together with some office space but does not make efficient and effective use of the land. It has a principal access from Transport Way to the south-east and includes significant areas of car parking with impermeable hard surfaces, which restricts opportunities for ecology and biodiversity. There are very limited opportunities for wildlife to move across the site via wildlife corridors. The site has a low-landscape value and poor accessibility through the site for walking and cycling. Although public transport is available services are limited and the site is heavily car dominated.

The site is largely comprised of brownfield developed land, but there is a small area of grassland, scrub and woodland in the north-east of the site that is likely to be of the greatest value ecologically. Consideration should be given to whether Open Mosaic Habitat is present (a range of diverse plant communities and substrates in close proximity to one another). Hollow Brook runs along the north-eastern boundary. Potential protected species constraints are likely to include breeding birds, foraging and commuting bats, reptiles, badgers, and water vole and otters (associated with Hollow Brook). Development proposals would offer an opportunity to protect (Policy G4) and enhance any biodiversity (Policy G5) on the site and provide potential links and green corridors to the surrounding grassland areas.

The potential redevelopment of this site offers significant opportunities for modernisation and intensification, through a comprehensive master plan, that could make more efficient

and effective use of this land in a way that promotes sustainable development and introduces more opportunities for green infrastructure. Sustainable travel should be positively encouraged including public transport, walking and cycling improvements. The re-opening of the Cowley Branch Line to passenger traffic could make a significant difference to travel options to and from the site to the city centre.

The land at Northfield which lies at the southern edge of this site is a large new development site in South Oxfordshire, allocated in their Local Plan. This will significantly change the character of the area and will need to be responded to both in the design of the new development at Unipart and the links to future transport infrastructure provision.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

This site is of archaeological interest as part of the access road is on the line of the Dorchester-Alchester Roman Road and there is high potential for roadside settlement. There is also high potential for other prehistoric and Roman remains (sites are recorded to the north & south of the plot). This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

Policy SPS7: Unipart

Planning permission will be granted for new development, modernisation and intensification of office (Class E), warehousing (Class B8) and general industrial (Class B2) employment uses. New development needs to make the most efficient and effective use of the land in accordance with Policy E1 (employment sites) and in recognition of its importance as a Category 1 employment site. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits. An element of residential development within the defined threshold as specified in Policy E1 will be supported.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. The new development should provide greening opportunities to contribute to the biodiversity on this site, which will be best determined and explained with a landscaping scheme. The use of large roofscapes for solar panels or green roofs will be encouraged. Planting of native trees to screen buildings and or the use of green walls to soften the industrial activity would be supported and help to reduce the sensitivity of the site's borders.

An assessment should be undertaken of the quality and condition of existing trees and hedgerows on the site with the aim of retaining high-quality trees and medium or low-quality trees wherever feasible. Opportunities should be taken to plant new trees to contribute to public amenity, good design and to improve connectivity within the green infrastructure network.

Surveys will be required to determine any species or habitats of value around the edges of the site and within the area of scrub to the north-east in advance of any redevelopment. Opportunities for wildlife corridors along the railway line and within the site that link to open areas within the industrial area should be fully considered and provided where feasible.

There should be a reduction in hard surfacing and car parks on this site which could release land for landscaping. This provides an opportunity to implement a SuDs programme to reduce surface water run-off and improve climate resilience.

A undeveloped buffer zone of at least 10m width should be left alongside the watercourse in accordance with Policy G2.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. The site would benefit from a comprehensive masterplan to co-ordinate its development and provide a framework for the future modernisation and intensification of this site and should positively promote sustainable development. The future development of this site needs to

consider its relationship to the new major housing development at Northfield and the treatment of sensitive boundaries and take account of potential linkages with the `proposed infrastructure provision in the area.

Development must take into consideration the potential presence of prehistoric and Roman archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

This site is located within the geographical area of the Eastern Arc. This is an area where it has been identified that future travel demand will be focused. Opportunities should be taken through the development of this site to support sustainable travel by providing greater public transport links and services, including the re-opening of the Cowley Branch Line to passengers. Support should be provided for improved pedestrian and cycle links and enhancements to the existing network and better connections to both existing and planned major developments in the area.

Natural resources

Because of the existing use of the site, some areas of potential contamination are present on the site, so site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary in compliance with Policy R5.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement to be submitted in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from traffic using the surrounding roads.

South area site allocation policies outside of the Area of Focus

- Bertie Place
- Blackbird Leys Central Area
- Knights Road
- Cowley Marsh Depot
- Cowley Centre and Templars Square
- Land at Meadow Lane
- Former Iffley Mead Playing Fields
- Redbridge Paddock
- Crescent Hall
- Oxford Academy Edge of Playing Fields
- 474 Cowley Road

Bertie Place Recreation Ground

Site area: 0.67 hectares
Ward: Hinksey Park
Landowner: Oxford City Council

Current use: Recreation Ground
Flood Zone: FZ3b but FZ2 for sequential test



The site is currently a public recreation ground. It is considered suitable for residential development because there is potential for the landowner (the City Council) to replace the function of the site partially within the site and partially elsewhere in the local area.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained including the treed/ small wooded areas to the east, south and west of the site. Where green elements are proposed to be removed, sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, in order to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum. Retention of trees around the edge of the site, in addition to greater use of permeable surfaces and additional high-quality planting as part of the landscaping through the site, will help ensure the requirements are achieved.

This site is within the catchment of the Iffley Meadows SSSI, which is sensitive to changes in the flows and quality of water in the two arms of the River Thames due to being in its floodplain. As such it can be impacted by contamination through surface water runoffs.

Residential development at this site in Flood Zone 3a has been justified through the sequential test. A Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out for this site to examine part b) of the Exception Test (which relates to whether the development is safe). The Level 2 SFRA considered the proposed development was appropriate and additional mitigation and/ or analysis may be required to demonstrate compliance with the Exception

Test at the planning application stage. This is to be undertaken through a site-specific FRA supporting the planning application. The site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate how the development will be safe otherwise planning permission will not be granted.

The minimum housing number uses a density assumption of 50 dwellings per hectare, and assumes a replacement playground will be provided, potentially using part of the small area of the site within high risk flood zones. The capacity assessment also assumes existing trees along the boundary retained.

Policy SPS8: Bertie Place Recreation Ground

Planning permission will be granted for residential development. The minimum number of homes to be delivered is 30. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. The following sets out the key considerations for achieving these requirements on this site.

There must be adequate re-provision of the current recreation facilities to meet the needs of those who currently use the facilities (and the new residents). The playground should be re-provided within the site. Replacement of the Multi Use Games Area could be with an alternative type of facility or by improvements to the capacity of an existing one, provided the re-provision is in the neighbourhood and meets the recreation needs of teenagers. The nature area to the west of Wytham street provides an opportunity in close proximity to the site, if accessibility and useability of that area is enhanced.

The trees at the edges of the site should be retained as far as possible or replaced where necessary and in accordance with Policy G1. High quality planting in landscaping features and use of permeable surfaces will be important to help achieve the requirements of Policy G3. A green buffer should be retained alongside the stream to the west of the site.

Planning permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse impacts on the integrity of the Iffley Meadows SSSI. To minimise the impact upon the Iffley Meadows SSSI development proposals will be expected to incorporate SuDS and, depending on the details of the proposals, may be required to be accompanied by a groundwater study.

A site-specific FRA will be required. A sequential approach should be taken to locating development on the site, with more vulnerable uses away from the highest flood risk. A drainage strategy will be required to manage run-off and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA.

A undeveloped buffer zone of at least 10m width should be left alongside the watercourse in accordance with Policy G2.

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>
Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. The site is surrounded by low-rise residential development and a green corridor. It is a constrained site and suitable for low-rise development of a typical suburban density. The surrounding streets are terraces and semi-detached houses. The position of the site amongst these homes and next to the green corridor means that buildings should be kept relatively low, otherwise it would be difficult to avoid overshadowing, overbearing and

overlooking of neighbouring properties.

Movement and access

Vehicular access should be taken via Bertie Place, and a suitable turning head will need to be provided within the development. Pedestrian access to the site should be provided from Bertie Place, from the pathway at the northern end of the site off Wytham Street, and from the alleyway between 378 and 380 Abingdon Road. The National Cycle Network Route 5 currently passes through the site and development proposals should either provide for its retention or replacement by a suitable alternative route.

Because the vehicular access will need to be on a no-through-road that allows circulation around the site, development should line and face this this so that it works well as a street and so that gardens are back-to-back with the existing gardens that back on to the site, and continuing as far as possible the street line of Bertie Place. The playground should be sited so that it is well overlooked by the new development.

Natural resources

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from traffic using the surrounding roads.

Blackbird Leys Central Area

Site area: 6.54 hectares
Ward: Blackbird Leys
Landowner: Various including Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire Council and Oxford and Cherwell Valley College
Current use: Mixed use
Flood Zone: FZ1



Blackbird Leys District Centre is located to the south of the city in the heart of Blackbird Leys. It is well served by public transport to and from the Cowley Centre and Oxford city centre, as well as by local cycle and pedestrian routes. It is important for the Blackbird Leys community and includes facilities such as the community centre, library and leisure centre. Blackbird Leys is one of Oxford's district centres and a regeneration area, improved local facilities, shops, new housing, educational and employment opportunities are appropriate and supported in this location.

To ensure that the development makes the best use of the site, delivers the policy requirements and is well designed, it is expected that the site will be developed as part of a comprehensive regeneration plan for the area. With a number of different landowners within the site this would help delivery and ensure that piecemeal development does not prejudice the overall aim of a comprehensive regeneration of the site.

The site includes the tower block sites where there may be potential to develop residential on the land around the base of the towers.

The site includes the Grade II listed Church of the Holy Family, and consideration should be given to the impacts of development on the significance of this building. Consideration should be given to potential impacts on the Oxford Stadium Conservation Area and views out from St Mary's Tower.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

Policy SPS9: Blackbird Leys Central Area

Planning permission will be granted for a mixed-use development that includes town centre uses, start-up employment units, residential development and community and educational facilities at the Blackbird Leys Central Area site. The minimum number of homes to be delivered is 200. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Planning permission will not be granted for development that prejudices the comprehensive development of the whole site. Regard should be had for any regeneration plan for the Blackbird Leys area.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Development proposals should seek to incorporate new green features throughout the site, including establishing new green corridors through street tree planting and hedges. If existing trees are to be removed, new trees should be planted to fully mitigate the impact on tree canopy cover and to support the introduction of more of green infrastructure on this site.

There is an opportunity to incorporate a network of pocket parks and green spaces through the site as part of the open space provision. These spaces should include areas of more natural planting to support biodiversity as well as opportunities for new play facilities for younger people.

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>
Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the setting of the Oxford Stadium conservation area and the Grade II listed Church of the Holy Family, and demonstrate compliance with policy HD1 and HD2.

Opportunities should be sought to enhance the quality of open space across the site which could include public realm enhancements such as a public square, tree and landscape planting, public seating and pocket parks.

Development proposals that exceed the height that the High Buildings TAN states may have an impact on the historic core, (which from this area says skylining impacts may be possible from 15m and above) will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts can be understood and assessed as listed in Policy HD9. Development proposals will be expected to mitigate impacts to the sensitive skyline and surrounding area by avoiding built forms with excessively overbearing scale and massing, and avoiding roofscapes that are excessively uniform.

<u>Movement and access</u>
The site is well served by public transport, and this should be complemented by ensuring that improvements to pedestrian and cycling links are designed in the

development and implemented.

Natural resources
Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

Knights Road

Site area: 2.25 hectares
Ward: Northfield Brook
Landowner: Oxford City Council
Current use: Open space
Flood Zone: FZ3b but FZ1 for sequential test



This site comprises a mix of informal playing fields and scrubland with self-seeded trees and ground made up mainly from spoil from the construction of the Kassam stadium. The site lies on the southwestern edge of the Blackbird Leys estate and is adjacent to the Spindleberry Nature Park, an Oxford City Wildlife Site, which wraps around the southern/southeastern boundary of the site. The Kassam Stadium lies to the southwestern corner of the site across the Northfield Brook.

The western side of site is covered with some scrubby woodland and abuts against the boundary of Orion Academy special school. A public footpath runs north/south along the edge of this area of scrub/woodland and connects to and from the Kassam stadium.

The majority of the site is at low risk of flooding, but the site's boundary includes the Northfield Brook and small areas of Flood Zone 2 and an almost negligible area in Flood Zone 3b. Any proposal should therefore include a flood risk assessment and design the

development to avoid the areas at flood risk.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. The site is likely to be able to accommodate a considerable amount of new native tree planting to compensate for the loss of those trees removed. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum.

The site is suitable for residential use and the density assumptions for the site are based upon suburban typology of 50-60dph. New development should enhance the quality and safety of the area in that the design should relate well to the existing development along Knights Road, ensure that it does not conflict with the adjacent school uses and ensure footpaths are well lit and overlooked to provide informal surveillance. In addition, new development should provide good access opportunities to Spindleberry Park.

There is evidence of badger activaity on the site. As such any proposed development on the site will require a detailed assessment as to how badgers use the site and surrounding land, to inform a package of mitigation and compensation measures that ensures that there are no residual impacts on the protected species.

There are records of peat deposits that follow the line of the Northfield Brook, and the potential for additional unrecorded deposits in the area, which will need to be assessed and avoided.

Policy SPS10: Knights Road

Planning permission will be granted for residential-led development and public open space. The minimum number of homes to be delivered is 80. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. A biodiversity survey will be expected to assess the biodiversity value of the site and it should be demonstrated how harm will be avoided, mitigated or compensated. Any proposed development on the site will require a detailed assessment as to how badgers use the site and surrounding land, to inform a package of mitigation and compensation measures that ensures that there are no residual impacts on the protected species.

The opportunity to enhance the vegetation across the site with enhanced planting, screening and landscaping should be taken. Native hedgerows and trees could be planted to help to ensure that there is no decrease from the baseline level of the Urban Greening Factor.

A Flood Risk Assessment will be required.

Opportunities should be taken to protect and enhance the Northfield Brook and a 10 m buffer should be retained between the edge of the watercourse and the built development.

Urban Design and Heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development proposals must ensure the design enhances the area and should seek to integrate well into the existing residential area. Development should not overlook the Orion Academy and good permeability through the site should be retained to ensure pedestrians can reach the Kassam Stadium and the surrounding area.

Movement and access

Opportunities should be taken to develop and link into existing pedestrian and cycling ways to and through the development.

Natural resources

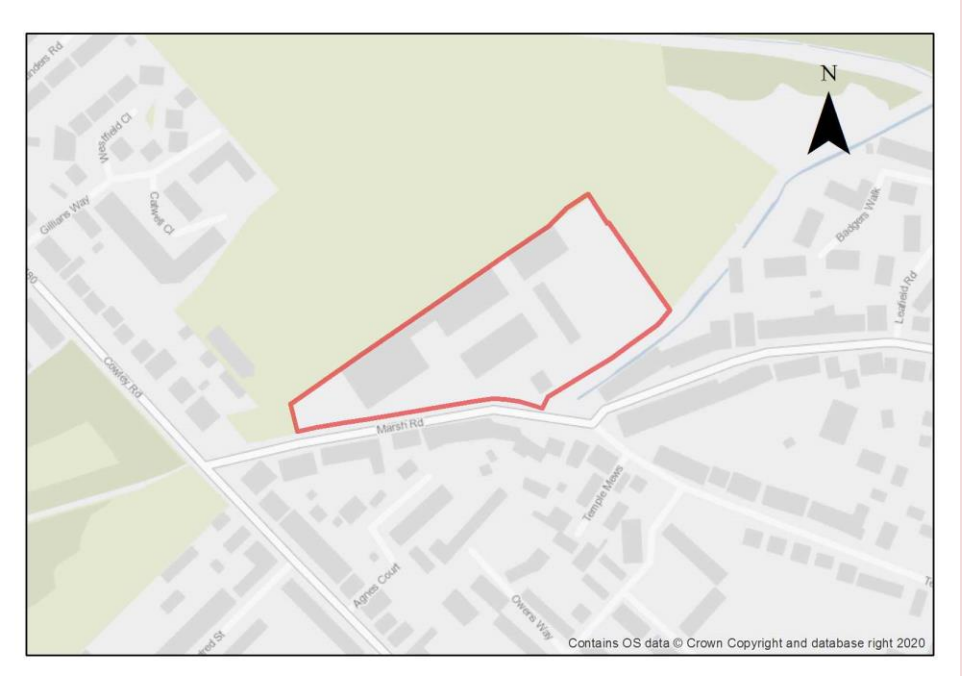
Due to the site's proximity to recorded peat reserves along Northfield Brook and the potential for further deposits in the area, any development on currently undeveloped parts of the site will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm or loss of peat deposits in accordance with the requirements of policy R6. This may mean that where there is the potential for causing removal of peat, site layout has been designed accordingly to protect and mitigate any harm to identified peat deposits onsite.

Areas of potential contamination are likely to be present on the site, so site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary in compliance with Policy R5.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to environmental noise from traffic using surrounding roads.

Cowley Marsh Depot

Site area: 1.7 hectares
Ward: Temple Cowley
Landowner: Oxford City Council
Current use: City works depot
Flood Zone: FZ2 but FZ1 for sequential test



The site is currently in use as a depot by the City Council, which is expected to relocate during the Plan period. The site is located in a residential area, adjoining the Cowley Marsh Recreation Ground green open space, with good links to transport and facilities on Cowley Road as well as the Sustrans route along Boundary Brook.

The site is suitable for residential development of similar density and form to the surrounding residential area. Redevelopment would present opportunities to improve the permeability of the site and provide biodiversity enhancements.

There are two residential properties within the site, at the corner between Marsh Road and the single track adjacent to the southern boundary, which are within the same landownership. If the landowner chooses to retain these then the design of this corner will

need a sensitive edge, or they could alternatively be redeveloped within a comprehensive scheme.

The site's boundary includes the Boundary Brook and small areas of Flood Zone 2, so any proposal should include a site Flood Risk Assessment and design the development to avoid the areas at flood risk. This should also consider the site's access from Marsh Lane, part of which lies in Flood Zone 3b. For ecology, protective and enhancement measures should be incorporated for river and wetland restoration, as well as ecological buffer zones (minimum of 10m from bank top) for the Boundary Brook.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

The site is likely to require site investigation as potentially contaminated land owing to its existing use as a council depot.

Policy SPS11: Cowley Marsh Depot

Planning permission will be granted for residential development and public open space at Cowley Marsh Depot. The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered is 80 homes. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Prior to the development of the site the City Council depot use must be relocated. The City Council also owns the two residential properties within the site, which could potentially be incorporated into a comprehensive redevelopment of the site.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. The development proposals should include opportunities to support and enhance biodiversity and connect with the adjoining playing fields and Cowley Marsh Nature Reserve/Boundary Brook/Barracks Lane. If existing trees are to be removed new trees should be planted to fully mitigate the impact on tree canopy cover and to support the introduction of more of green infrastructure on this site.

Opportunities should be taken to protect and enhance the Boundary Brook and a 10 m buffer should be retained between the edge of the watercourse and the built development.

A Flood Risk Assessment will be required and this should consider a flood warning system because the flood risk on the access road.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Heights should be compatible with surrounding residential streets and should avoid negatively impacting on the view cone. Opportunities should be taken to increase permeability of the site for residents and the access to the adjoining recreation ground and footpaths across it and the nearby sustrans route along Boundary Brook; as well as improving wildlife corridor connections for biodiversity; improving active frontage along Marsh Road; and improving permeable surfaces on the site.

Movement and access

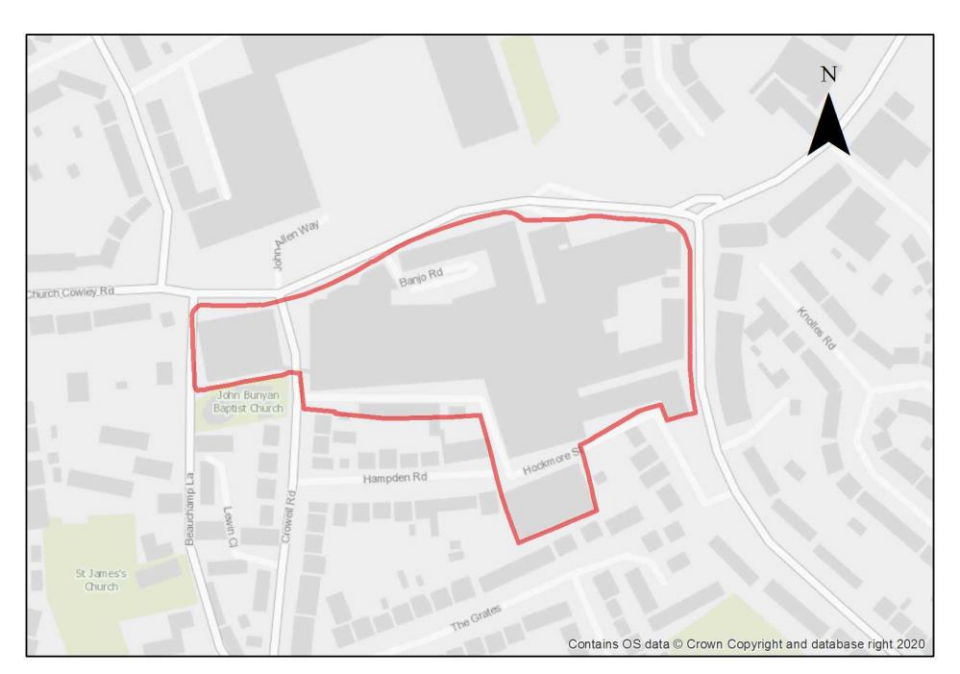
Opportunities should be taken to develop and link into existing pedestrian and cycling ways.

Natural resources

Because of the current use as a depot with a fuel station some areas of potential contamination are present on the site, so site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary in compliance with Policy R5.

Templars Square

Site area: 3.65 hectares
Ward: Cowley
Landowner: Oxford Re Value Investments Ltd.
Current use: Mixed use including retail, residential and car parks
Flood Zone: FZ1



Templars Square is within the Cowley Centre primary district centre and provides a varied retail and commercial offer which serves a local and wider catchment area. Residential apartments are also provided across the site, including at Hockmore Tower. Templars Square plays an important role in serving the local and wider community.

Across the road from Templars Square is the Templars Shopping Park. The sites are both part of the Cowley district centre but have different roles and characters: Templars Square in particular is used by local communities in the Cowley and Blackbird Leys areas especially, for day-to-day goods and services, as well as being an alternative to the City Centre, whilst the Templars Shopping Park comprising larger-scale national retailers and free car parking also attracts shoppers from a wider area. The sites are split by the busy Between Towns Road, which the District Centre extends along to the east.

Templars Square (including its three multi-storey car parks, one of which is closed) is reaching the end of its functional lifespan, does not make the most efficient use of this highly sustainable site, restricts permeability, and provides no landscaping/biodiversity. There are opportunities for pedestrian, cycle, and public realm improvements within and directly around the site.

Users of Templars Square predominantly access the site by foot, cycle, and public transport. A parking strategy should be prepared to review the approach to parking in and around the site including consolidation of the three public car parks to support sustainable

modes of transport.

In 2021 planning permission was granted for a large-scale redevelopment of part of the Templars Square site, on part of the site that fronts Between Towns Road, but not including the main enclosed shopping centre. The approved scheme provides 226 residential units, a 71-bed hotel, and 2 new commercial units, and proposes significant investment in the quality of the buildings and public realm and a strengthening of the range and quantity of facilities provided. This permission has not been implemented, however, and the site has since been sold. The new landowner is reviewing development options, including comprehensive redevelopment for a larger residential-led mixed use scheme across the whole site reflecting the site's district centre status whilst responding to changing retail patterns. The minimum housing number in the policy considers the planning permission plus the wider site so it is expected that a greater number of residential units can be delivered as part of a mixed-use scheme.

The site is on the edge of an area visible from the historic core, including from St Mary's tower, and it is on the edge of an area where tall buildings may create a skylining effect. This means that tall buildings on the site could be in the backdrop of views of the spires from the other side of the central core, which may harm appreciation of those views. As well as any obstruction of a view, which can be reduced by minimising the width of any higher buildings, higher buildings may create visual competition in the view in the foreground and in this case most likely background of views. The heritage asset that is Oxford's central core is appreciated in long-range views, and the impact on views into and across the historic core should help to inform heights for this site. In addition, the impact on views from the historic core, particularly St Mary's tower, which are part of the significance and understanding of the heritage asset of the historic core, must be considered carefully and fully explained and evidenced.

Also important in terms of design choices, including height and massing, is the adjacent Beauchamp Conservation Area, which includes the Grade II* listed 12th Century Church of St. James and Grade II listed cottage at 1 Beauchamp Lane. The significance of this heritage asset needs to be fully considered and taller buildings on the site should preserve or enhance the architectural interest of the asset and enable the conservation area to be appreciated; matters of visual competition and incongruous design should be avoided. However, there is also potential for enhancement of the appreciation of the asset, because current buildings detract from it.

Though the area is built up, the site is of potential archaeological interest being located in the historic core of Church Cowley and at the western end of a Roman pottery manufacturing compound. This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

Contamination risks are potentially present. Site investigations and remedial works are likely to be necessary.



Policy SPS12: Templars Square

Planning permission will be granted for a mixed-use development at Templars Square that supports its ongoing role as a key part of the district centre.

Development should include residential and retail development, and could also include a range of town centre uses, including the following:

- **commercial leisure;**
- **financial and professional services;**
- **learning and educational uses (e.g. Use Class F.1);**
- **evening economy uses such as cafes, restaurants and pubs;**
- **community facilities (e.g. Use Class D.1, Use Class F.2);**
- **Other employment such as offices and small workshops**

The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered is 350 (net gain).

In any development, the active frontages at ground floor level in Use Class E should be re-provided along the identified principal route/s. The routes are to be situated to draw people into and through the shopping centre from the surrounding areas.

A mix of town centre and community uses are encouraged on this site to retain a vibrant town centre with a mix of uses for local communities, especially those in the east of the city. The City Council will encourage schemes which make more efficient use of the site and strengthen and diversify the range of services and facilities on offer to the local community and its wider catchment area, alongside the provision of new homes.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Greening features will be necessary to achieve the required urban greening factor score. Most appropriate to the urban context of this site will be high-quality planting and landscaping along any public realm and integrating green features into the built form.

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. A masterplan should be in place to help guide development, which would help to organise services, access, movement routes, landscape, public realm, and acceptable heights through the site, and to ensure that piecemeal development does not prejudice the overall aim of a comprehensive regeneration of the area.

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the setting of the adjoining Beauchamp Conservation Area and the setting of the Grade II* listed Church of St James and Grade II listed cottage at 1 Beauchamp Lane.

Proposals must demonstrate compliance with policies HD1 and HD2.

Because of the elevated position of this site relative to the city core, there is potential for development on the site to alter views from and to the historic core (both in the foreground and background of views). Therefore, the townscape and visual impact of any development on views to and across the historic core area, as well as from the historic core area's key spires and tower, must be thoroughly explained and the impacts evidenced with thorough townscape/landscape VIAs, in compliance with Policy HD9, in particular from St Mary's Tower, but also from more than one point in the historic core to give different viewing angles.

Development proposals must also take into consideration the potential presence of archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

Development should seek to significantly improve the public realm to accommodate improved pedestrian connectivity across Between Towns Road and an improved pedestrian and cycle experience, whilst supporting the important public interchange hub located at Between Towns Road. Development should take opportunities to consolidate public car parking, improve bus stopping areas, signage and facilities, and the taxi ranks.

Natural Resources

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how any contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to environmental noise from surrounding roads

Land at Meadow Lane

Site area: 0.99 hectares
Ward: Iffley Fields
Landowner: Oxford City Council
Current use: Grassland/pony paddock
Flood Zone: FZ3b but FZ1 for sequential test



The site comprises land used for horse grazing, with some trees and shrubs. The site sits within the Iffley village envelope and has potential for some sensitive housing infill. Any development proposals would be expected to conserve and enhance the unique characteristics of the Iffley Conservation Area. The site is also partly within a view cone.

The site is of archaeological interest as it is located within the historic core of a medieval village and there is potential for Iron Age and Roman remains. This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

The building line should be followed on the frontage of Meadow Lane and the semi-rural frontage on Church Way should be retained, as well as the stone wall boundary and trees, particularly at Church Way. Development should be relatively low- density and two-storey with front and rear gardens and stone-walled boundaries. The impact of development on views through the riverside edge landscape of the Cherwell meadows to the west, and views back to Iffley from the west should be considered.

Access to the site can be achieved from Church Way or Meadow Lane. There is an existing field gate access to the site from Church Way.

Ecological assessments undertaken in 2023 have found the site to be of County value for invertebrates. There is also evidence of badger activity. Development on the site will require a detailed assessment as to how invertebrates and badgers use the site and surrounding land, to inform a package of mitigation and compensation measures that

ensures that there are no residual impacts on either interest.

The majority of the site is at low risk of flooding, but a small part of the site is in Flood Zone 2, and a very small part in Flood Zone 3b. Residential development at this site in Flood Zone 3a has been justified through the sequential test. A Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out for this site to examine part b) of the Exception Test (which relates to whether the development is safe). The Level 2 SFRA considered the proposed development was appropriate and additional mitigation and/ or analysis may be required to demonstrate compliance with the Exception Test at the planning application stage. This is to be undertaken through a site-specific FRA supporting the planning application. The site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate how the development will be safe otherwise planning permission will not be granted.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained including the retention of mature trees and hedgerows on the site. Where green elements are proposed to be removed, sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum. The site is likely to be able to accommodate the lines of trees and the hedgerows around the boundary of the site.

This site is within the catchment of the Iffley Meadows SSSI, which is sensitive to changes in the flows and quality of water in the two arms of the River Thames due to being in its floodplain. As such it can be impacted by contamination through surface water runoffs.

Policy SPS13: Land at Meadow Lane

Planning permission will be granted for residential development at Land at Meadow Lane with the minimum number of dwellings to be delivered is 29 units. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Planning permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse impacts on the integrity of the Iffley Meadows SSSI. To minimise the impact upon the Iffley Meadows SSSI development proposals will be expected to incorporate SuDS and, depending on the details of the proposals, may be required to be accompanied by a groundwater study.

A detailed assessment of the site's value for invertebrates and the impacts of the proposed development will be required, with mitigation and compensation measures delivered that fully offset these impacts and functionally support notable species and the assemblage as a whole.

Any proposed development on the site will require a detailed assessment as to how badgers use the site and surrounding land, to inform a package of mitigation and compensation measures that ensures that there are no residual impacts on the protected species.

The existing vegetation on the site should be retained where possible including the strong belt of vegetation on the southern boundary of the site.

A site-specific FRA will be required. A sequential approach should be taken to locating development on the site, with more vulnerable uses away from the highest flood risk. A drainage strategy will be required to manage run-off and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA.

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>
Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the setting of the Iffley Conservation Area and demonstrate compliance with policy HD1. The building line should be followed on the frontage and the semi-rural frontage on Church Way should be retained as well as the stone wall boundary and trees. Heights should be compatible with surrounding residential streets and should avoid negatively impacting on the view cone in accordance with policy HD9.

Development must take into consideration the potential presence of Iron Age and Roman archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

Opportunities to improve walking and cycling links should be taken to link into existing networks.

Natural Resources

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how any contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

Former Iffley Mead Playing Field

Site area: 2.04 hectares
Ward: Rose Hill and Iffley
Landowner: Oxfordshire County Council
Current use: Fenced off grassed areas with scrub (no permitted right of access)
Flood Zone: FZ1



The Former Iffley Mead Playing Field was once part of the St Augustine School which closed in 2003. Most of the St Augustine School site was redeveloped for housing, but the playing field was retained for use by the adjacent Iffley Mead School. Iffley Mead School is now the Iffley Academy and uses their adjacent playing field not the former playing field which has been fenced off and is increasingly covered in scrub and brambles. The site is bounded to the north by the Donnington recreation ground, to the east and west by residential areas and to the south by The Iffley Academy. The site is adjacent to the Iffley Village Conservation Area and is close to the Rose Hill view cone. The site should be designed in such a way as to capture the village character of the conservation area, including small scale development plots, irregular building lines and the use of brick

and stone materials, especially for the edges of the development. The design of the development should take opportunities to look out on the views over the recreation ground to the north of the site.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor (UGF) assessment. The site should also be assessed to determine its value to invertebrates. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features such as mature trees, hedgerows and grassland can be retained. Depending on the existing distinctiveness and condition of the existing grassland, there may be opportunities to enhance this. Where green elements are proposed to be removed, sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum. The site is likely to be able to accommodate areas of public open space including space for children's play.

This site is within the catchment of the Iffley Meadows SSSI, which is sensitive to changes in the flows and quality of water in the two arms of the River Thames due to being in its floodplain. As such it can be impacted by contamination through surface water runoffs.

This site is of archaeological interest as it is located 70 metres from a Neolithic pit circle and there is potential for further remains. This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

The site is well located to nearby bus stops on Iffley Road and Henley Avenue providing access to both the city centre and Rose Hill. Meadow Lane connects to Donnington Bridge Road, which also has bus stops providing access to the city centre and cycle infrastructure.

Policy SPS14: Former Iffley Mead Playing Field

Planning permission will be granted for residential development and public open space at the Former Iffley Mead Playing Field site. The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered is 84. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

<u>Open Space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Planning permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse impacts on the integrity of the Iffley Meadows SSSI. To minimise the impact upon the Iffley Meadows SSSI development proposals will be expected to incorporate SuDS and, depending on the details of the proposals, may be required to be accompanied by a groundwater study.

The site would be expected to provide for 10% new public open space which could incorporate a well-designed secure children's play area alongside some Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS).

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>
Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. The design should consider active frontages and how to optimise links to new and existing public open space. Existing trees and hedgerows within and surrounding the site should be retained to give privacy within the site and for neighbouring properties in addition to retaining habitats/ wildlife corridors within and across the site. The site needs to give careful attention to the relationship with the adjacent school to ensure visual impacts on both developments can be mitigated.

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the setting of the Iffley Village Conservation Area and on views, particularly from the Rose Hill view cone, and demonstrate compliance with policies HD1 and HD9.

Development must take into consideration the potential presence of Neolithic archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

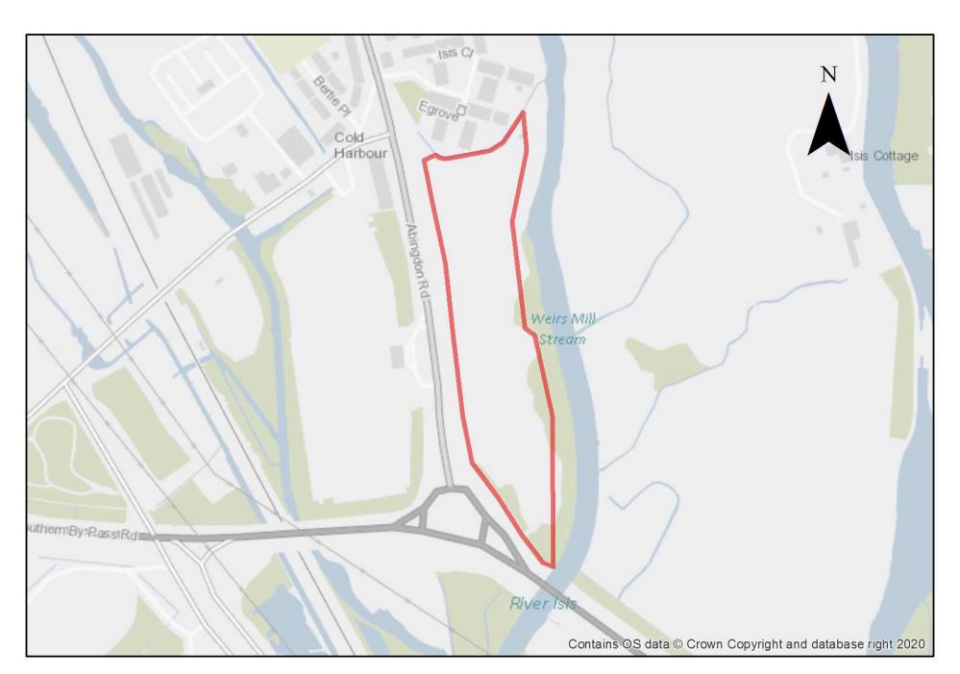
<u>Movement and access</u>
Vehicular access to the site can be achieved via Augustine Way, which connects into Iffley Turn. As this access is the primary route to the adjacent Iffley Academy school, vehicular access to the site should be minimised to not be detrimental to the school site. A low car development would be supported, ensuring parking provision is made available for blue badge holders and servicing and delivery vehicles. Ensuring access links through to local bus stops must be sought as part

of the development

Opportunities to access the site for pedestrians and cyclists from Cavill Road and through the adjacent recreation ground to the north should be explored. This would improve permeability within the site and provide a connection with existing pedestrian and cycle infrastructure across the recreation ground between Cavill Road and Meadow Lane.

Redbridge Paddock

Site area: 3.64 hectares
Ward: Hinksey Park
Landowner: Oxford City Council
Current use: Agricultural land
Flood zone: FZ3b but FZ1 for sequential test



Redbridge Paddock is a former landfill site that is currently used for rough grazing. Weirs Mill Stream forms the eastern boundary beyond which lies the Iffley Meadows SSSI. A cycle track and footpath form the western boundary alongside Abingdon Road with Redbridge Park and Ride beyond. The site was formerly Green Belt land but was removed from the Green Belt in the Oxford Local Plan 2036. Green Belt land lies along eastern edges of the site. The busy Eastern Bypass Road forms the southern boundary of the site which has noise and air pollution implications for the site.

There are views into and out of the site from the Iffley Village Conservation Area which need to be properly considered and assessed in any design proposals for the site. The site is also of archaeological interest for potential remains of a historic routeway

(potentially Norman/medieval) and related fording points but has been subject to landfill so archaeological implications would be subject to the scale and character of development/remediation.

The site has good access to the city onto the Abingdon Road and benefits from good sustainable transport links in terms of segregated pedestrian and cycle routes and is on an important bus route with regular buses serving the Park and Ride travelling into and out of the city centre.

The majority of the site is at low risk of flooding, but there is an almost negligible area in Flood Zone 3b. Any proposal should therefore include a flood risk assessment and design the development to avoid the area at flood risk.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained, which could include maintaining the vegetation and trees along the river edge and introducing screen planting around the site to act as a buffer from the roads around the site.

Weirs Mill Stream is one of the few locations in the city with potential for new residential moorings. These should be provided as part of the development with access through the site to the bankside and necessary servicing provided.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Policy SPS15: Redbridge Paddock

Planning permission will be granted for residential development and public open space at Redbridge Paddock. Proposals should include residential moorings and associated servicing facilities. The design of the proposals should include a minimum of 200 dwellings.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Planning permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse impacts on the integrity of the Iffley Meadows SSSI. To minimise the impact upon the Iffley Meadows SSSI development proposals will be expected to incorporate SuDS and, depending on the details of the proposals, may be required to be accompanied by a groundwater study.

The design for the proposals should consider and respond to the natural setting of the site with the river and pastoral floodplain landscape character and the sensitive SSSI adjacent. A 10m buffer measured from the edge of the riverbank, must be retained between the river and the built development to protect and enhance the watercourse.

There are opportunities to create attractive riverside open spaces and the mature trees along the banks should be retained where they enhance the design of the proposal. A biodiversity survey will be required to assess the biodiversity value of the site. The survey must set out how any harm to biodiversity on the site will be avoided, mitigated or compensated.

A lighting strategy should be submitted in support of any planning application setting out the internal and external lighting associated with the proposed development. This is because the River Thames is likely to be an important foraging and commuting resource for bats and should not be subject to any artificial illumination as a result of the proposed development.

A flood risk assessment will be required as a very small part of the site is in Flood Zone 3b.

Compensatory improvements should be made to the surrounding areas of remaining Green Belt in accordance with the identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of Green Belt Land Report (LUC 2018).

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. It is important that this "gateway site" into the city is given a clear identity/sense of place, in terms of its design and

layout. It must be well designed to enhance the area currently dominated by the Redbridge Park and Ride and Travelodge hotel.

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impacts on the broader landscape setting and the views from and into the Iffley Village Conservation Area and must demonstrate compliance with policy HD1.

Development must also take into consideration the potential presence of Norman/ medieval archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

The site is well located to existing pedestrian and cycle links as well as good public transport service into the city centre and to locations outside of the city. Development proposals should seek to enhance these links.

Vehicular access to the site would be from Abingdon Road and must be delivered to the satisfaction of the transport authority.

Natural resources

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with Policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from traffic on the surrounding roads.

Crescent Hall

Site area: 0.96 hectares
Ward: Temple Cowley
Landowner: Oxford Brookes University and Oxford City Council (the MUGA)
Current use: Student accommodation
Flood zone: FZ1



The site is fully built out and is currently in use as student accommodation, with the capacity of about 300 bedspaces. The development is made up of two separate blocks that largely follow the perimeter of the site, with openings to allow access.

The surrounding context is predominantly residential and is in proximity to the Cowley district centre with good access to transport options, including bus routes and dedicated cycle paths along Hollow Way and Garsington Road. As the site also lies within a CPZ, the site will be appropriate for car free or low car development.

The site is directly adjacent to the Temple Cowley conservation area with the shared boundary along the Hollow Way. Most of the buildings are at a height of 3 stories and hipped roofs in varying configurations, which is generally in keeping with the surrounding context. There is also a characterful low limestone wall along the perimeter of the site, which mirrors a similar wall along the frontage on the opposite of Junction Road. There is a council owned MUGA within the site boundary and it is expected that this would be retained or integrated within any development schemes unless it is deemed surplus to requirements.

The site contains significant existing trees and other forms of planting along the Crescent Road, Junction Road and Hollow Way frontages, which provide visual interest in the street scene. However, within the site curtilage there is no other landscaping of note other than some amenity grass within the enclosures formed by the blocks.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development

to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

Policy SPS16: Crescent Hall

Planning permission will be granted for residential development and/or student accommodation on the site. The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered on the site is 29 (or, if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied).

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. The following is expected to help meet these requirements. There are opportunities to incorporate high-quality green infrastructure on the site. Existing mature trees should be retained as far as possible, especially those on the edge of the site and those that screen the site from the adjoining conservation area. Replacement and additional planting of trees and other mixed high-quality planting will be required. There should be permeable surfacing across the site and more natural landscaping. Development schemes will be expected to retain and integrate the existing MUGA, unless the loss of the sports provision can be otherwise compensated for in accordance with the requirements of Policy G5. If an alternative site is found, the City Council must be satisfied that it will be delivered.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. There is scope for intensification on the site, including additional height; however development proposals are expected to have regard for the character of the adjoining conservation area (in accordance with policy HD1), particularly in terms of heights, massing, roofscape and impacts on street scene and local character.

Movement and access

The scheme should seek to prioritise walking and cycling owing to its proximity to the district centre and location within a CPZ. The most suitable access to the site is likely to be from Crescent Road, as the existing access is. Designing and locating circulation areas and servicing areas so that vehicle circulation around the site is minimised will be important due to the limited access opportunities for this relatively large site.

Edge of Playing Fields, Oxford Academy

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Site area: 0.58 hectares
Ward: Littlemore
Landowner: Oxfordshire County Council (Freehold Owner), River Learning Trust (leaseholder)
Current use: School playing field
Flood zone: FZ1



This site comprises spare land at the edge of the playing fields at the Oxford Academy School. It is at a lower level than the rest of the playing fields, and not an intrinsic or well-used part of the outdoor sport offer. The site is adjacent to Denny Gardens and there is potential to access the site through Denny Gardens. The site is suitable for residential development, which is employer-linked housing provided for employees of the academy trust.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained. The site is likely to be able to accommodate more planting along the boundaries of the site to provide both screening for the development and enhanced quality of vegetation surrounding the site.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes

Policy SPS17: Edge of Playing Fields, Oxford Academy

Planning permission will be granted for employer linked housing in accordance with Policy H5. The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered is 20. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

The site to be developed is the playing field only and must not encroach upon the other playing pitches on the school site. The loss of part of the playing field will require qualitative improvements to be undertaken to the City Council's satisfaction to the remaining playing field.

Open space, nature and flood risk
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. The planting on the southern edge of the site should be encouraged and reinforced to provide both screening to the neighbouring properties and to enhance the biodiversity value of the hedgerow. Planting should be introduced on the northeastern boundary of the site to screen the sports pitch from the proposal.

Urban design and heritage
Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. The residential development must be designed to ensure sufficient space for a turning head to allow waste services, emergency vehicles access and egress of the site. The site would be better suited to a flatted scheme to optimise the use of amenity space and create attractive public realm. Careful consideration must be given to the positioning of windows and lighting in this development to ensure there is good surveillance of the public realm.

Movement and access
Opportunities should be taken to connect the development proposal into the existing pedestrian and cycling network and to improve it where opportunities arise. Access could be taken from Denny Gardens.

Natural resources
The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with Policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

474 Cowley Road (Former Powells' Timber Yard)

Site area: 0.34 hectares
Ward: Donnington

Landowner: The Orders of St John Care Trust
Current use: Former timber yard, currently not in use
Flood Zone: FZ2



This site was previously in employment use, today all buildings have been demolished and the site cleared. It is tightly bounded by two-storey terraced residential uses on two sides, allotments and a car repair business. The design and layout of development will therefore need to be sensitive to these neighbouring uses.

The site has previously benefitted from planning permission for a care home and although the former industrial buildings on the site were demolished, the permission was not fully implemented and has expired. A care home or residential C3 would be suitable for this site.

Access to the site is via a single-width passage between two residential properties onto Cowley Road. The site has good access to public transport and to cycle and pedestrian infrastructure along Cowley Road. The site is situated within the Cowley Marsh Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) and would be appropriate for car free or a low car development.

As a former timber yard, the site has potential contamination risks. Site investigations and risk assessment works are required to be undertaken and necessary remediation works carried out.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

Policy SPS18: 474 Cowley Road (Former Powells Timber Yard)

Planning permission will be granted for residential development, which could be in the form of care home. The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered is 20.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. There are opportunities to incorporate high-quality green infrastructure on the site, to enhance the existing green infrastructure in the neighbouring allotments creating an opportunity for wildlife corridors to extend within the site. Existing trees and hedgerows on the site boundary should be retained and new planting introduced where necessary to provide screening both within the site and to the neighbouring properties and adjacent employment site. Equally, applicants are encouraged to deliver improvements to permeable surfacing across the site which would establish opportunities for more natural landscaping and SuDS features.

A site-specific flood risk assessment should also be submitted as part of any planning application (Policy G7). This should set out any mitigation measures.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. The built form should be sympathetic to the surrounding area and careful attention should be given to the relationship with the neighbouring employment use. The site should be designed to give privacy within the site and for neighbouring properties.

Movement and access

Opportunities to improve access to the site for pedestrians and cyclists should be explored to provide a connection with existing pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along Cowley Road.

Natural resources

Because of the current use some areas of potential contamination are present on the site, so site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary (Policy R5).

East Infrastructure Area (including Marston and Old Road Area of Focus) and Site Allocation Policies

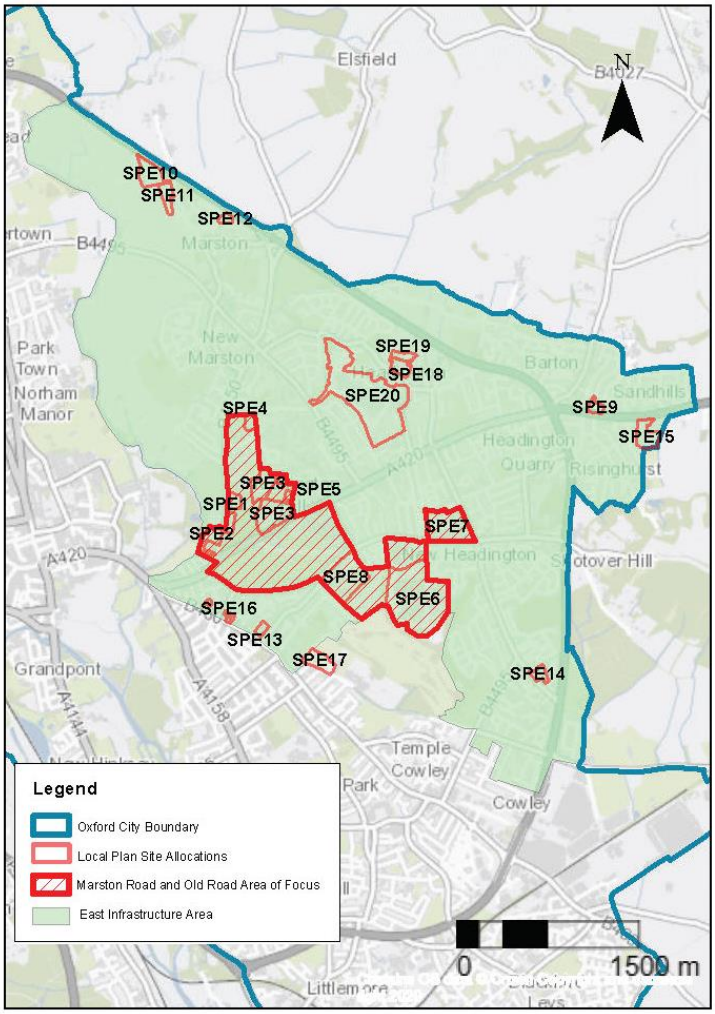


Figure 8.8 East Infrastructure Area, Marston and Old Road Area of Focus and site allocation policies

This area includes a number of sites with a range of uses including education, residential, research and the medical hospitals. As a result of people needing to get to the sites, particularly the hospitals, there is significant traffic congestion in the area. Improving accessibility, especially to the hospitals, by means other than the car is a key aim for this area.

The area includes many significant green spaces, including the Lye Valley SSSI, South Park and Bury Knowle Park.

Key considerations for infrastructure and design across the area are:

- Ensure good connectivity by foot and cycle and public transport across the area, e.g., with safe, attractive routes
- Seek to manage/reduce the levels of car parking on the hospital sites.

- Ensure protection of New Marston SSSI and Lye Valley SSSI
- Seek opportunities to increase active frontages along the southern end of the Marston Road
- Maintain the rural character of Cuckoo Lane whilst taking opportunities to enhance its function as a walking and cycling route

Marston and Old Road Area of Focus

This Area of Focus extends from the southwest part of Marston Road, incorporating Oxford Brookes and Old Road Campus and the hospital sites. The area around this part of the Marston Road includes some underutilised sites with development potential. It is also a sensitive area because of proximity to important parks Headington Hill and South Park, to the River Cherwell and several listed buildings. The area has an attractive and important natural setting and there are important views both into and out of the historic core of Oxford that must be protected. There are also some significant archaeological sites within this area including Civil War defences and the Fairfax siege line.

A design workshop was held in March 2023 with the aim of gathering knowledge, experience and aspirations from residents of the Marston area to support the drafting of development policies for three sites located on Marston Road. These sites are Government Buildings and Harcourt House, Land Surrounding St Clement's Church, and Oxford Brookes University Marston Road Campus. Design principles developed during the workshop have informed the design considerations contained within the policy for this Area of Focus, along with the specific policies for these sites.

Policy MRORAOF: Marston Road and Old Road Area of Focus

Planning permission will be granted for new development within this Area of Focus where it would ensure that opportunities are taken to deliver the following (where applicable):

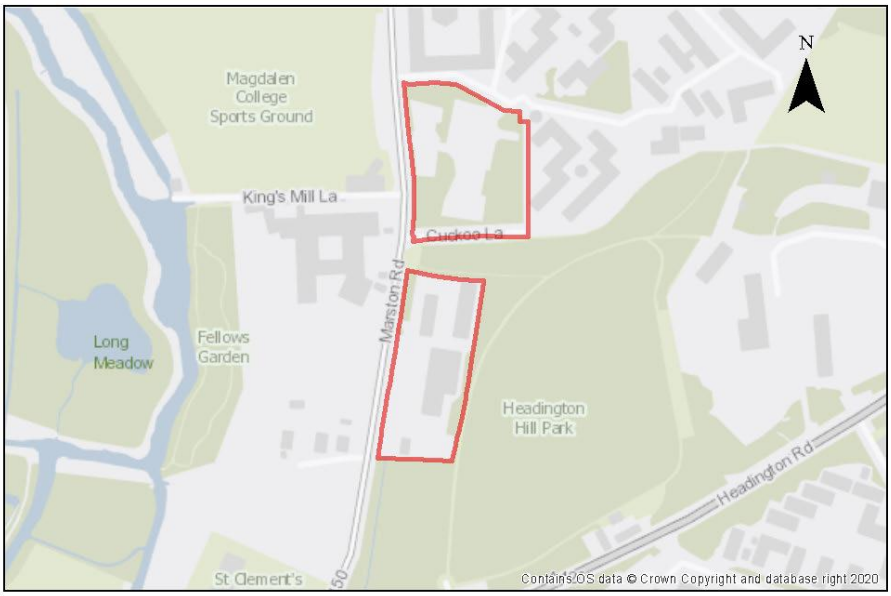
a) Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure improvements must be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the Oxfordshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. All opportunities to optimise connectivity and permeability for people wishing to walk or cycle in the area to other parts of the city and/or to destinations in South Oxfordshire;
b) Positive contributions and enhancements to the character and setting of conservation areas and other heritage assets;
c) Making the best use of good urban design and place making opportunities with the redevelopment of Clive Booth Hall and Headington Hill Hall;
d) Building heights that are appropriate for their setting and that do not negatively impact on key views or historic skylines;
e) The consolidation and reduction of excess car parking across the hospital sites;
f) Increased active frontages and natural surveillance along the southern end of Marston Road;
g) Maintaining the frontage of St Clement's Church, and ensuring that the setting is not compromised;
h) Maintaining the verdant and rural character of the areas around Cuckoo Lane;
i) Ensuring the protection of New Marston SSSI and Lye Valley SSSI, and other sites of ecological and biodiversity importance; and
j) Mitigation of potential negative air quality impacts that arise during the construction and operational phases.

East Area site allocation policies within the Area of Focus

- Government Buildings and Harcourt House
- Land Surrounding St Clement's Church
- Headington Hill Hall and Clive Booth Student Village
- Oxford Brookes University Marston Road Campus
- 1 Pullens Lane
- Churchill Hospital
- Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC)
- Warneford Hospital

Government Buildings and Harcourt House

Site area: 2.37 hectares
Ward: Headington Hill and Northway
Landowner: Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies
Current use: Car park, offices and cadet accommodation
Flood Zone: FZ1



This site is on the Marston Road with good public transport links to the city centre and hospitals. The site is divided into two distinct parcels, the northern parcel is a car park surrounded by Clive Booth Student Village on two sides, Marston Road and Headington Hill Park. The southern parcel is separated from the northern parcel by Headington Hill Park and the historic Cuckoo Lane (with access to the park), is a small business estate and cadet accommodation consisting of 1-3 storey buildings.

The site context needs to consider heritage and natural environment sensitivities, which will need to be responded to through careful design, as set out in the policy. The northern parcel is adjacent to the Headington Hill Conservation Area and southern parcel is within it. There are no listed buildings on the sites but the Grade II* Headington Hall sits within the park and St. Clements Church is nearby. The Headington Hill view cone passes through the northern parcel and South Park view cone passes to the south of the southern parcel. Significant view lines are indicated in the conservation area documents from Headington Hill Hall towards the site and along the paths at the back of the southern parcel. As such buildings should generally be higher facing the road and lower adjacent to the park as site topography slopes up where particular care should be given to view sensitivity from the park. Roofscape should be varied in terms of height and arrangement to add visual interest. Combining different typologies would help give variation to the blocks and give opportunity to incorporate active frontages into the design**.**

Building material selection that features a palette of robust materials like high quality brick or stone would sit comfortably with the park setting and the institutional buildings nearby, at the Oxford Centre for Islamic studies. Maintaining rural character boundaries would reinforce the rural character of the area. Opportunities should be sought to reflect local vernacular features in boundary areas like stone walls – many from stone quarried locally – as well as making use of hedges and trees to give character to proposals.

There is the potential for archaeological remains on the site, with the Civil War Parliamentarian siege line having been identified in Headington Hill Park, suggesting that

it runs through the northern part of the two plots. This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

The site is a short distance away from the Long Meadow, a designated Local Wildlife Site, and the New Marston Meadows SSSI. Parts of the site include priority habitat in the form of open mosaic habitat (on the northern parcel) and woodland (on the southern parcel) and there is potential of the presence of various protected species including foraging and commuting bats, roosting bats (trees and buildings), badgers, and nesting birds. A high hedge separates the northern parcel from the Marston Road and low trees and shrub define back edge; large mature trees define the north and south edges of the parcel including a number of TPOs which are also within the site. Equally, mature trees define the boundaries of the southern parcel which are protected as part of the conservation area, with additional high hedging separating it from Headington Hill Park and a low stone wall facing the road.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; and as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss),demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements such as the mature trees (including those protected by TPOs) and established boundary features like hedges, can be retained. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum. The park setting, and existing green features gives ample opportunity to blend new development into the verdant surroundings with rich planting characteristic of the Headington Hill Conservation Area.

Policy SPE1: Government Buildings and Harcourt House

Planning permission will be granted for residential development and public open space including student accommodation, as well as other academic institutional uses (subject to Policy H10). The minimum of dwellings to be delivered is 70 (or, if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied). Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. There are a number of high-quality green features on the site, including mature trees, trees protected by TPOs, and hedges which should be retained wherever possible in order to help define a natural setting for proposals in line with the landscape and townscape character of the area, and help ensure no decrease in the Urban Greening Factor baseline score. External areas should work with existing green infrastructure such as the existing trees on the site and establish green linkages through the site, incorporating existing features as well as new planting and small green spaces. In particular, the existing green infrastructure and proximity of the site to Headington Hill Park creates an opportunity for wildlife corridors around the edge of, and through the site, which should be enhanced through the site as part of the green infrastructure provision.

A biodiversity survey may be required to assess the biodiversity value of the site and where appropriate it should be demonstrated how harm will be avoided, mitigated or compensated.

Opportunities to incorporate green features in the design of any new buildings should be maximised, such as green roofs, which are a feature of neighbouring buildings in Clive Booth Student Village. Development proposals should seek to reduce the impermeable surfaces across the site and introduce more natural landscaping and SuDS features.

Planning permission will only be granted if it can be proven that there would be no adverse impact on the New Marston Meadows SSSI. Development proposals should reduce surface water runoff in the area and should be accompanied by an assessment of groundwater and surface water flows. Development proposals must incorporate sustainable drainage with an acceptable management plan.

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>
Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. The most efficient arrangement for the site is likely to be blocks parallel to the road to create a consistent building line within the setting of the trees. Building heights should be designed in a way that avoids interrupting or disrupting existing views across the site, particularly where their location is sited within the protected view cones.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Secure by Design Principles should be incorporated into design of external areas including clear, well-lit pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access from the Marston Road, well surveyed from the proposed buildings and sensitive to the Headington Hill and St Clements Conservation Areas.

Development proposals must have consideration of their impacts on the setting of the Headington Hill Conservation Area, particularly for development of the southern parcel; as well as the setting of the nearby listed buildings Headington Hall and St. Clement's Church. Proposals must demonstrate compliance with policies HD1 and HD2. Design of development blocks and choice of materials should be sensitive to the special historic qualities and character of the area and ideally seek to enhance this.

Development proposals must take into consideration the potential presence of archaeological remains related to the Civil War Parliamentarian Siege line. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

<u>Movement and access</u>
Proposals should seek to improve upon accessibility to the site for pedestrians and cyclists. The southern parcel requires either a new pedestrian access behind the tree line or new crossings to be accessible from Marston Road. There is the potential for pedestrian linkage between the sites, where Cuckoo Lane and the park meet the road. Linkages with the adjacent park should be explored to open access for occupants to this green space, however, care should be taken in how entrances are placed to reduce impacts on the green character of the eastern boundary or the setting of the park.

<u>Natural resources</u>
The green boundaries to the west of the site should be retained and enhanced to mitigate impacts from air pollution and general traffic impacts from Marston Road.

The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with Policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how any contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement to be submitted in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from the traffic on the surrounding roads.

Land surrounding St Clement's Church

Site area: 2.31 hectares
Ward: St Clement's
Landowner: Magdalen College
Current use: Greenfield, green open space, two bungalows, plant nursery
Flood Zone: FZ3b but FZ1 for sequential test



The site surrounds the Grade II* listed St. Clement's Church and its cemetery, the St Clement's and Iffley Road Conservation Area, and the setting of the Headington Hill Conservation Area. Careful design will be required to accommodate development whilst conserving and enhancing the conservation area and the setting of the Church. The conservation area appraisal identifies the open character of this part of Marston Road and the way in which St Clement's church is set within a green enclave as key features. To conserve this character, development should be set back from Marston Road, and protection of key green infrastructure and maintenance of a green feel will be important. There is a still a clear visual relationship between the river and its meadows, the church and the green slope of Headington Hill, with views from the church across the Cherwell and towards Magdalen College, which should be referenced in new development. The southern part of the site lies within the South Park view cone and the impact of development on views of the historic core should be carefully considered.

The site also contains Air Training Corps huts on the southern side. The ATC huts are a

public amenity. With careful design, scope exists for residential development that improves access, permeability, and experience of the site. A small area of the western part of the site lies in flood zone 3b and 2. The New Marston Meadows SSSI is a short distance away from the site and is sensitive to changes in the flows and quality of water in the river Cherwell due to being in its floodplain.

There have been issues previously with sewage leakages, therefore the network capacity needs to be considered.

The site is suitable for residential development and complementary uses, with some potential to help meet some of the needs of the college within this, in particular with a nursery and potential small-scale sports pavilion. The pavilion could be suitable on a part of the site that is more challenging for residential development and its associated servicing needs. The minimum housing number given assumes minimum appropriate suburban densities of around 30 dwellings per hectare, with allowances for buffers and no assumption built in for the western and southern part of the site because the suitability of these for residential development has not been tested through a detailed design processes and they are highly sensitive. The assumption is also made that 10% of the site will need to be delivered as public open space, according to Policy G2. The public open space could be distributed across the site, with green links and pocket parks, and planting and types of space that appeal to a range of senses, a range of ages, including children and provide corridors for wildlife that link existing features should all be aims of the public open space.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained including the hedgerows and trees on the site's boundaries and around the church. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, in order to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum. A very small part of the site, near to the river, is in Flood Zone 3b, and this should be kept free of development and include biodiversity enhancements.

Policy SPE2: Land Surrounding St Clement's Church

Planning permission will be granted for residential development and/ or student accommodation at the Land surrounding St Clement's Church site. The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered is 40 (or, if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied).
Planning permission will also be granted for a children's nursery and a pavilion as complementary uses, and other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Habitats should be preserved and enhanced, retaining existing hedgerows and mature trees where possible. Mature trees to the west and north of the church and the natural vegetation along the river should be maintained. At least a 10 metre buffer should be left between built development and the river Cherwell that adjoins the site. The tree and hedge-lines along the Marston Road and to the south of the church are important to the character of the area and to screen the site and the church. The green, treed character of these should be maintained.

Gardens with rich planting along boundaries should allow more diverse routes through the site for wildlife, connecting the river with neighbouring sites. Native hedgerow planting alongside the new homes should connect the river to west and the mature trees alongside the Marston Road to the east. Natural and diverse planting may form the main element of public open space on the site. 10% of the residential area of the site will be required to be public open space. These measures will be important in achieving no decrease in the Urban Greening Factor baseline score.

Planning permission will only be granted if it can be proven that there would be no adverse impact upon surface and groundwater flow to the New Marston SSSI. Development proposals should reduce surface water runoff in the area and should be accompanied by an assessment of groundwater and surface water. Development proposals must incorporate sustainable drainage with an acceptable management plan.

A site-specific flood risk assessment should also be submitted as part of any planning application (Policy G7). This should set out any mitigation measures.

A lighting strategy should be submitted in support of any planning application setting out the internal and external lighting associated with the proposed development. This is because the River Cherwell is likely to be an important foraging and commuting resource for bats and should not be subject to any artificial illumination as a result of the proposed development.

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impacts on the significance of heritage assets, which are the Grade II* listed church, the St Clement's and Iffley Road Conservation Area, the setting of the Headington Hill Conservation Area and the View Cone. Proposals must demonstrate compliance with policies HD1, HD2 and HD9. The conservation area appraisal identifies the open character of this part of Marston Road and the way in which St Clement's church is set within a green enclave, as key features, and these should be retained. There is a clear visual relationship between the river and its meadows, the church and the green slope of Headington Hill, with views from the church across the Cherwell and towards Magdalen College, which should be referenced in new development. The southern part of the site lies within the South Park view cone and the impact of development on views of the historic core should be carefully considered.

Buildings should be arranged in a way that maintains the openness of the riverside setting, that does not compete with the Grade II* listed St. Clement's Church, and that maintains the hedge and treeline on the Marston Road.

The built form needs to be highly sympathetic to the sensitive setting, which will mean buildings should reflect the semi-rural character of the site and be relatively limited in height and massing so as not to dominate the church and in response to the surrounding character. For example, terraced or semi-detached housing with pitched roofs would reflect the local vernacular in the character area and should provide a sympathetic setting for the Church. There would be an opportunity for larger plots to bookend rows or at junctions, giving variety to the roofscape.

Potentially the most challenging part of the site to develop will be the narrow strip to the south of the church. This will need bespoke design and there are a number of key considerations. Heights will need to drop towards the Cherwell, to be sympathetic to the relatively rural setting of the river. The impacts on the adjoining homes to the south will need to be considered carefully, avoiding direct over-looking into windows. Main outdoor amenity space may work best if shared. It will be important that the built development and new access road are not sited so close to the church that they would be too harmful to the setting of this heritage asset. The western part of the site, alongside the Cherwell and behind the church, is narrow and should maintain a more rural character and is most suitable for the location of a pavilion if that is to be within the mix of uses on the site. To the north of the church more than a single row of units is possible, potentially fronting the access road. The ATC huts could be relocated to the northernmost part of the site, near the current plant nursery.

<u>Movement and access</u>
Main access to the site from Marston Road should be towards the north of the site, avoiding the more sensitive area nearer the church. The existing access to the bungalows could become this main access. One main entrance would allow a highways compliant design while minimising the loss of hedgerow on Marston Road. There is a network of paths and bridges at the North-West corner of the site, however these are in the private ownership of Magdalen College. Opportunities to

open these up for public access should be considered. A separate vehicle entrance to the south, where there is existing access to the ATC huts, is likely to be needed to service any development in this southern part of the site, but the impact on the setting of the church must be considered. The shorter, further south and more rural in character the access is the less likely it is to detract from the setting. Pedestrian and cycle connections within the site should link to the northern part of the site.

Parking should be kept in the public realm where possible and could be located close to the Marston Road, allowing the development of a masterplan more focused on walking and cycling within the site.

Natural resources

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement to be submitted in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from traffic on the surrounding roads.

Headington Hill Hall and Clive Booth Student Village

Site area: 10.05 hectares
Ward: Headington Hill and Northway
Landowner: Oxford Brookes University
Current use: Academic Institutional and student accommodation
Flood Zone: FZ1



This site is home to academic and teaching facilities of Oxford Brookes and student accommodation. The entrance to the Headington Hill Hall site is from Headington Hill, opposite Oxford Brookes' main teaching and academic centre at Gipsy Lane. The Clive Booth student village stretches down to Marston Road. The student village site is

currently undergoing redevelopment following the approval of a scheme comprising of new student accommodation, associated social and leisure facilities for students, staff and the wider community. As well as enabling Oxford Brookes to relocate from their Wheatley campus, it will also contribute to their aim of reducing the number of students living outside of university-managed accommodation.

Headington Hill Hall and Lodge House are both listed buildings and much of the site falls within the Headington Hill Conservation Area. The well-treed slopes of the hill are important to the setting of the City Centre Conservation Area in views from the west, making an important contribution as the green backdrop in the famous views of the city of 'dreaming spires' and providing a number of features of historic or architectural interest in these views. Enhancing the landscape setting of the site will therefore be particularly important for any development proposals.

The New Marston Meadows SSSI is a short distance away from the site and is sensitive to changes in the flows and quality of water in the river Cherwell due to it being in floodplain. Due to the sensitivity of the SSSI opportunities to integrate SuDS into development proposals should be explored.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained including the mature trees. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum.

There is the potential for archaeological remains on the site, with the Civil War Parliamentarian siege line having been identified in close proximity at Headington Hill Park. This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

The redevelopment of Clive Booth Student Village (21/01185/FUL) approved February 2022 will result in a total of 1213 student bedrooms on the campus (a net gain of 573 student rooms).

Policy SPE3: Headington Hill Hall and Clive Booth Student Village

Planning permission will be granted for:

a) **additional academic and teaching facilities on the Headington Hill Hall site (subject to Policy H10), with associated sport, social and leisure facilities subject to other relevant Local Plan policies;**
b) **residential development on the Clive Booth Student Village site, including student accommodation or employer-linked affordable housing at a minimum quantum of 229 residential units (or, if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied).**

Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Habitats should be preserved and enhanced, retaining existing green features where possible, particularly where these are identified as important for supporting the setting of the conservation areas and views across the site. In particular, there are a number of significant mature trees and some important tree groups, many of which will need to be preserved, and there must be no long-term overall loss of tree canopy cover across the site. New planting should be incorporated to enhance the landscape setting or to improve linkages between the adjacent green spaces.

Planning permission will only be granted if it can be proven that there would be no adverse impact upon surface and groundwater flow to the New Marston SSSI (Policy G6). Development proposals should reduce surface water runoff in the area and should be accompanied by an assessment of groundwater and surface water flows and development proposals must incorporate sustainable drainage with an acceptable management plan (Policies G7 and G8).

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>
Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impacts on the setting of the listed buildings, the character of the conservation area, and on views, particularly from the historic core. Proposals must demonstrate compliance with policies HD1, HD2 and HD9. Development should have a positive impact on the relationship between buildings and the landscape setting. Development that rises above the treeline will need to be very carefully considered and justified.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution

sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes

Development proposals must take into consideration the potential presence of archaeological remains related to the Civil War Parliamentarian Siege line. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

Development proposals should improve the pedestrian and cycle connectivity around the site, following desire lines between different parts of the site and from Gipsy Lane.

The development will be expected to minimise car parking spaces on site, and there should be no increase. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development mitigates against traffic impacts and maximises access by alternative means of transport. Pedestrian and cycle access should be enhanced across the whole site, following desire lines from the Gipsy Lane campus and between different parts of the site.

Natural resources

The site is located in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how any contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

Oxford Brookes University Marston Road Campus

Site area: 1.18 hectares
Ward: Headington Hill and Northway
Landowner: Oxford Brookes University
Current use: Educational facilities
Flood Zone: FZ1



The site comprises the former Milham Ford School, which closed in 2003 and is currently in use as the Oxford Brookes Marston Road Campus. The former school building, built between the late 1930s and early 1940s is an imposing building, built in a neo-Georgian style. The school building is distinctive and there is an opportunity for it to be preserved as a landmark building within the site with the added benefit of embodied carbon savings. The site is adjacent to the Headington Hill Conservation Area and it has an important relationship to the setting of the conservation area.

The Oxford landscape assessment report records that Milham Ford School grounds contains important areas of lowland meadow grassland, a nationally important habitat, and is a good example of how recreation and wildlife can be accommodated side by side. The area is also designated as a Local Wildlife Site, as is the internal quad within the centre of the former School. The site is adjacent to the Milham Ford Nature Park, on the site of the former school playing fields and creates a landscape setting that has a strong relationship to the buildings. The Nature Park includes areas of formal play and a diverse mix of habitats. The tree and hedge lined boundaries along Jack Straws Lane and Harberton Mead are important features of the character of the area. The New Marston Meadows SSSI is a short distance away, and is sensitive to changes in the flows and quality of water in the river Cherwell due to being in its floodplain. Due to the sensitivity of the SSSI, development proposals should make the most of opportunities to integrate SuDS and make use of the natural features, such as the natural slope of the site, as part of drainage plans for the site.

The developable area considers the internal quad as well as allowances for vegetation on the eastern boundary which currently acts as a form of buffer to the adjoining residential dwellings on Jack Straw's Lane.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green

surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

Currently vehicle access is limited to only the north and south of the site. Access can be achieved via Jack Straw's Lane, McCabe Place and Mary Price Close.

The nearest bus stops are located on Marston Road to the west of the site and are within a suitable walking distance to support low car development. The site is also within the Marston South Controlled Parking Zone of the city. Therefore, the site should be a low car development or uses which would not increase vehicle movement (e.g., student accommodation).

Policy SPE4: Oxford Brookes University Marston Road Campus

Planning permission will be granted for further academic, research and related uses (subject to Policy H10), potentially with linked student accommodation or employer-linked housing, subject to other relevant Local Plan policies.

Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Development should not result in adverse impacts on the Milham Ford Nature Park or the inner quad, which is designated as a local wildlife site.

Green links could be incorporated through the site connecting from the nature park, these should include green SuDS features, rain gardens etc. to facilitate sustainable drainage. Hard, non-permeable surfaces should be kept to a minimum. There are a few medium sized trees on the site which should be retained in first instance, opportunities to incorporate additional trees and hedges would help to replicate the character of the wider area and have various benefits.

Planning permission will only be granted if it can be proven that there would be no adverse impact upon surface and groundwater flow to the New Marston SSSI. Development proposals should reduce surface water runoff in the area and should be accompanied by an assessment of groundwater and surface water flows. Development proposals must incorporate sustainable drainage with an acceptable management plan.

Boundary treatments could continue the natural style present on the site, e.g. retain and make use of existing hedges and trees as much as possible. The existing row of hedges and trees form a natural border along the western boundary as well as to the north of the site (which are characteristic of the length of Jack Straw's Lane) and should be retained in any development proposals. Public realm improvements should incorporate ample amounts of green features designed to function aesthetically, but also as important resources for biodiversity, cooling, noise, and flood resilience. Particular attention should be paid to new lighting and its impacts on biodiversity, particularly on the western side of the site adjacent to the nature park, efforts should also be made to minimise negative impacts of noise and poor air quality.

Urban Design and Heritage

It is expected that the form, materiality and significance of the existing school buildings are assessed and responded to appropriately in development proposals.

Attention should also be paid to the materiality of the adjacent conservation area, and Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. materials selected that are sensitive to this and enhance it.

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the overall landscape setting and character of the adjoining conservation area, demonstrating compliance with policy HD1.

Movement and access

The existing accesses allow good permeability through the site and are likely to remain the best locations for accessing the site in future.

Natural resources

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how any contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

1 Pullens Lane

Site area: 0.4 hectares
Ward: Headington Hill & Northway
Landowner: Oxford Brookes University
Current use: Residential
Flood Zone: FZ1



The site contains a single detached dwelling dating from the 1960s set within a large plot. The site is in the Headington Hill Conservation Area although the existing house itself is not of design or heritage interest. The buildings of the historic Pullen's Gate farmhouse occupy the adjoining northern plot. The density of the area is low, characterised by large plots within which are set detached dwellings of varying size and individual educational buildings.

The site directly adjoins a large allotment site (St Clement's at Pullens Lane). The presence of the allotments, the extensive mature planting within and around the site, strong hedgerows on both sides of Pullens Road for much of its length, and the generous gaps between detached buildings in the surroundings creates a green backdrop. The Conservation Area Appraisal notes the dominance of greenery on Pullens Lane in providing enclosure which contributes to the rural or sylvan character of the area.

Pullen's Lane is a private narrow single lane road that branches off London Road and is occasionally closed to vehicular access traffic. Access is retained from Harberton Mead and Jack Straw's Lane at the other end. There are no designated footpaths for much of its length, and mature planting lining both sides can make it difficult for pedestrians and cyclists when they are faced with passing vehicles. It is also possible to connect to Headley Way via Cuckoo Lane, which is an unlit cycleway/footway that runs behind Headington Girls school.

The site is likely to have a high biodiversity value, and already contributes greatly to the verdant character of the street scene, particularly on the front boundary where hedgerows are in place. Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained, particularly the hedgerows along Pullens Lane and the shared boundaries, as well as the larger mature trees along the site boundaries and towards the rear of the site. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum.

Policy SPE5: 1 Pullens Lane

Planning permission will be granted for residential development, student accommodation, elderly accommodation or specialist or supported accommodation. The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered on the site is 11 dwellings (or, if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied).

Open Space, Nature and Flood Risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Development proposals must be accompanied by a site-specific biodiversity survey and any harm avoided, mitigated or compensated for.

Consideration should be given to integrating as many of the existing natural features into design schemes as possible, particularly the hedgerows along Pullens Lane and the shared boundaries, and the larger mature trees along the site boundaries and towards the rear of the site. In addition to landscaping of outdoor spaces, consideration should be given where practicable to integrating features such as green roofs or walls to retain as much of the verdant character as possible.

A lighting strategy should be submitted in support of any planning application setting out the internal and external lighting associated with the proposed development. This is because the surrounding habitat is likely to be an important foraging and commuting resource for bats and should not be subject to any artificial illumination as a result of the proposed development.

Urban Design and Heritage

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the conservation area setting and must demonstrate compliance with policy HD1.

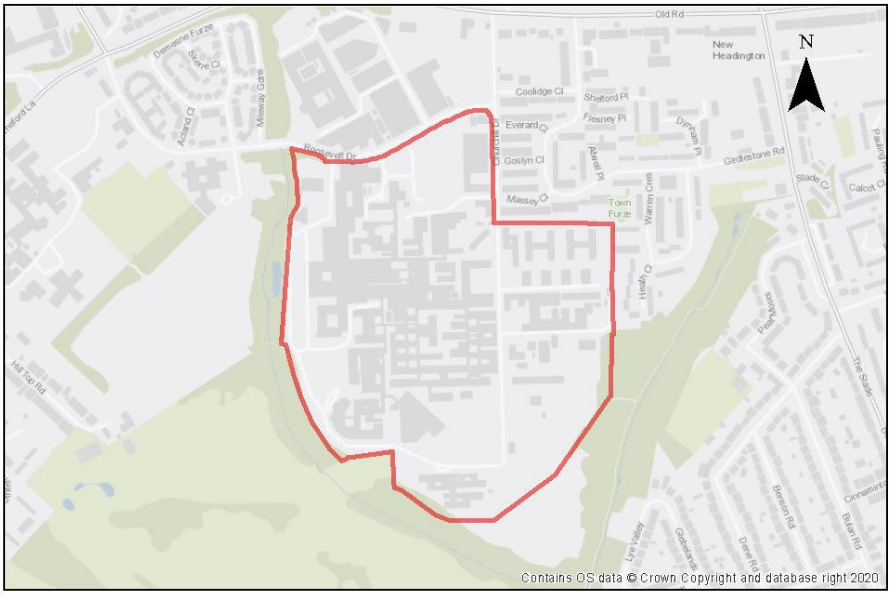
The local setting is one of a green backdrop sand it is expected that any development will retain this character, with features such as screening and planting of a range of vegetation and trees, some degree of setback and screening from Pullen's Lane and the boundaries with adjoining plots, and a medium scale that is in keeping with the surroundings. There is potential for development to make more efficient use of the land, subject to consideration of the conservation area setting, and bring about a better standard of building.

Movement and Access

The existing access is likely to remain as the most suitable location for accessing the site. The location of parking, servicing and circulation routes around the site will need to be carefully considered to avoid conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehciles that may arise when there is only one main access.

Churchill Hospital

Site area: 22.73 hectares
Ward: Churchill
Landowner: Oxford City Council
Current use: Hospital
Flood Zone: FZ1



The Churchill Hospital is a teaching hospital specialising in cancer care, managed by the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The site is fully developed with well-established medical and related uses, including research and institutional buildings, as well as residential accommodation – some of which is currently under construction. The main site access is from Old Road, via Churchill Drive and Roosevelt Drive. Further development for the hospital function or employment uses which have a particular need to be located close to the hospital, such as medical research, would be suitable. Residential development, student accommodation, employer linked housing would also be appropriate uses.

The highest density of built development is focussed on the hilltop in the north-east corner of the site. The large complex is formed of interconnected buildings, with Churchill Drive forming an encircling access road connecting multiple car parks. Pavements along Churchill Drive are not continuous or limited to one side at a time, and there are minimal legible pedestrian routes through the site. Further work should be carried out to assess if the level of car parking can be reduced and the land repurposed for other uses.

The central part of the site comprises of the historical temporary hospital buildings, around which wider complex has grown, including various cabins., The buildings themselves are rarely higher than two storeys and several of the older structures are in a poor state of

repair. There is scope for densification and increased heights to consolidate uses and make more efficient use of land. The site is of archaeological interest due to an important Roman pottery manufacturing site and there is the potential for further Roman remains.

The site only has marginal areas of green space which are isolated from each other. Hardstanding is extensive throughout the site, which might have implications for environmental impacts such as excessive surface water runoffs. There is potential to integrate more green features that could improve the site's visual appearance, spatial quality and ecological amenity.

The site directly adjoins a number of designated ecological sites and parts of the green infrastructure network. Significant development has the potential to impact hydrologically sensitive sites, including Boundary Brook along the western and southern boundaries, and the Lye Valley along the eastern boundary. Lye Valley is particularly sensitive because of its important peat deposits. Churchill Hospital field lies on the southern boundary and a near continuous line of mature trees along entire western edge of site. The overall effect creates a green backdrop to the site, although this is not always perceptible from within the site.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

Policy SPE6: Churchill Hospital

Planning permission will be granted for:

a) **further hospital related uses, including the redevelopment of existing buildings to provide improved facilities on the Churchill Hospital Site.**
b) **Other suitable uses which must have an operational and research link to the hospital could include:**
   - **employment;**
   - **patient hotel;**
   - **primary health care;**
   - **education;**
   - **academic institutional and research;**
   - **extra care accommodation, including elderly persons accommodation;**
   - **small scale retail units, provided that they are ancillary to the hospital;**
   - **employer-linked affordable housing;**
   - **student accommodation.**

Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Development of the site should be undertaken as part of a masterplan to ensure all landuse issues including parking are considered in a comprehensive way to make the most efficient use of land.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Planning permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse impact upon surface and groundwater flow to the Lye Valley SSSI.

Development proposals should reduce surface water runoff in the area and should be accompanied by an assessment of groundwater and surface water. Development proposals must incorporate sustainable drainage with an acceptable management plan. Important trees should be retained.

A buffer zone should be provided during the construction period to avoid disturbance to the adjacent SSSI.

Any planning applications near the Boundary Brook or Lye Valley will also need to assess the potential for additional indirect impacts on the flora and fauna of those areas, including (but not limited to) potential impacts from lighting, noise, and dust, and provide adequate buffers and deliver ecological enhancements as required.

Additional protective and enhancement measures for river and wetland restoration

as required around the watercourse and ecological buffers zones (minimum 10metres from bank top) should form part of development proposals.

Opportunities should be sought to repurpose the existing hard surfaces for other uses including GI and amenity uses, or to create connections between the site and landscape beyond, or green corridors/routes through the site.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Redevelopment or consolidation of buildings is likely to be the most appropriate approach to achieve more effective use of land and free up land for further development and for landscaping and the creation of amenity areas. Rationalisation and consolidation of parking provision where possible will free up more land for more effective uses. New buildings should be designed to create active frontages and avoid creating large areas of inactive frontage. Design should draw inspiration from the non- designated heritage assets, drawing inspiration from them to inspire and enrich the identity, character and quality of new development on the site.

New development must preserve the Roman pottery manufacturing site and should take into consideration the potential for further Roman archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development mitigates against traffic impacts and maximises access by alternative means of transport. Mitigation measures will be required to ensure that proposals do not lead to increased parking pressure on nearby residential streets. Improvements to pedestrian and cycle links to and across the site, and good public transport access will be required. Development proposals must not prejudice current bus access through the site.

Natural resources

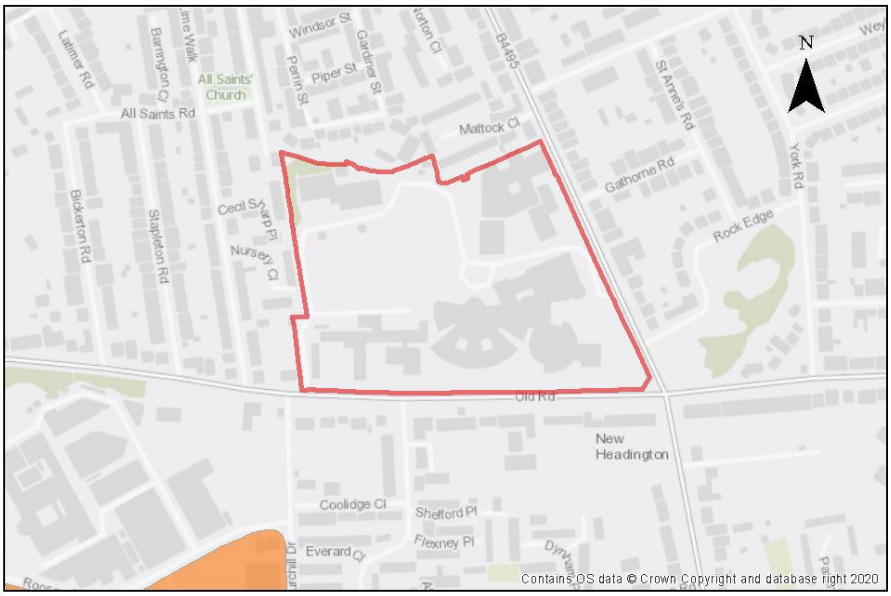
Due to the site's proximity to recorded peat reserves, and the potential for further deposits in the area, any development on currently undeveloped parts of the site will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm or loss of peat deposits in accordance with the requirements of policy R6. This may mean that where there is the potential for causing removal of peat, site layout has been designed accordingly to protect and mitigate any harm to identified peat deposits onsite.

Because of the use as a hospital some areas of potential contamination are present on the site, so site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary (Policy R5).

Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC)

Site area: 8.37 hectares

Ward: Headington
Landowner: Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust
Current use: Hospital, medical research
Flood Zone: FZ1



The Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre is a modern hospital and medical research site that forms part of the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. It has significant roads on two sides (Old Road and Windmill Road) and adjacent residential development to the north and west. Large institutional frontages are set back from the roads, with open space mainly in the centre of the site.

There are opportunities for suitable intensification of use and rationalisation of car parking surfaces can contribute to a more efficient use of buildings and spaces. It would be beneficial to develop a masterplan to arrange different uses onsite including hospital, research and potentially Employer Linked Housing and respond holistically to the unusual plan form of the main buildings.

The site bordered by trees and hedging with good cover along Old Road and the East of the site, with more variable coverage around the remainder. Surface level parking dominates the external areas and there is a minimal level of landscaping. Improvements could include reinforcing treeline and hedging at the sensitive site boundaries to improve privacy and reduce overlooking. The site may be within the catchment area of Lye Valley SSSI, which contains important peat deposits and as a result is particularly sensitive to impacts to groundwater flows and other changes to hydrology. The site is also directly opposite the Rock Edge SSSI, however as it is a geological site there are no direct impacts expected from development on this site.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

The site is well served by several sustainable and active travel options, including bus routes along Windmill Road, segregated cycle ways and wide pavements. The site is however dominated by car parking. Movement within the site prioritises the car above other modes and is not best suited for those with mobility issues using the bus stop on Windmill Road. Currently the main access is via Windmill Road, with secondary access on Old Road to access research buildings and back of house servicing. Low density development means buildings are spread across the site and there are few direct through routes across the site.

If level of need for car parking is assessed to be not as high as the amount of provision, the car parking could be repurposed for other uses including GI for biodiversity and amenity purposes, SuDS or green corridors/routes through the site.

The site is of archaeological interest as Roman remains have been recorded previously.

Policy SPE7: Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC)

Planning permission will be granted for further healthcare facilities and medical research including staff and patient facilities at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre. Planning permission will also be granted for residential development and extra care accommodation, employer linked affordable housing that supports the main use of the site.

Open Space, Nature and Flood Risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Planning permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse impact upon surface and groundwater flow to the Lye Valley SSSI.

Development proposals should reduce surface water runoff in the area and should be accompanied by an assessment of groundwater and surface water and development proposals must incorporate sustainable drainage with an acceptable management plan (Policies G7 and G8).

Urban Design and Heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. There may be potential for infill development of repurposed surface level parking areas and redevelopment of low-density buildings in the South–Western part of the site. The use of pitched roofs can also help in the transition down in scale from institutional buildings to the residential edge.

Development must take into consideration the potential presence of Roman archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and Access

Along with the potential for consolidating car parking areas, there may also be opportunities to reduce the overall amount of hard surfacing in favour of increased considered landscaping and amenity spaces such as pocket parks, or other forms of GI for ecological purposes.

Natural Resources

Due to the site's proximity to recorded peat reserves, and the potential for further deposits in the area, any development on currently undeveloped parts of the site

will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm or loss of peat deposits in accordance with the requirements of policy R6. This may mean that where there is the potential for causing removal of peat, site layout has been designed accordingly to protect and mitigate any harm to identified peat deposits onsite.

Because of the use as a hospital some areas of potential contamination are present on the site, so site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary (Policy R5).

Warneford Hospital

Site area: 8.78 hectares
Ward: Churchill
Landowner: Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Current use: Hospital, research, playing fields
Flood Zone: FZ1



The hospital is run by the Oxford Health NHS Trust and provides mental health services. The main hospital building from the late 19th century was built in the style of a country house set in parkland. Over time, various annexes and self-contained buildings accommodating specialist units and research facilities have been built, making up the complex. The site location lies adjacent to the Headington Hill CA. A masterplan holistic

approach to redevelopment would help address the complexities of this site.

Stone boundary walls are features of the public realm, enclosing private spaces. 6 structures on the site are Grade II listed, with the main hospital building, ancillary annexes (mortuary, nurse's home, and chapel), front garden wall including lodge and piers, being included within the listing. Building heights are relatively low across the site, around 2 to 3 storeys, including the later additions.

Roosevelt Drive is main access route into the site. Warneford Lane runs along northern boundary but there is no access from it. The boundary wall and piers are at least partially covered by the listing so creating additional access points will be difficult to deliver. Generally, car movement is prioritised through the site with areas dedicated to car parking, however, the site is accessible by sustainable and active travel options. There is therefore potential to rethink the layout of the grounds to enhance non-vehicular movement through the site by introducing measures such as dedicated foot and cycle paths and connections, and reducing the priority given to cars and other vehicles.

The site sits between two green corridors and comprises of open fields within which the buildings are set, with several mature trees, lawns and hedges, and a sizable playing field. The overall effect is that of a green backdrop and open character than blends the site into the surrounding landscape. The hospital directly adjoins a number of designated ecological sites and parts of the green infrastructure network, including the Warneford Meadows. Proposals should include an assessment of what connectivity the site provides to protected species and seek to preserve and enhance existing permeability through the site. The site lies within the catchment area of Lye Valley SSSI, which contains important peat deposits and as a result is particularly sensitive to impacts to groundwater flows and other changes to hydrology.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained such as the mature trees. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, in order to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum.

The site is of archaeological interest for potential Roman remains. This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

Policy SPE8: Warneford Hospital

Planning permission will be granted for healthcare facilities and related uses at Warneford Hospital, any of the following complementary uses:

- **extra care accommodation**
- **residential development, including employer-linked affordable housing and student accommodation,**
- **employment uses that have an operational link to the hospital;**
- **additional academic institutional and education uses subject to compliance with relevant local plan policies.**

Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Planning permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse impact upon surface and groundwater flow to the Lye Valley SSSI.

Development proposals should reduce surface water runoff in the area and should be accompanied by an assessment of groundwater and surface water. Development proposals must incorporate sustainable drainage with an acceptable management plan.

The existing trees and green boundaries are important features that should be retained. Opportunities should be explored for more considered landscaping with a greater variation of planting and natural surface covers to bring ecological enhancements onto the site and to make the most of the green setting. The creation of more amenity spaces that make use of the green setting and are easy to access on foot would be a positive addition. Proposals should also integrate SuDS to mitigate surface water flows and impacts on nearby ecological sites.

Development proposals affecting the playing fields will be expected to mitigate any harm or loss in accordance with the requirements of Local Plan Policy G1.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Developers are encouraged to follow a coordinated masterplan approach for the site to encourage holistic development and avoid a situation where proposals coming forward in a piecemeal way.

The open, green character of the site, and setting of listed structures should inform

the design of proposals. A generous setback from the rear of properties on Hill Top Road must be retained. To minimise loss of openness on the site, further development could be focussed in the first instance towards the rear of the hospital block with redevelopment of non-listed poorer quality buildings. The most appropriate approach will incorporate green gaps between buildings of relatively low height and limited scale. Development proposals must retain the listed buildings and be designed with consideration of their impact on the setting of the listed buildings, the broader landscape and the adjoining Headington Hill Conservation Area. Proposals must demonstrate compliance with policies HD1 and HD2.

Development proposals must also take into consideration the potential presence of Roman archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

If the current levels of car parking are assessed as not being required, there may be opportunities for some consolidation and any freed-up site area may be repurposed for considered landscaping and more space for pedestrian use, or development. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development mitigates against traffic impacts and maximises access by alternative means of transport.

Natural resources

Due to the site's proximity to recorded peat reserves associated with the Lye Valley, and the potential for further deposits in the area, any development on currently undeveloped parts of the site will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm or loss of peat deposits in accordance with the requirements of policy R6. This may mean that where there is the potential for causing removal of peat, site layout has been designed accordingly to protect and mitigate any harm to identified peat deposits onsite.

Because of the use as a hospital some areas of potential contamination are present on the site, so site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary (Policy R5).

Development proposals should be accompanied by an assessment of groundwater and surface water and must incorporate sustainable drainage with an acceptable management plan (Policy G8).

East Area site allocation policies outside the Area of Focus

- Bayards Hill Primary School Part Playing Fields
- Hill View Farm
- Land West of Mill Lane

- Marston Paddock
- Manzil Way Resource Centre
- Slade House
- Thornhill Park
- Union Street Car Park
- Jesus and Lincoln College Sports Grounds
- Ruskin College Campus
- Ruskin Field
- John Radcliffe Hospital
- Rectory Centre

Bayards Hill Primary School Part Playing Fields

Site area: 1.04 hectares
Ward: Barton & Sandhills
Landowner: Oxfordshire County Council (Freehold), River Learning Trust (leaseholder)
Current use: School playing field
Flood zone: FZ1



This site is currently used as a school playing field. The eastern part of the playing field adjacent to the Barton Leisure Centre will be released for employer linked housing to be occupied by staff working for the school academy trust. This loss of playing field (excluding the playing pitches) is justified owing to the need for and benefits of providing some employer-linked housing for the employees of the school academy trust though mitigation will need to be provided in line with the requirements of policy G1.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features

on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained and in particular how to introduce an effective landscape screen to differentiate the residential area from the school use. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, in order to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum.

This site is of archaeological interest as part of the access road is on the line of the Dorchester-Alchester Roman Road and there is potential for roadside settlement. This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

Site investigation required although significant contamination not considered likely.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Policy SPE9: Bayards Hill Primary School Part Playing Fields

Planning permission will be granted for employer-linked affordable housing. The minimum number of homes to be delivered is 30. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

The site to be developed at Bayards Hill Primary School is to be a part of the field only and must not encroach upon the playing pitches.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. The loss of part of the playing field will require reprovision in accordance with Policy G1. Qualitative improvements to remaining areas of greenspace such as enhanced planting should be incorporated in order to maintain baseline UGF score (policy G3). In addition, a landscape scheme must be approved and implemented to show how an effective planting belt can be introduced on to the site to differentiate the residential area from school use.

Urban design and heritage

Development should be sympathetic to the school, providing clear separation and limited overlooking and overbearing. New development must take into consideration the potential presence of Roman archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

Use of the existing access from Waynflete Road into the Barton Leisure Centre Car Park would avoid conflicts with the school use and avoid the need for additional accesses onto surrounding streets. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development enables access by alternative means of transport including improving connectivity to support active travel such as walking and cycling.

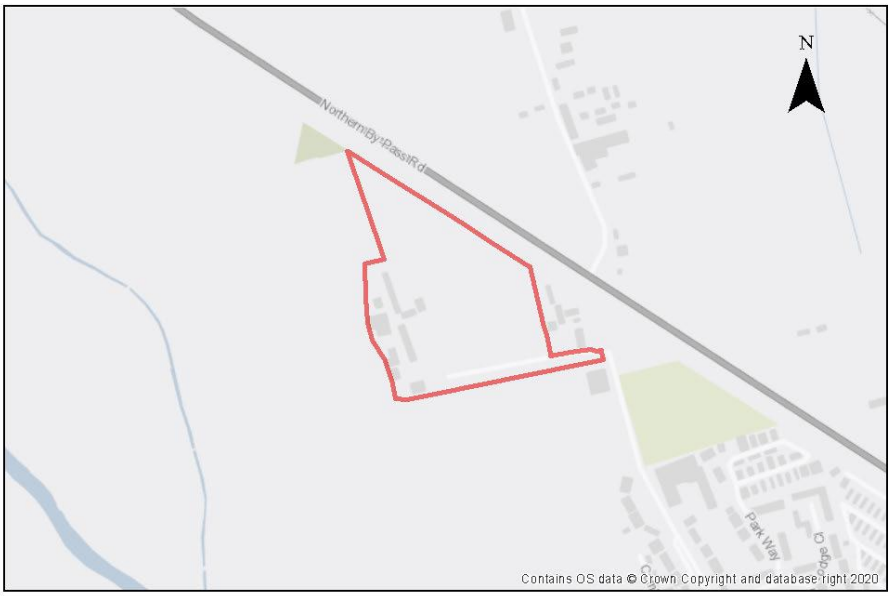
Natural resources

The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from traffic on the surrounding roads.

Hill View Farm

Site area: 3.52 hectares
Ward: Marston
Landowner: M K Dogar Limited
Current use: Green field with agricultural buildings
Flood Zone: FZ1



The site is comprised of hedged farmland and riverside meadow with some farm buildings, trees and shrubs and some mown areas. The site adjoins the defined urban edge at its south-eastern corner, on Mill Lane, next to Hill View Farmhouse and an associated property, which are in the Green Belt but outside of the site. The A40 Northern Bypass defines the northeastern edge of the site.

The site was formerly in the Green Belt. There is a slight detachment between the site and the existing urban settlement edge, as allotments form the northern tip of the defined urban area. Site policy SPE11 which adjoins with the southern boundary connects this site with the residential areas to the west of Mill Lane. The openness of the Cherwell Valley, penetrating the heart of Oxford, makes an important contribution to the City's historic setting and special character, but this parcel is peripheral within that area. The river itself meanders westwards along the edge of Sunnymead, so the parcel is some distance from the valley floor floodplain, but the north-south orientation of the river to the south means that high buildings would still encroach on the perceived openness of the valley.

The site is near to the Old Marston Conservation Area. Careful design will be needed in order to ensure that the setting of the conservation area is conserved and enhanced. Development must be sensitive to both the Green Belt and the character of the Old Marston Conservation Area. Relatively low-density and low height residential development will be required.

The site does not have any biodiversity protections, but the ecological value of the site must be assessed as part of a planning application and any harm avoided, mitigated or compensated for. The hedgerows should be retained as part of the design where possible. 10% of the site will be required for new public open space which should be sited to make existing residents feel welcome to use it.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained including the mature hedgerows that define the north, north-western and southern edges of the site. Where green elements are proposed to be removed, sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, in order to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum. The site is likely to be able to accommodate the planting of native hedgerows to strengthen the existing boundary treatment and provide enhanced screening of the development. Several trees already exist within the site that should be retained, and where possible additional trees should be planted. Any public open space provided on site should incorporate new trees within its design and link to the existing hedgerows to enable wildlife movement.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Access to the site will need to be taken from Mill Lane and localised improvements will be required to demonstrate that two vehicles can pass each other along the duration of Mill Lane.

Policy SPE10: Hill View Farm

Planning permission will be granted for residential development at the Hill View Farm site. The minimum number of homes to be delivered is 159. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature and flood risk

A minimum of 10% of the site should be for public open space, which must be sited to also be welcoming to existing communities. Development proposals should encourage active frontages to the new public open space. Gardens with rich planting along boundaries should allow more diverse routes through the site for wildlife, connecting to those existing hedgerows which are to be retained that define the boundary of the site. These measures will be important in achieving no decrease in the Urban Greening Factor baseline score. Compensatory improvements should be made to surrounding areas of remaining Green Belt in accordance with the Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of Green Belt Land Report (LUC, 2018).

Urban design and heritage

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the character of the adjoining Conservation Area and the landscape setting and must demonstrate compliance with policy HD1. Development heights must be designed to minimise the effect of encroachment on the perceived openness of the Cherwell Valley.

Movement and access

Access to the site will need to be taken from Mill Lane and localised improvements will be required in order to demonstrate that two vehicles can pass each other along the duration of Mill Lane. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development enables access by alternative means of transport including improving connectivity to support active travel such as walking and cycling.

Natural Resources

The site is located in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how any contamination issues will be resolved (Policy R5).

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from traffic on the A40.

Land West of Mill Lane

Site area: 1.99 hectares
Ward: Marston
Landowner: Oxford City Council
Current use: Agricultural land
Flood Zone: FZ1



This flat agricultural site is surrounded by mature hedgerows. It adjoins site policy SPE10 to the north and forms part of the rural edge to Old Marston, in close proximity to the Old Marston Conservation Area. Development proposals should have consideration in their design to the setting of the village. The site was formerly within the Green Belt and compensatory improvements should be made to surrounding areas of remaining Green Belt.

The site does not have any biodiversity protections, but the ecological value of the site must be assessed as part of a planning application and any harm avoided or compensated for. The hedgerows should be retained as part of the design where possible. 10% of the site will be required for new public open space which should be sited to make existing residents feel welcome to use it.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss) and demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor (UGF) assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained including the edges of the site. Where green elements are proposed to be removed, sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement

of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, in order to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum. The site is likely to be able to accommodate the planting of native hedgerows to strengthen the existing boundary treatment to the western edge of the site and provide enhanced screening of the development. A balancing pond could be provided to the north of this space which could also assist with the SuDS strategy for the site. Substantial new tree planting between the public open space and the frontage of the built form would also be suitable and once mature, would further assist in screening the development in views from the west. Any hedgerows removed to facilitate access to the site should be kept to a minimum and where possible, incorporated elsewhere within the development.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Localised improvements are likely to be required to Mill Lane in order to demonstrate that two vehicles can pass each other along the duration of Mill Lane. Access improvements will also be required from Mill Lane into the site which is currently only suitable for agricultural vehicles.

Policy SPE11: Land West of Mill Lane

Planning permission will be granted for residential development on the Land West of Mill Lane site. The minimum number of homes to be delivered is 80. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. A minimum of 10% of the site should be for public open space which should be accessible for existing residents of Marston. The development should be designed to ensure active frontages face onto the open space. Gardens with rich planting along boundaries should allow more diverse routes through the site for wildlife, connecting to those existing hedgerows which are to be retained that define the boundary of the site. Native tree planting could also be incorporated within the open space as these measures will be important in achieving no decrease in the Urban Greening Factor baseline score. Compensatory improvements should be made to surrounding areas of remaining Green Belt in accordance with the Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of Green Belt Land Report (LUC, 2018).

Urban design and heritage

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the character of the adjoining Conservation Area and the landscape setting and must demonstrate compliance with policy HD1. Development heights must be designed to minimise the effect of encroachment on the perceived openness of the Cherwell Valley.

Movement and access

Access to the site will be from Mill Lane and localised improvements will be required in order to demonstrate that two vehicles can pass each other along the duration of Mill Lane. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development enables access by alternative means of transport including improving connectivity to support active travel such as walking and cycling.

Natural resources

The site is located in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from traffic on the A40.

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how

any contamination issues will be resolved (Policy R5).

Marston Paddock

Site area: 0.78 hectares
Ward: Marston
Landowner: Aubrey-Fletcher
Current use: Paddock land
Flood Zone: FZ1



The site is comprised of a single pasture field with several trees and shrubs and well-treed hedgerows to the east and north. The current urban edge is defined by the residential park home site to the north. The site is a contained flat site with a small area of woodland containing mature trees and hedgerows located in the northeast corner of the site. The site was formerly Green Belt land.

The site is on the edge of Marston village adjacent to existing residential properties and the Old Marston Conservation Area. Low density residential development is possible without harm to the conservation area. Careful design will be needed in order to ensure that the setting of the conservation area is conserved and enhanced. 10% of the site will be required for new public open space which should be sited to make existing residents feel welcome to use it.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing

green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained including the small, wooded area to the northeast of the site. Where green elements are proposed to be removed, sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, in order to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum. The site is likely to be able to accommodate a considerable amount of new native tree planting to compensate for the loss of those trees removed and the wooded area to the northeast can be further strengthened through additional tree planting which would also enable wildlife movement.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Access to the site is via Butts Lane and Church Lane, which are of single carriageway width. Proposals for the development of this site would need to demonstrate that access arrangements would not be detrimental to highway safety.

Policy SPE12: Marston Paddock

Planning permission will be granted for residential development at the Marston Paddock site. The minimum number of homes to be delivered is 40. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. A minimum of 10% of the site should be for public open space, which should be accessible for existing residents of Marston. The development should be designed to ensure active frontages face onto the open space. Gardens with rich planting along boundaries should allow more diverse routes through the site for wildlife, connecting to the wooded area to the northeast of the site to the new open space. Native tree planting could also be incorporated within the open space and existing wooded area, as these measures will be important in achieving no decrease in the Urban Greening Factor baseline score. Compensatory improvements should be made to surrounding areas of remaining Green Belt in accordance with the Identification of Opportunities to Enhance the Beneficial Use of Green Belt Land Report (LUC, 2018).

Urban design and heritage

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impacts on the landscape setting and the character of the Old Marston Conservation Area and must demonstrate compliance with policy HD1.

Movement and access

Development proposals for this site must demonstrate that access arrangements would not be detrimental to highway safety. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development enables access by alternative means of transport including improving connectivity to support active travel such as walking and cycling.

Natural resources

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how contamination issues will be resolved (Policy R5).

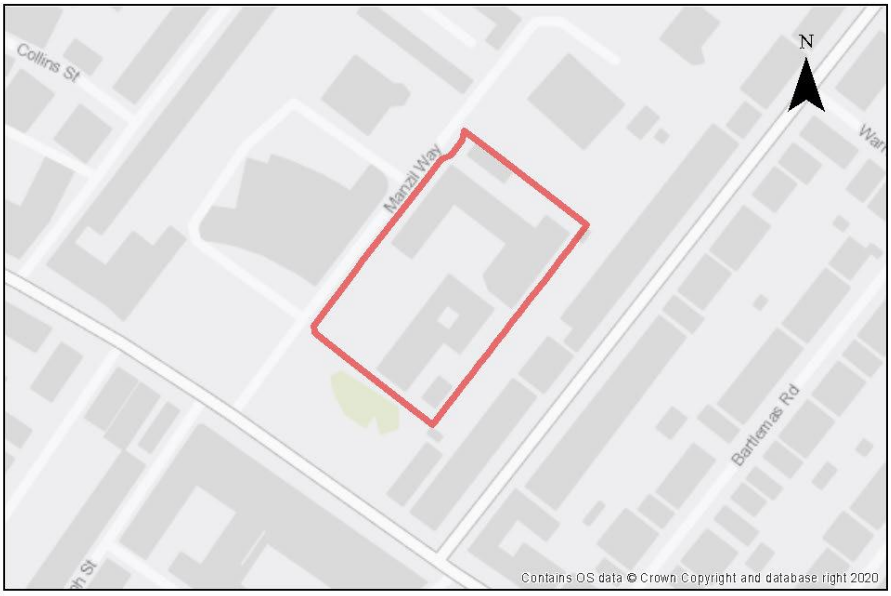
The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant

environmental noise from the traffic using the A40.

Manzil Way Resource Centre

Site area: 0.75 hectares
Ward: St Clement's
Landowner: Oxford City Council
Current use: Healthcare, offices, flats
Flood Zone: FZ1



The site is located within Cowley Road district centre with very good access to shops, services, and bus routes. It comprises health centre, offices, and nurses' accommodation, with car parking and small areas of grass and trees.

This site is a suitable site for a healthcare facility or for residential development. As one of only a few sites owned by the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, it is also an opportunity for them to develop employer-linked affordable housing on the site.

There is potential for the existing buildings, which are fairly modern, to be converted to residential use, or if the site is redeveloped more comprehensively, then the proximity of existing surrounding residential uses will require considerate design of heights and orientation of plots to avoid overlooking or overbearing or impacts on the View Cone.

Given the location in the district centre and within a CPZ any additional residential development could be car free.

Any redevelopment should respond to the opportunities of the adjoining Manzil Gardens public open space, and also support enhancements to Manzil Way to become a high-quality spine from which numerous community-focussed buildings are accessed (the health centre, Mosque and Asian Culture Centre, and the community garden cafe).

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

Policy SPE13: Manzil Way Resource Centre

Planning permission will be granted for improved health-care facilities, associated administration and/or residential development, including employer-linked affordable housing, at the Manzil Way Resource Centre site.

Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature and flood risk
Development proposals should include urban greening on the site and opportunities to introduce more tree and shrub planting.

Urban design and heritage
Development should respond to the opportunities of the adjoining Manzil Gardens public open space, and support enhancements to Manzil Way to become a high-quality spine from which numerous community-focussed buildings are accessed (the health centre, Mosque and Asian Culture Centre, and the community garden cafe). Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impacts on the protected view in accordance with policy HD9.

Movement and access
Access should continue to be from Manzil Way. The site is small so circulation around it to allow safe turning for vehicles that does not conflict with pedestrian and cycle use will need careful consideration. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development enables access by alternative means of transport including improving connectivity to support active travel such as walking and cycling.

Nature and resources
Because of the previous use of the site some potential contamination may be present on the site, so site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary in compliance with Policy R5.

Slade House

Site area: 1.68 hectares
Ward: Churchill

Landowner: Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Current use: Offices, training, and adult day care
Flood Zone: FZ1



The site contains multiple healthcare-related buildings (including Slade House, Abell House and Maple House, and an adult day care centre) plus staff training and office accommodation, and several parking areas. A number of buildings on the site are currently vacant.

Site is suitable for healthcare facilities or for residential development: As this site is one of only a few sites owned by the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, it also presents an opportunity for them to develop employer-linked housing on the site.

There are a number of biodiversity constraints affecting the site: The site is in close proximity to the Shotover and Brasenose Wood SSSI, which is sensitive to recreational pressure, so proposals will need to demonstrate no adverse impact from recreational pressure or groundwater/surface water flows to the SSSI. It is also in the vicinity of the Lye Valley SSSI, which contains important peat deposits and as a result is particularly sensitive to impacts to groundwater flows and other changes to hydrology. This would need to be established as part of the planning application process

A TPO applies across the whole site, which protects the mature trees across the site and around the boundaries so the plots and layout will need to respond to this. There are also opportunities from the mature trees and hedgerows on the north, west and southern boundaries to help wildlife corridors, provide privacy for occupiers, and ameliorate noise/pollution from the ring road.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. There are several parcels of existing green

space on the site as well as other green features like mature trees and hedges which any new development ought to accommodate into the design. Play space and pockets of biodiverse planting could be included to enhance the setting and help achieve the minimum UGF target. The green spaces to the east/centre of site could be enhanced to accommodate more biodiverse species/wild areas or potentially some play equipment. Hedges and other natural features should be incorporated wherever possible, particularly where new boundaries/fencing is considered. Opportunities to introduce pockets of wilder/biodiverse patches would enhance the natural feel of the site.

Reduction in hard surfacing could be used for communal amenity space and SuDS could be incorporated into the site to help reduce the risk of surface water flooding and further enhance the natural character of the site.

Buildings on the site are 1-3 storeys and are residential in scale and character, having been used primarily for mental health residential care. There is potential to retain the larger 3-storey buildings on the site and convert them to residential use, alongside new development on the site to make more efficient use of the site.

Access to the site is from Horspath Driftway then First Avenue. There are good sustainable transport links by bus and cycle, with potential to bring cycle routes through the site. In addition, there is potential for additional access via Awgar Stone Road which could be explored.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Policy SPE14: Slade House

Planning permission will be granted at the Slade House site for improved health-care facilities, associated administration, and/or residential development, including employer-linked affordable housing.

Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature and flood risk
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Planning permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse impact upon surface and groundwater flow to the Lye Valley SSSI.

Development proposals should reduce surface water runoff in the area and should be accompanied by an assessment of groundwater and surface water. Development proposals must incorporate sustainable drainage with an acceptable management plan.

Planning permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse impact on the integrity of the Brasenose and Shotover Park SSSI.

Development proposals must be accompanied by an assessment of potential recreational pressure on the SSSI that may arise from increased numbers of visitors, along with plans to mitigate this impact as necessary.

Proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the Policy G3.

A Tree Protection order applies across the whole site, meaning all trees on site must protected in any redevelopment of the site. The design of any redevelopment should be led by the presence of the trees on the site and be prepared in a way that these would be retained.

Movement and access
Active travel should be promoted in this site and opportunities taken to improve connectivity both to and through the site for pedestrians and cyclists.

Natural resources
The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how any contamination issues will be resolved in compliance with Policy R5.

Due to the site's proximity to recorded peat reserves associated with the Lye Valley, and the potential for further deposits in the area, any development on currently undeveloped parts of the site will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm or loss of peat deposits in accordance with the requirements of policy R6. This may mean that where there is the potential for causing removal of peat, site layout has been designed accordingly to protect and mitigate any harm to identified peat deposits onsite.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from traffic using the Oxford ring road/Eastern bypass.

Thornhill Park

Site area: 3.39 hectares
Ward: Barton and Sandhills
Landowner: Shaviram Group
Current use: Residential, car parking and a sports ground.
Flood Zone: FZ1



This site lies on the south-side of the A40 London Road in Headington, next to the predominantly residential areas of Risinghurst and Sandhills. The site is well served by

local bus services and cycle routes that lead into the city centre. The Thornhill Park and Ride is situated to the east of this site. The site is accessed from the London Road.

The site was formerly in employment use occupied by A C Nielsen. The main office buildings fronting London Road have since benefited from a prior approval for conversion from offices to residential, which has now been completed and comprises 134 residential units. There are some ancillary buildings on the site associated with the former use, together with a car parking area and a sports ground. This site allocation is for the remaining wider site and excludes the former office building as that development has already completed.

A planning application (21/01695/FUL) was submitted in July 2021 for the erection of 402 apartments (Class C3), 133 bed hotel (Class C1) and employment provision in the form of offices, café and restaurant (Class E), which was approved in principle in December 2022 subject to a section 106 legal agreement.

A previous study has shown that the site is of particular value to wildlife and contains great crested newts and multiple bat roosts. Although this site is not designated it lies close to the CS Lewis Nature Reserve, and as such, recreational impacts from new development will need to be assessed and appropriate mitigation measures implemented where necessary to preserve the nature reserve.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements can be retained, such as the larger mature trees, particularly those along the boundaries of the A40 which will also help with buffering the site. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, including reducing artificial surface cover in order to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum.

There is the potential for land contamination on the site due to previous uses and as such proposals will need to be informed by appropriate assessment to identify risks and any required remediation. The site is also located in an air quality hotspot area and as such, proposals will need to consider the impacts of air pollution on occupants, as well as potential for worsening air quality, and incorporate sufficient mitigation measures in line with policy R4.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Policy SPE15: Thornhill Park

Planning permission will be granted for a residential-led mixed use redevelopment on the remainder of the Thornhill Park site, which should include some employment use (offices Class E). Other complementary uses could include a café, restaurant, gym, hotel. The minimum number of new homes to be delivered is 402.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. The existing playing field must be retained unless its loss can be otherwise compensated for in line with policy requirements. If an alternative site is found the City Council must be satisfied that it will be delivered.

Proposals for development will need to be informed by an updated ecological assessment to confirm previous findings in relation to biodiversity and consider potential for known species of interest (great crested newts and bats) as well as other species including reptiles, nesting birds and badgers. Recreational impacts on the CS Lewis Nature Reserve should be assessed and mitigation measures included, if necessary.

Opportunities exist to reduce the overall amount of hard surfacing in favour of increased natural landscaping. Existing mature trees should be retained where possible as with other high-quality GI in order to preserve the base line UGF score. Layout should incorporate a network of amenity spaces such as pocket parks, or other forms of GI that provide linear connections across the site particularly where this can assist with movement of wildlife.

Urban design and heritage

Development proposals that exceed the height that the High Buildings TAN states may have an impact on the historic core will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts can be understood and assessed as listed in Policy HD9. New development should respect design sensitivities particularly in the southern part of the site which is likely to have a visual impact on the countryside (Policy HD1).

Movement and access

Active travel should be promoted in this site and opportunities taken to improve connectivity both to and within the site for pedestrians and cyclists and to connect through to neighbouring areas.

Natural resources

The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts

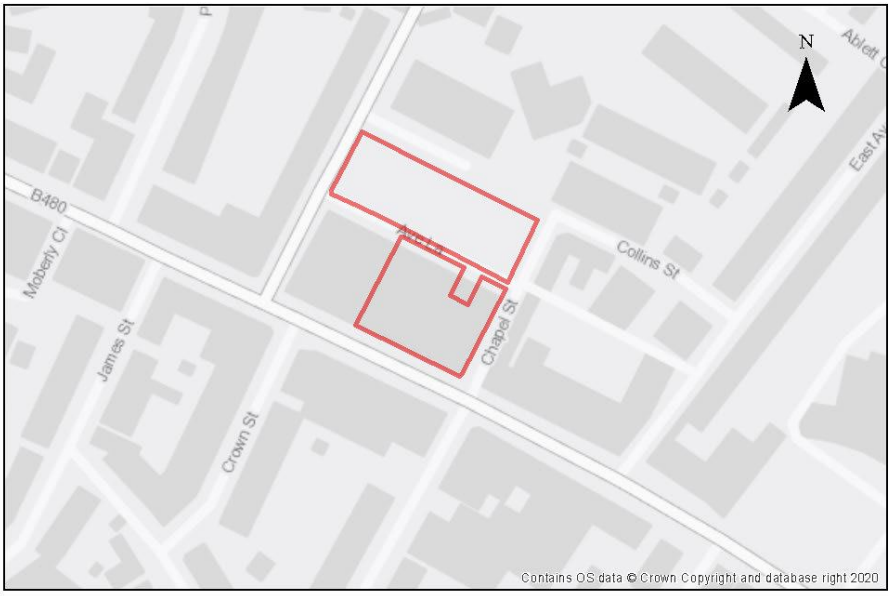
are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Extensive site investigation works have been completed over parts of the site already, however a contamination investigation would be required in other areas due to its previous use and potential contamination risks, and an application must demonstrate how contamination issues will be resolved (Policy R5).

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from the traffic on the A40.

Union Street Car Park and 159-161 Cowley Road

Site area: 0.47 hectares
Ward: St Clement's
Landowner: Oxford City Council
Current use: Car park
Flood Zone: FZ1



This site is within the busy Cowley Road District Centre which has a variety of uses including those with active frontages such as retail, cafés and restaurants, as well as residential and student accommodation. Part of the site includes the Tesco Express (159-161 Cowley Road) which has been redeveloped for student accommodation and the reconfiguration of the supermarket which remains on the ground floor. This provides active retail frontage on the Cowley Road.

There is further capacity on the site but any proposed scheme would need to consider design owing to the proximity of surrounding buildings and future car parking needs in the district centre as well impact on the protected View Cone across the site. Sufficient car

parking spaces should be retained at a level at which the City Council considers is reasonable to serve and safeguard the vitality of the local area bearing in mind the quality of public transport to the area and the current level of usage of the car park. Supporting information justifying the proposed level of car parking spaces should accompany any application. The retained car parking could be in a different form such as beneath ground level (undercroft), decking or surface level with buildings above.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

Whilst overall proportion of green infrastructure on the site does not currently meet the target score required in policy G3, this site contains significant existing trees along the northern (row of mature lime trees) and southern boundaries (an over- mature cherry and several young trees) of the car park which are important to public amenity in the area and will provide valuable ecosystem services. Existing trees will influence the developable area of site and its capacity. The quality of all existing trees should be assessed against the criteria in table 1 of BS5837:2012 (or its latest iteration). High quality trees must be retained unless there is a robust over-riding policy-based justification. Moderate and low-quality trees should be retained where it is feasible to do so. Opportunities exist to plant new trees along the Union Street and Chapel Street frontages to benefit the quality of the street scenes.

This site is of archaeological interest as is within the general area of a poorly understood Civil War parliamentary siege line. There is also potential for prehistoric, Roman and medieval archaeology. These will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

Policy SPE16: Union Street Car Park and 159 –161 Cowley Road

Planning permission will be granted for residential development or student accommodation, and car parking at Union Street Car Park and 159-161 Cowley Road. The minimum number of residential homes to be delivered is 20 (or, if delivered as student accommodation, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied). Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature and flood risk
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Opportunities should be sought to reduce the overall amount of hard surfacing in favour of increased natural landscaping. Existing mature trees along the northern and southern boundaries should be retained where possible. There is an opportunity to plant new trees as part of any new development along the Union Street and Chapel Street frontages to benefit the quality of the street scenes.

Urban design and heritage
It is expected that the requirements for high quality design set out in Policy HD1 will be met in the following ways. Development proposals must consider the proximity of surrounding building and the car parking provision to ensure a comprehensive scheme is achieved and in balance with the redevelopment above the existing supermarket fronting the Cowley Road. Development proposals must also be designed with consideration of their impacts on the protected view in accordance with policy HD9.

Development proposals must take into consideration the potential presence of archaeological remains related to the Civil War Parliamentarian Siege line and also potential prehistoric, Roman or medieval archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access
Any residential development/student accommodation delivered on this site should be low car. The City Council will seek to minimise public car parking on the site to a level which is reasonable to serve the area bearing in mind the public transport connections and its location within a District centre. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development enables access by alternative means of transport including improving connectivity to support active travel such as walking and cycling.

Natural resources
Because of the use as a car park, potential contamination is present on the site, so site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary (Policy R5).

Jesus and Lincoln College Sports Grounds

Site area: 5.42 hectares
Ward: Donnington
Landowner: Lincoln College & Jesus College
Current use: Open air sports facility
Flood Zone: FZ1



The site is situated to the north-eastern side of Cowley Road, to the north of Barracks Lane and currently consists of two adjoining private open-air sports facilities (for Lincoln College and Jesus College). Access to both Jesus College's and Lincoln College's sports facility is taken from Bartlemas Road whilst Jesus College's existing graduate accommodation and grass tennis courts is accessed from Herbert Close.

There is potential for residential development on the site whilst retaining the sports pitches, on the land around the existing graduate accommodation at Herbert Close and along the eastern edge of the adjacent open-air sports facilities. The potential for residential development on the larger part of the site would depend on the potential to re-provide the sports facilities. This could potential be done on-site through pitch-sharing if the capacity could be re-provided on a smaller area of shared pitch. If the capacity of both pitches could be re-provided elsewhere in the local area this could potentially provide an even larger area, although this would still be significantly constrained because of the need to retain a green setting to Bartlemas and the need to retain a green edge to the wildlife corridor on the northern edge.

The southern part of the site is adjacent to the Bartlemas CA and is within its setting., and also within the setting of the Grade I listed St Bartholomew's Chapel and Bartlemas

House and the Grade II* listed Bartlemas Farmhouse (all located on the eastern side of Bartlemas Close). The southern part of the site also lies partially within the Crescent Road view cone.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor (UGF) assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained, including the hedgerows and trees on the sites' boundaries, some of which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. There is an existing mobile phone mast disguised as a conifer tree within the site that it is likely will need to be retained. Existing trees should be assessed against the criteria in Table 1 of BS5837:2012 (or its latest iteration). Where green elements are proposed to be removed, there must be a robust policy-based justification. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum. The site is likely to be able to accommodate enhanced planting and landscape screening along with Sustainable Urban Drainage System features (SuDS).

Policy SPE17: Jesus and Lincoln College Sports Grounds

Planning permission will be granted for residential development (including graduate accommodation) at Jesus College Sports Ground (Playing Field off Bartlemas Close, and Herbert Close sites) and Lincoln College Sports Ground. The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered is 52, which may come forward individually as a minimum of 26 dwellings each on land in the Jesus College and Lincoln College ownerships (or, if delivered as non-self-contained student accommodation, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied). Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Landscape design should be a fundamental consideration at the earliest design stage, to enhance the contribution that existing trees and hedgerows make to the rural setting of the Bartlemas settlement, listed buildings, and the Bartlemas Conservation Area (CA). Development should result in enhancement of the hedgerow along the southern side of the site and existing trees should be retained as much as possible. The opportunity to enhance existing wildlife corridors and ecological habitats with enhanced planting, screening and landscaping should be taken. SuDS features could be incorporated within the landscaping. This will help to ensure that there is no decrease from the baseline level of the UGF.

Sports provision must be retained. Contributions could be made to improving a local facility such that its capacity increase replaces what is lost at the site; however, no opportunities are evident currently, and in addition a large portion of the site needs to be kept as green open space to maintain a green corridor and the setting of the conservation area. Potentially, if pitches can be shared on the site and still provide the same capacity to meet playing pitch needs, then a larger area of the site could be developed. If all pitch capacity is re-provided off-site, a green area at least the size of one of the existing pitches must be retained on the site to keep its green character and fit with the rural character of the Bartlemas CA and green corridor.

Built development is most suitable adjacent to the existing graduate student accommodation located on Herbert Close and belonging to Jesus College. There should be a significant area of green space left alongside Bartlemas Close to minimise impacts on the Bartlemas CA, and any replacement shared sports facilities should remain alongside Bartlemas Close. In addition, a green corridor needs to be retained in the north of the site to maintain the continuous green network alongside the golf course and towards the Oriel College Sports Ground.

Development should be designed to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the Lye Valley SSSI.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on views, the rural setting of the Bartlemas settlement, listed buildings and the Bartlemas Conservation Area. Proposals must demonstrate compliance with policies HD1, HD2 and HD9.

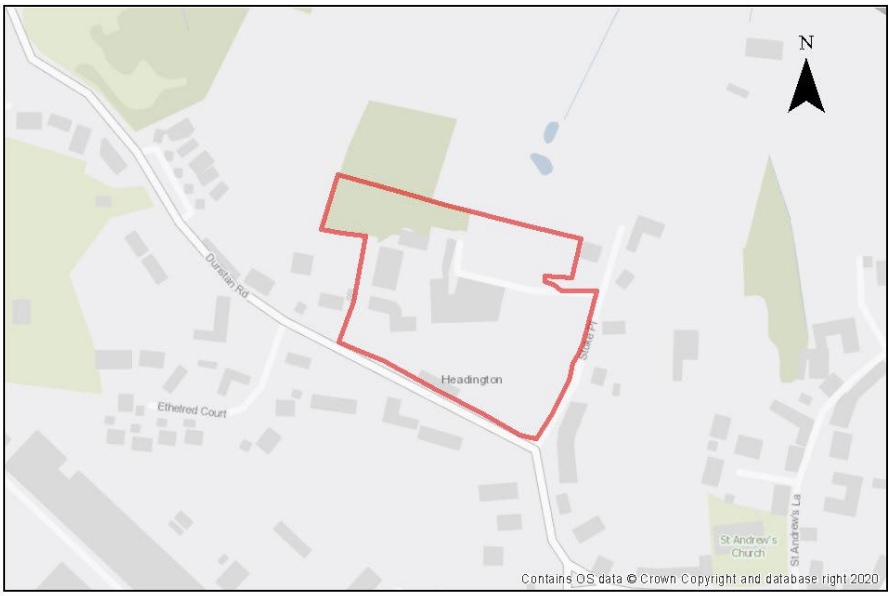
The character and materiality of the Bartlemas CA and the Edwardian and Victorian residential streets on the southern side of Barracks Lane should influence the design of new development. This is likely to mean development should be relatively small-scale buildings, irregular building lines and utilise brick and stone materials, especially for boundary treatments. Any development should be designed with buildings of form, massing (roof profiles) height and façade materials that allow the built forms to recede in the backdrop to the view from and across Bartlemas. A graduation of height, lower on the south-western edge and highest in the north-eastern, would respond to the context of the Crescent Road view cone.

Movement and access

The most suitable area of the site for development is around the existing graduate accommodation accessed from Herbert Close and this is the most suitable location for vehicular access, which should be shared with pedestrians and cyclists. Beyond this point, Barracks Lane is only suitable for pedestrians and cyclists. If the playing pitches are shared and more development happens to the northwest, vehicle access may be required from Bartlemas Close, in which case the existing service vehicle access from Bartlemas Close would be most suitable as this would minimise intrusion into the existing treeline along Bartlemas Close. There is also opportunity to increase design options by designing a low or car free scheme. If graduate accommodation comes forward, then parking should only be available for servicing and disabled.

Ruskin College Campus

Site area: 1.86 hectares
Ward: Headington
Landowner: University of West London
Current use: Educational Facilities
Flood Zone: FZ1



Ruskin College Campus off Dunstan Road(and the associated field – see Policy SPE19) has been bought by the University of West London and is now operating as a campus site of that university. The buildings are used for academic purposes, student accommodation, student facilities and administration.

There are nine buildings on site, including the listed Rookery and wall, set within landscaped grounds with some large trees. Any development would need to ensure that there was no adverse impact upon the setting of the listed buildings, wall or on Old Headington Conservation Area, and therefore should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD1 and HD2. The site is suitable for further academic uses, residential development including student accommodation linked to the academic uses on the site, public open space and sports facilities.

The site contains significant existing trees and hedgerows scattered across the site, which are important to public amenity in the area and that will provide valuable ecosystem services. Trees will be protected by their location within the Old Headington Conservation Area and the most valuable and high-quality trees will need to be retained. There are tennis courts within the site boundary.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained including the existing tree and hedgerows. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, as well as enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, in order to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum.

The site is of archaeological interest with Iron Age activity and Roman pottery production

having been recorded previously. In addition, the site has potential for peat deposits as these have been recorded at Dunstan Park to the west.

Policy SPE18: Ruskin College Campus

Planning permission will be granted for academic institutional uses (subject to Policy H10), student accommodation and residential development, including student accommodation and residential development at Ruskin College Campus. The minimum number of dwellings (net gain) to be delivered on the site is 28 (or, if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied). Development could include open space, sports facilities and allotments. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature and flood risk
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Trees and hedgerows at the edges of the site maintain a rural character; these should be retained, with loss of other trees compensated for within the development in accordance with Policy G1, and new landscaping encouraging connectivity of green networks.

Urban design and heritage
Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the Old Headington Conservation Area and the setting of the listed buildings within the site and demonstrate compliance with policies HD1 and HD2. Development should respond positively to the rural setting of the Old Headington Conservation Area. Views through to the remaining undeveloped areas should be retained.

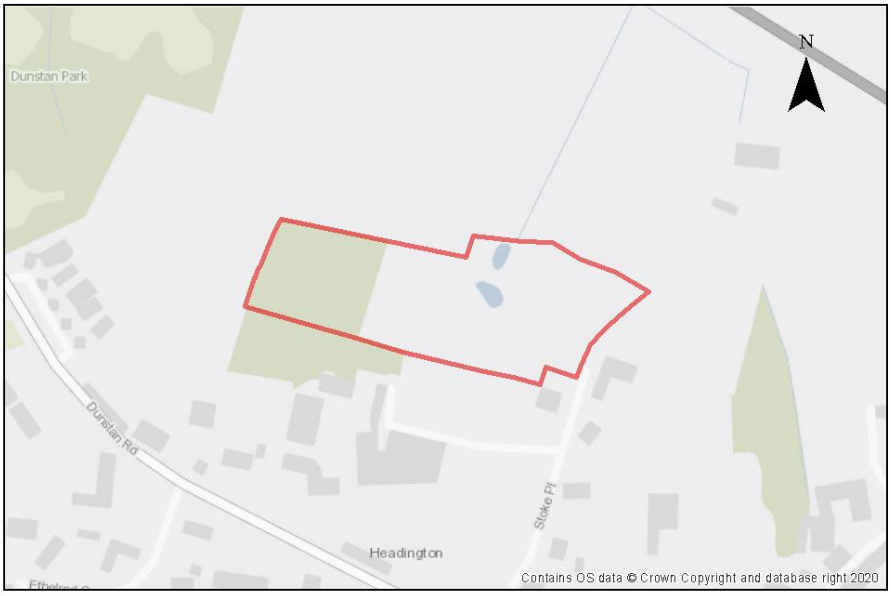
Evidence of Iron Age activity and Roman pottery production has been recorded from this site, so it has significant archaeological potential. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access
Access to the site exists currently from Dunstan Road and should remain in the same location. Pedestrian and cycle links to the site and circulation around the site should be enhanced.

Natural resources
Due to the site's proximity to recorded peat reserves at Dunstan Park and the potential for further deposits in the area, any development on currently undeveloped parts of the site will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm or loss of peat deposits in accordance with the requirements of policy R6. This may mean that where there is the potential for causing removal of peat, site layout has been designed accordingly to protect and mitigate any harm to identified peat deposits onsite.

Ruskin Field

Site area: 1.19 hectares
Ward: Headington
Landowner: University of West London
Current use: Field
Flood Zone: FZ1



The site is owned by the University of West London and is part of a private field behind the college. It has some thick vegetation and is not accessible to members of the public or members of Ruskin College for recreational purposes. The site lies to the north of Stoke Place, a historic lane and private road, which forms part of the public right of way network (Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) and bridleway) and lies within the Old Headington Conservation Area (CA). The adjacent Ruskin College campus (Policy SPE18) includes the listed Rookery and wall, set within landscaped grounds with some large trees.

Old Headington has a clear village development envelope and distinct character from surrounding, later developments. The fields form part of the former rural setting of the village, allowing for a degree of visual separation with development to the north, helping to keep the historic character and settlement pattern of the village. The view from Stoke Place across Ruskin Fields to Elsfield is one of the most sensitive across and out of the conservation area. There is also potential for archaeological remains as well as potential for peat deposits which are recorded at Dunstan Park to the west. This will require further investigation as part of any development.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover. As such, proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), to be demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor (UGF)

assessment as required by Policy G3. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained including the mature trees, the pond and the hedgerow along Stoke Place. Where green elements are proposed to be removed, sufficient high-quality replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, and/or existing green infrastructure that is being retained will need to be enhanced, to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum. The site is likely to be able to accommodate additional native hedgerow planting to create nature corridors, diverse planting in landscaping and gardens, new areas of tree planting and enhancements of existing features that are to be retained. This type of planting will also aid in achieving biodiversity net gain. The policy sets out requirements for green infrastructure on the site.

Any vehicular access would need to be through the college. There are opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycle access to the site via the BOAT/ bridleway along Stoke Place which could include contributions towards improvements to the existing surfacing of both the BOAT and bridleway.

The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Due to the heritage sensitivity of the site, the design of the scheme will need to be low in height and include gaps between buildings to retain views and a rural setting. The minimum housing requirement has assumed a density of 30 dwellings per hectare, which provides for retention of the most valuable planting, with high quality green infrastructure integrated into the design.

Policy SPE19: Ruskin Field

Planning permission will be granted for expansion of the adjoining academic institutional use (subject to Policy H10) and/or residential development use, which may include employer linked affordable housing or student accommodation. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits. The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered is 20 (or, if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied).

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the setting of the Old Headington Conservation Area and demonstrate compliance with policy HD1. The site has a rural character due to surrounding trees and hedgerows, which is part of the distinctive character of the Old Headington Conservation Area. To minimise the impact of development on the sense of rural identity and support biodiversity interest, the most valuable green infrastructure should be retained, including trees that are part of the setting of the listed buildings and that frame Stoke Place. New native hedge and tree planting should connect existing trees and hedgerows. The potential to enhance the value of the ponds should be considered. Gardens and amenity spaces will need to have rich planting along boundaries to allow more diverse networks through the site for wildlife. Natural and diverse planting should be the basis of landscaping. These measures will be important in achieving no decrease in the UGF baseline score.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development must be well related to the college and carefully and sensitively designed to preserve and enhance the setting of the listed buildings and character and appearance of the conservation area (in accordance with HD1 and HD2). The potential impact on views from the north should inform the choice of siting, height, form and appearance of new buildings, as will the listed buildings, wall, hedges and pond. The view from Stoke Place across Ruskin Fields to Elsfield is one of the most sensitive across and out of the conservation area, and this should inform the choice of layout and built form. Built development should be low-density with several gaps to retain views through and to the north from the buildings on the Ruskin Campus, and views through the site from the north.

New development must take into consideration the potential presence of archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

The creation of a secondary pedestrian/ cycle access into the site from Stoke Place would be possible. Vehicular access to the site is not possible via Stoke Place or

from the A40, and would therefore need to be through the college (as well as the primary pedestrian and cycle access). This means the site is most suitable for expansion of the college or employer-linked housing or student accommodation relating to the college, although the college could provide an access road for general housing.

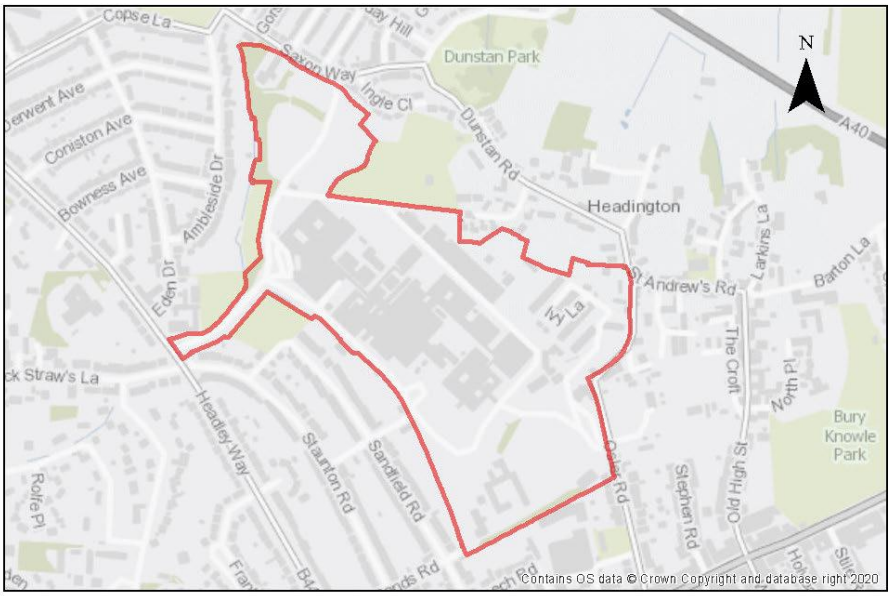
Natural resources

Due to the site's proximity to recorded peat reserves at Dunstan Park and the potential for further deposits in the area, any development on currently undeveloped parts of the site will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm or loss of peat deposits in accordance with the requirements of policy R6. This may mean that where there is the potential for causing removal of peat, site layout has been designed accordingly to protect and mitigate any harm to identified peat deposits onsite.

The site is located in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

John Radcliffe Hospital

Site area: 27.75 hectares
Ward: Headington
Landowner: Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Current use: Hospital
Flood Zone: FZ1



The John Radcliffe Hospital is a large tertiary teaching hospital that forms part of the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The hospital complex occupies the hilltop that was formerly the Headington Manor House Estate with views over the city which results in the site being very prominent in views across Oxford. There is scope for intensification of use on this site, including the use of higher buildings. Previous assessments and modelling have determined that sky-lining will occur in the St. Mary's view out of the city for buildings over 21m, change of character will occur in the Boars Hill View Cone for buildings over 18m and competition will occur in the Elsfield view cone for buildings over 18m. The urban character of the site is large scale institutional buildings, often of modern style that contrasts with the semi-detached houses of New Headington and the historic village structure of the adjacent Old Headington Conservation Area.

To the north, the site is defined by mature trees and car parks adjacent to Headington Cemetery. To the east, tree cover and hedging is dense but with some breaks, buffering the site from Old Headington Conservation Area. To the south, tree cover on Cuckoo Lane separates the neighbouring residential apartment blocks. Back gardens of two storey semi-detached dwellings form the western boundary to the site. The site includes on its outer edge designated heritage assets in the form of Grade II listed Manor House and boundary wall.

Pedestrians can access the site on a non-segregated pavement from Headley Way, Woodlands Road, Saxon Way and Ostler Way. On Ostler Way, foot and cycle paths have been successfully integrated into the landscaping. A private road gives pedestrian access from Sandford Way. However, once inside the site, it is dominated by vehicles, with large areas of surface level car parking, loading bays and turning areas to navigate. Footpaths are fragmented, causing tension between vehicles and pedestrians.

Cyclists can access via the same entrances with dedicated cycle lanes at the main entrance on Headley Way and Ostler Way leading to cycle parking. However, it is much harder to cycle within the site as cyclists share the road with cars, ambulances and service vehicles.

Cars can access the site at the main entrance, Ostler Way, from Woodlands Road and a second entrance on Ostler Way near the site of the approved Ivy Lane Key worker housing scheme. The entrance on Saxon Way is for buses only. Congestion at the site entrance has been identified as an issue as has the demand for parking which is accommodated across the site at surface level. There is a helipad on the parkland grounds behind Headington Manor House and another adjacent to the Eye Hospital.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

Given the current use of the site as a hospital and a Category 1 employment site, it is expected that most buildings onsite are in use and would be retained. However, there may be scope for intensification and improved use of space, including infill development, the erection of new buildings and rationalisation of car parking to provide space for new development and mitigating the impact of vehicular journeys into the site.

It would be beneficial for the hospital if the site was developed for uses where the proximity of being adjacent to the hospital is important. Employment uses which have a particular need to be located close to the hospital, such as pharmaceutical companies needing access to patients for research purposes, would be suitable. It would also be beneficial to locate primary healthcare and a patient hotel on the site. Employer-linked housing that supports the main uses of the site will also be supported. Complementary uses which would also be suitable, but which should not dominate the new development on the site are general residential and student accommodation.

Policy SPE20: John Radcliffe Hospital

Planning permission will be granted for:

a) **further hospital related uses, including the redevelopment of existing buildings to provide improved facilities on the John Radcliffe Hospital Site.**
b) **Other suitable uses which must have an operational link to the hospital and are:**

- **employment uses;**
- **patient hotel;**
- **extra care accommodation, including elderly persons accommodation;**
- **primary health care;**
- **education;**
- **academic institutional**
- **small scale retail units ancillary to the hospital**
- **employer-linked affordable housing;**
- **student accommodation.**

Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Development of the site should be undertaken as part of a masterplan to ensure all land use issues including parking are considered in a comprehensive way to make the most efficient use of land.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. This site is within an area where development could exacerbate surface and/or foul water flooding. There is an opportunity to address excess of runoff at the John Radcliffe Hospital site by ensuring that any development at the site reduces rather than maintains existing levels. This could take the form of ponds, wetlands or an on-site attenuation feature. A drainage strategy will also need to be produced by the developer in liaison with the City Council, Thames Water and the Environment Agency, to establish the appropriate drainage mitigation measures for any development. Planning permission will only be granted if sufficient drainage mitigation measures are incorporated into the design of proposals.

Existing drainage features such as the brook separating northern car parks should be maintained, enhanced and integrated into the landscape scheme, potentially creating wildlife corridors through the site.

Surface level parking dominates the site. Consolidating and rationalising the level of car parking on the site could free up land for redevelopment, as well as present opportunities for providing improved landscaping and GI, improved pedestrian/cycle paths, and SuDS for managing surface water run-off.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the adjoining Old Headington Conservation Area and views, particularly from the Boars Hill and Elsfield view cones, as well as on the listed buildings. As such, proposals must demonstrate compliance with policies HD1, HD2 and HD9.

For development of new hospital buildings, materials should be consistent with townscape character and be modern in style and materials. Whilst a more contextual approach should be considered for development of residential, student residential or key worker housing which would soften the impact of any new development and take inspiration from neighbouring areas. Material choice should not exacerbate the prominence of the hospital in views across the city or the view cones. Flat roofs onsite could accommodate solar panels.

Movement and access

Improvements to public transport, walking and cycling access through the site will be required. These measures should be set out within a transport assessment or travel plan and reflected in an agreed masterplan. Development proposals must not prejudice bus access through the site, and new routes that effectively separate walking and cycling from visitor or servicing traffic, will be encouraged. Additional access points to non-vehicular traffic onto the site will also be beneficial.

Rationalisation of the existing parking must be undertaken as part of development proposals coming forward on the site to ensure the most efficient use of land is made.

Natural resources

Site investigation works would be required in the event of redevelopment due to current and historic uses of the land and must demonstrate compliance with Policy R5.

Rectory Centre

Site area: 0.21 hectares
Ward: St Clement's
Landowner: Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Current use: Healthcare
Flood Zone: FZ1



This site is within East Oxford and within the vibrant Cowley Road District Centre which has a variety of uses including retail, cafes/restaurants, residential and student accommodation, as well as frequent bus services towards the City Centre and eastwards towards Cowley and access to cycle routes. The site is located at the end of Rectory Road which is predominately a residential street, with some student accommodation/hostel accommodation of 2-3 storeys. As such, residential development on this site would be appropriate.

The site is comprised of a cluster of buildings used as an NHS health clinic where the majority of appointments must be pre-arranged which limits the number of walk-in visitors to the site.

This site has a flat topography, constrained by Rectory Road running to the west of the site, but adjoins residential plots along much of the site boundary. There is limited natural vegetation on the site as it is mainly a developed area, though there is a single established tree within the site boundary, which is adjacent to a cluster of trees to the east. Any redevelopment of the site should consider how this tree can be retained as part of the design. Most of the site is made up of hard surfaces either from tarmac or building roofs with little vegetation or permeable surfaces present so there is an opportunity to increase the amount of green infrastructure on site.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

The site is in an air quality hot spot area. Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may

include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

The site is in line with the Crescent Road View Cone which should be considered in the consideration of building heights when developing the site in future. The rich and varied roofscape of this view cone should also be respected.

Policy SPE21: Rectory Centre

Planning permission will be granted for residential development on this site. The minimum number of residential homes to be delivered is 21.

Development of this site would lead to the loss of community healthcare facilities, so these should be re-provided elsewhere, in accordance with Policy C3, which may be through consolidation onto other healthcare sites.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Elements of green infrastructure on the site are currently lacking. Although the site is small and constrained the implementation of green walls and roofs on parts of the site should be considered. Further to this, elements of smaller and individual green features as part of gardens, as well as around boundaries, should be implemented to compliment any residential development which will in turn create a more pleasant living environment for residents.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on views, particularly from the Crescent Road view cone, and demonstrate compliance with policy HD9.

Any development should respond to both the character of the of the East Oxford Victorian Suburb and and the vibrant Cowley Road District Centre. The existing residential streetscape of Rectory Road should be considered to enhance the area's existing colour and pattern of brickwork. The existing building height should also be respected and adhered to.

Movement and access

The constrained nature of the site means that the site is only accessible via Rectory Road from the west. The site should be easily navigable for residents both on foot and travelling on a bike, although applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development improves connectivity to support active travel such as walking and cycling.

Natural resources

The site has potential contamination so a site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary to be undertaken in compliance with Policy R5.

The site is located in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Central and West Oxford Infrastructure Area (including North of the City Centre Area of Focus and West End and Botley Area of Focus

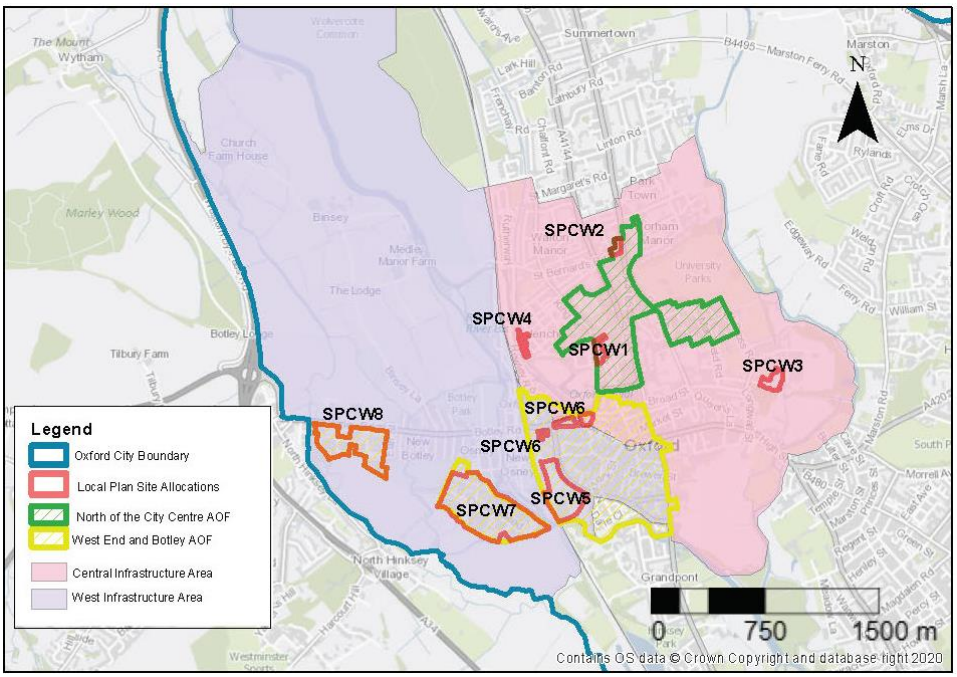


Figure 8.9 North of the City and West End and Botley Road Area of Focus and site allocation policies

This area contains a wide variety of buildings and uses. It is a key area of public transport provision for rail and bus, and includes the Oxford railway station, Gloucester Green coach station (the stopping point for most buses to and around the city) and Seacourt Park & Ride. It contains most of the Oxford colleges and most of the faculties of the University of Oxford. In addition, it is the retail heart of the region and contains venues that attract people from a wide area, including cinemas, theatres, live music venues and the ice rink. The large numbers of people visiting and interchanging on public transport can create congestion and conflict in the public realm, and high quality, thoughtfully designed public realm is key to the success of the area.

Some parts of the area are at high flood risk and so may be unsuitable for residential development. Flood mitigation measures, including new areas of flood storage and SuDS, integrated into green infrastructure enhancements, are likely to be necessary in the southern and western parts of the area.

Key considerations for infrastructure and design across the area are:

- Create high-density urban living with good provision and access to public open space
- Maintain a vibrant mix of uses
- Contribute to the knowledge economy
- Integrate flood risk mitigations into the public realm and green infrastructure
- Provision of a pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Thames to Oxpens

- Enhance accessibility and permeability of the area through good pedestrian and cycle links and enhanced public realm
- Support the redevelopment of Oxford railway station to create an easy and attractive transport interchange between rail, bus and active travel

North of the City Centre Area of Focus

The area to the north of the city centre is dominated by University of Oxford buildings of a wide range of styles, ages and sizes. The University would like to develop many of its buildings and plots within the area to improve the quality of the academic facilities and add some new floorspace. Development will be considered against any masterplan for the sites, which would help ensure that development occurs as part of a comprehensive plan for the area.
Across the area there is a lack of definition between public and private spaces and a lack of clear signalling of public routes. The area can feel closed off to the public and is dominated by hard landscaping, ill-defined and multiple small areas of parking and servicing features such as extractors and chemical storage tanks. Opportunities need to be taken to improve the permeability of the area, enhance the public realm and landscaping and clearly define public areas. The use of some of the institutional buildings at ground level for communal uses to bring a wider range of people into the area is encouraged. Development in the area should seek to add character and have regard to the listed buildings and conservation area. As these sites are controlled by one landowner there is more scope to ensure that new development and redeveloped buildings relate well to one another to optimise the opportunities to enhance the public realm. The Science Area & Keble Road triangle, the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter (ROQ) and the Banbury Road University sites all part of this Area of Focus, no site-specific policies required, but development in these areas will be expected to meet the requirements of Policy NCCAOF.

The AOF is largely within the Central (City and University) Conservation Area(CCA) part of the ROQ is within the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area and it adjoins and is in the setting of the Jericho and Walton Manor Conservation Areas. Although the Banbury Road Triangle site is outside of any conservation area, although it is in the setting of several.

The impact of views out and into the Central Conservation Area from the Cherwell Valley, and longer-range views to and from the elevated viewpoints around surrounding landscape, are all sensitive to increases of height in this area. There is potential for visual competition with the city centre skyline in all views towards the city and competition and obstruction in elevated views from the city centre, particularly at heights above 15 metres. Short-range views to and from the Cherwell Meadows contribute to the significance of the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area, and consideration of the impact of these will be important, particularly in relation to the Science Area. The backdrop to views from University Parks is also sensitive.

There are many listed buildings within the AOF and in addition, this area forms the setting of other listed buildings in the vicinity. Listed Buildings and their settings within the AOF include the Radcliffe Observatory, the Dyson Perrins Chemistry Laboratory, the Inorganic Chemistry Building, Reuben College, Ratcliffe Science Library, Museum Lodge and the Townshend building and the Grade I University and Pitt Rivers Museum.

Policy NCCAOF: North of the City Centre Area of Focus

Planning permission will be granted for new development within this Area of Focus where it would ensure that opportunities are taken to deliver the following (where applicable):

a) community and public uses of some institutional buildings, especially at ground floor level e.g., example cafes and exhibition spaces;
b) integration of servicing infrastructure into the built form;
c) enhanced landscaping, including tree planting and enhanced biodiversity and green corridors and SuDs;
d) improved demarcation and legibility of public routes through the area, using urban design and wayfinding;
e) additional tree planting, green features and wayfinding in areas other than key routes;
f) building heights and roofscapes that are appropriate for their setting and that do not negatively impact on historic skylines, roofscapes or key views, particularly from University Parks, to and from the Cherwell Valley and to and from the historic towers and spires of the city centre;
g) creation of a strong and well-defined building line along the streets;
h) mitigation of potential negative air quality impacts that arise during the construction and operational phases;
i) new development should be designed to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the New Marston Meadows SSSI (part of the area is in proximity to the SSSI) ; and
j) any design should balance the existing historic buildings onsite coupled with the celebration of cutting-edge science.

Central & West Area site allocation policies within the North of the City Centre and the Area of Focus

- West Wellington Square
- Land at Winchester Road, Banbury Road and Bevington Road, Oxford

West Wellington Square

Site area: 0.88 hectares
Ward: Carfax
Landowner: University of Oxford
Current use: Academic institutional uses
Flood Zone: FZ1



The site lies within the Central (City and University) Conservation Area to which a number of these buildings, particularly those ones fronting Walton Street, make a positive contribution and is adjacent to a grade II listed building. The area has a high potential for archaeological interest as it is the site of the Wellington Workhouse and a line of Civil War defences. Part of the site lies within the Walton Street and Little Clarendon Street Local Centre.

Opportunities should be taken to enhance pedestrian and cycle links between Walton Street and Wellington Square.

The site could contribute towards the University's need to provide additional graduate accommodation and staff housing. In addition, the site would be suitable to provide employer-linked housing for staff at the University. The site will continue to accommodate some academic functions for the University although these are likely to be relocated to the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter over the plan period.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

Policy SPCW1: West Wellington Square

Planning permission will be granted for academic, institutional, student accommodation and residential development including employer linked housing in accordance with Policy H5. The minimum number of homes to be delivered is 18 dwellings (or, if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied). Appropriate uses to the local centre of Little Clarendon Street and Walton Street as set out in Policy C1 will be permitted.

Open space, nature and flood risk
Development of the site must seek to ensure that the mature and semi mature gardens in the rear gardens of the property are retained and incorporated into any redevelopment scheme.

Urban design and heritage
Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the setting of the Central Conservation Area and adjacent listed buildings demonstrating compliance with policy HD1 and HD2. The site is in an area of high archaeological interest and new development must also take into consideration the potential presence of archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access
Access is limited to the site and as such the development should be low car and not generate any material increase in traffic movements above the existing ones that service the current occupiers.
The opportunity exists to enhance pedestrian links between Walton Street and Wellington Square

Land at Winchester Road, Banbury Road and Bevington Road Oxford

Site area: 0.52 hectares
Ward: Walton Manor
Landowner: University of Oxford
Current use: Academic uses
Flood Zone: FZ1



The site lies within the boundary of the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area (NOVSCA) and consists of a triangular area of land that lies between Banbury Road to the east and Winchester Road to the west. The land is bounded by Bevington Road to the south and the rear boundaries of the properties lying on the south side of North Parade, which is a narrow street of small-scale buildings. There are two listed buildings adjacent to the site, 59 Banbury Road, a Grade II listed detached villa completed in 1859. Gees Restaurant is a Grade II listed building in use as a restaurant, it's a surviving glasshouse from the former market garden that occupied the site.

The site's contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area is its strong plot character, with large residential Victorian and Edwardian villas set in generous plots and the perception of verdant tranquil back gardens from the surrounding streets. The buildings are currently used by a number of academic departments of the university.

Development proposals must consider the impact of any development on the New Marston SSSI. A drainage and flood risk strategy will be required to assess any impacts upon the SSSI.

The site is of archaeological interest as it is located on the line of a Bronze Age linear barrow cemetery and there is potential for prehistoric and Roman remains. This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover. As such, proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), to be demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor (UGF) assessment as required by Policy G3. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained including the mature trees within the site boundary. Development proposals should seek to minimise tree removal and to incorporate new semi-mature trees where possible alongside other green features e.g. within front gardens. All planting proposals should form part of a submitted landscape plan including details of how trees will be retained.

Policy SPCW2: Land at Winchester Road, Banbury Road and Bevington Road

Planning permission will be granted for academic institutional uses, student accommodation, and/or residential development. The minimum number of dwellings is 52 (or, if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied). Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Retaining existing mature trees where possible and providing new tree planting to mitigate against loss of canopy cover where necessary. Incorporating a range of other green features as part of site layout to ensure no loss in baseline UGF score, such as within and around the boundaries of new gardens.

Planning permission will only be granted if it can be proven that there would be no adverse impact upon surface and groundwater flow to the New Marston SSSI (Policy G6). Development proposals should reduce surface water runoff in the area and should be accompanied by an assessment of groundwater and surface water. Development proposals must incorporate sustainable drainage with an acceptable management plan (Policy G8).

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impacts on the setting of the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area and the setting of the nearby listed buildings and demonstrate compliance with policies HD1 and HD2.

Development must also take into consideration the potential presence of prehistoric and Roman archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

Opportunities should be taken to create a pedestrian route from north/south through the site.

Natural resources

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how any contamination issues will be resolved (Policy R5).

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement to be submitted in accordance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from the traffic on the Banbury Road and

Winchester Road.

Central & West area site allocation policies outside the Areas of Focus

- Manor Place
- Canalside Land, Jericho

Manor Place
Site area: 1.24 hectares
Ward: Holywell
Landowner: Merton College
Current use: Former tennis courts, allotments, orchards
Flood Zone: FZ3b but FZ1 for sequential test



This site consists of a mix of disused hard and grass tennis courts, abandoned private allotments and an orchard. It is a sensitive location falling within the Central Conservation Area, and forms part of the setting of several listed buildings and the Holywell Cemetery. The site is in line with the Elsfield, Doris Field and Headington Hill Allotments view cones but may also appear in others as it is located in the Historical Core Area.

The area is characterised by hedged boundaries and several mature/semi mature trees established on the site, particularly at the northern and southern corners. The site itself contains various types of natural ground cover including grass, scrub and scattered trees.

These contribute to the green, semi-rural character of the setting which includes Holywell Cemetery, St Cross Annex and the Magdalene College Deer Park and likely have high biodiversity value.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features on the site at present means it is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained including the features highlighted above such as mature trees and hedged boundary features. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum.

The site lies in close proximity to the New Marston Meadows SSSI which is sensitive to changes in the flows and quality of water in the River Cherwell due to its floodplain. As such this site faces several hydrological challenges that would need to be addressed in any development proposals. The site adjoins the River Cherwell and a small portion of the site is active floodplain. It is expected development be directed away from affected areas subject to flood risk and a site-specific flood risk assessment will be required.

The majority of the site is at low risk of flooding, but a small part of the site is in Flood Zone 2, and a very small part in Flood Zone 3b. Residential development at this site, a small part of which is in Flood Zone 3a, has been justified through the sequential test. A Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out for this site to examine part b) of the Exception Test (which relates to whether the development is safe). The Level 2 SFRA considered the proposed development was appropriate and additional mitigation and/ or analysis may be required to demonstrate compliance with the Exception Test at the planning application stage. This is to be undertaken through a site-specific FRA supporting the planning application. The site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate how the development will be safe otherwise planning permission will not be granted.

The site is of archaeological interest with Civil War defences having been excavated previously.

Access to the site may prove to be challenging, due to physical constraints and potential routes being outside of the control of the landowner. To minimise the impact of vehicular traffic, the most appropriate uses for the site are either student accommodation, or low car residential development. The loss of the former sports facility is considered justified only due to the need for and benefits of new housing or student accommodation.

Policy SPCW3: Manor Place

Planning permission will be granted for student accommodation or car free residential development or a mix of both uses. The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered on the site is 43 (or, if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied).

Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Planning permission will only be granted if it can be proven that there would be no adverse impact on the New Marston Meadows SSSI. Development proposals should reduce surface water runoff in the area and should be accompanied by an assessment of groundwater and surface water flows. Development proposals must incorporate sustainable drainage with an acceptable management plan.

Development proposals should reduce surface water runoff in the area and should be accompanied by an assessment of groundwater and surface water flows, as well as a site-specific flood risk assessment, and development should incorporate any necessary mitigation measures. Development proposals should also incorporate sustainable drainage with an acceptable management plan.

A site-specific FRA will be required. A sequential approach should be taken to locating development on the site, with more vulnerable uses away from the highest flood risk. A drainage strategy will be required to manage run-off and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA.

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>
Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impacts on the setting of the Central Conservation Area, the setting of the nearby listed buildings and views, and demonstrate compliance with policies HD1, HD2 and HD9.

Development must be based upon a clear understanding of the significance of the site and its surrounding context. Development should seek to preserve the secluded character of the Magdalen College Deer Park and the Victorian cemetery and maintain spatial separation of the historic western suburb and the suburb of Holywell and views from the elevated cemetery towards the tree lined Cherwell and the 15th century Magdalen College wall, for example by employing separated buildings in a green landscape. The size, alignment and design of any proposed

development should take account of the importance of preserving the visual and physical connections between important, surviving, historic elements.

Development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5 and must preserve the Royalist Civil War rampart and ditch line, previously located by archaeological evaluation, in situ.

Materials and construction details used for new development schemes should be of high quality, appropriate for the setting and sympathetic to the local context.

Movement and access

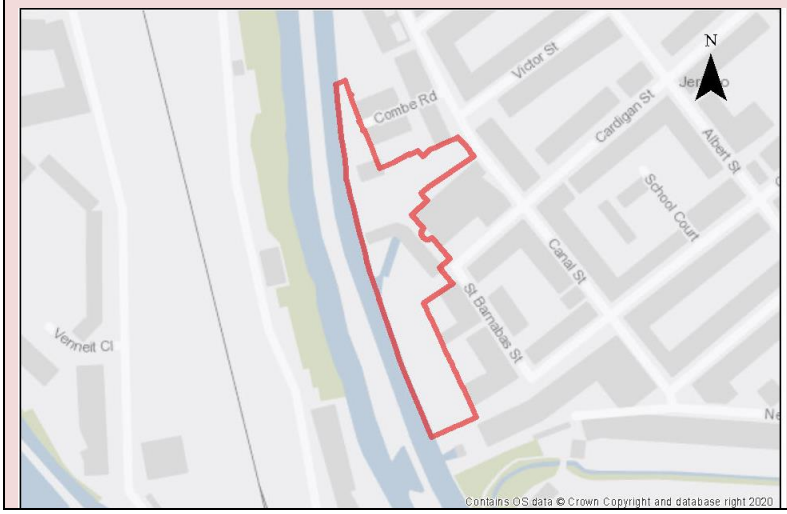
The most appropriate vehicular access would be to widen and extend the existing pedestrian and cycle access from Manor Place to the north of the site, incorporating land in Merton College's ownership. Access via Holywell Mill Lane to the south is unlikely to be deliverable as it is not under the control of Merton College and the visibility at the junction with St Cross Road is substandard. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development enables access by alternative means of transport including improving connectivity to support active travel such as walking and cycling.

Natural resources

Site investigations will be required as part of the development proposals to ensure that any land contamination is fully identified and mitigated (Policy R5).

Canalside Land, Jericho

Site area: 0.49 hectares
Ward: Jericho and Osney
Landowner: Canal and River Trust, Oxford City Council, The Church of England
Current use: Boat hire facility, open space and derelict workshops
Flood Zone: FZ3b but FZ2 for sequential test



This former boatyard and workshop site has been vacant and derelict since 2006. Part of the site to the north is still used by a boat hire facility while garages and open space occupy the land owned by the City Council. The site is in a sensitive area with the Jericho Conservation Area and adjacent to the Grade 1 listed St Barnabas Church.

As a former boatyard it is considered that this use should remain and there is capacity for it to do so. The operating boatyard should include the provision of a wet and/or a dry dock and allow craneage for narrowboats with possible supporting chandlery and associated workshop facilities. Other uses that should be provided on the site are residential units, a sustainably sized community centre, a public open space or square. The canal hire base at the northern part of the site should be retained. The development proposal needs to incorporate electric charging infrastructure for boaters to reduce carbon emissions from diesel engines and improve air quality.

It is expected that the any development on the site would make a financial contribution towards the upgrading of or reprovision of the existing bridge in the area. There is also a need for the proposal to support the upgrading of the tow path.

The site is at moderate risk of fluvial flooding, with most of the site in Flood Zone 2 and parts in Flood Zone 3a and 3b. The residential development at this site has been justified through the sequential test. A Level 2 SFRA was carried out for this site to examine part b) of the Exception Test (which establishes whether the development is safe). The Level 2 SFRA considered the proposed development was appropriate and additional mitigation and/or analysis maybe required to demonstrate compliance with the Exception Test at the planning application stage. This is to be undertaken through a site-specific FRA supporting the planning application. The site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate how the development will be safe otherwise planning permission will not be granted. Early warning methods should be considered as part of the SFRA given the high speed of onset values associated with the proximity to the Oxford Canal.

The site is adjacent to Oxford Canal which is an Oxford City Wildlife Site. The site supports a small number of common bat roosts. Key to any development is avoiding potential impacts on the Canal and Castle Mill Stream and the wildlife that utilise them, including foraging and commuting bats, otter and (potentially) water vole. Any planning application should incorporate a robust lighting assessment that demonstrates no additional artificial light spill on the canal – from either exterior or interior lighting – or otherwise demonstrate that the light spill will avoid any significant impacts on the faunal interest. It should also include an appropriate assessment of the Canal and Castle Mill Stream. The Oxford Meadows SAC is a short distance away from the site.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.



Policy SPCW4: Canalside Land, Jericho

Planning permission will be granted for a mixed-use development at the Canalside Land that includes all the following:

a) **Residential dwellings;**
b) **A sustainably-sized community centre;**
c) **Public open space/square;**
d) **Replacement operating boatyard;**
e) **To provide electric charging points for mooring boats;**
f) **A contribution towards the upgrade of the tow path between the site and Hythe Bridge Street; and**
g) **A contribution towards the upgrading of the existing bridge over the canal.**

Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. These requirements should be met through sufficient provision of a range of green infrastructure features that allow the site to meet minimum requirements for the UGF assessment. Planting that enhances the waterside and promotes connections between it and the wider area are encouraged, as well as habitat features that can support the foraging and shelter of wildlife of the adjacent ecological designated sites.

Development proposals should be accompanied by an assessment of potential recreational pressure on the immediate setting including the canal towpath and the Oxford Meadows SAC that may arise from increased numbers of visitors, along with plans to mitigate this impact as necessary. Development proposals should also be accompanied by ecological and lighting assessments of the potential impact on ecology and protected species on site and adjacent Canal and Castle Mill Stream, along with plans to mitigate this impact as necessary.

A lighting strategy should be submitted in support of any planning application setting out the internal and external lighting associated with the proposed development. This is because the Canal is likely to be an important foraging and commuting resource for bats and should not be subject to any artificial illumination as a result of the proposed development.

Planning applications must be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment and development should incorporate any mitigation measures. The FRA should look at options for early warning. A sequential approach should be taken to locating development on the site, with more vulnerable uses away from higher risk areas where possible. A drainage strategy will be required to manage run-off and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Building heights should reflect the form and scale of surrounding development, particularly around the area of public open space, and should not exceed three storeys. Finished design should respect the waterfront heritage of the site, the conservation area and Grade 1 listed St Barnabas Church. A new public square should be created and to open up views of St Barnabas Church from the canal, the wall separating the church and the proposed new square could be demolished. The wall is curtilage listed and as it relates to an active place of worship, separate Faculty approval is required from the Diocese. Listed building consent is not required for such demolition.

Movement and access

A contribution towards the upgrading of the existing bridge over the canal and the towpath should be provided as part of the development proposals. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development enables access by alternative means of transport including improving connectivity to support active travel such as walking and cycling.

Natural resources

All proposals should minimise impact on air quality during the construction phase and a Contruction Traffic Management Plan must be followed in accordance with the requirements of Policy C6.

The on-site boatyard may need some sealed storage areas if fuels, paints and chemicals are being used.

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how contamination issues will be resolved (Policy R5).

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement to be submitted in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from the railway line.

West End and Botley Road Area of Focus

Oxford's West End

Oxford's West End is located in the south-west corner of the city centre and includes Oxford Railway Station. For many years it has been an under-performing area of the city centre. There is potential for the West End of Oxford to be transformed into a vibrant city quarter through the successful development of a number of key sites in the area. However, there is a risk that with so much development proposed for the area during the Plan period that Oxford's historic character could be impacted. Care needs to be taken to ensure that Oxford's historic character is not lost or harmed through development in this sensitive part of the city. The West End Area of Focus has a rich depth of history with a number of buildings from different time periods located within it. However, it also includes some poorly integrated incremental development which could be enhanced or improved through redevelopment.

Development opportunities should seek to improve connectivity through the area and where appropriate, to improve the contrasting qualities of old and new built form. Opportunities should also be taken to improve the legibility of the area and to improve connectivity with the watercourses that run through it.

The West End and Botley Road Area of Focus is an appropriate location for employment-related development opportunities which seek to build on Oxford's key economic strengths that link research, education and social enterprise in areas such as life sciences and energy. Given the high demand for commercial research and development space and specific developer interest, it is likely that this sector will be the main driver of development across the area. However, there are also opportunities to accommodate a range of other sectors and uses, such as the creative and digital industries, as well as affordable workspaces for start-ups, co-working spaces, or even community uses where feasible across the wider area that this area of focus covers.

Redevelopment opportunities should aim to provide a mix of uses including employment, residential, leisure and other city centre uses including appropriate levels of retail where it supports the creation of new communities and helps to activate street frontages.

The heights of new buildings will be an important consideration in this area of focus and there is likely to be a degree of conflict between delivering development that protects and enhances Oxford's iconic dreaming spires and the ambitions of delivering certain development types. Wherever high buildings are proposed (over 15 metres) they should be accompanied by a visual impact assessment which clearly shows how the proposal relates to Oxford's historic skyline.

If a heritage asset is currently appreciated as a prominent feature in views, the introduction of a high building that distracts the attention of a viewer, could harm the heritage significance of the asset. The High Buildings Technical Advice Note (TAN) provides further information, and all visual analysis in support of proposals should be carried out based on the advice in this document.

West End and Osney Mead SPD

The West End and Osney Mead Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is an area-based SPD that was produced to support the delivery of sites in this part of the city centre following the adoption of the previous Local Plan 2036. It underwent extensive consultation with stakeholders including landowners, amenity groups, and the public during its production. The West End and Osney Mead SPD is retained to supplement and facilitate the delivery of the site allocations in the Local Plan 2040.

The West End and Osney Mead SPD[5] provides guidance about infrastructure interventions including green and blue infrastructure, public realm and walking and cycling improvements that would enhance and improve the area. Infrastructure improvements should be made in line with the SPD.

Oxford Railway Station

Oxford Railway Station is situated within the West End and has the potential to be transformed within the Plan period. This is due to the delivery of strategic rail infrastructure to support the

[5] including the Spatial Framework and Design Guide

Oxford to Cambridge Pan Regional Partnership – namely East West Rail. East West Rail would connect both people and businesses in the towns and villages between Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge. It would open up new journeys, cutting travel times, easing congestion on local roads and would bring more jobs within the reach of local people[6].

Work is already being undertaken to the western entrance to Oxford Station to help deliver track capacity upgrades to support East West Rail, and more future services, including the proposed re-opening of the Cowley Branch Line to passengers. Additional works would also be required to create further track and platform capacity to the Eastern side, which would require a replacement main entrance. Work is on-going between partners to develop a scheme which enables a transformed station building and interchange which meets the needs of the 21st century and growing passenger numbers. The central location and strategic importance of the station should be capitalised upon and enable good onward connections by public transport, walking and cycling within the West End and towards the core of the city centre.

The City Council will support proposals for the redevelopment of the eastern entrance to the railway station and associated infrastructure (i.e., Becket Street car park) to deliver a mixed-use scheme including enhancements to the public realm which helps to fund the transformation of Oxford's Railway Station.

Osney Mead and Botley Road

Osney Mead Industrial Estate and Botley Road Retail Park are characterised as 20th Century Fringe Business, Industry and Retail areas in the updated Oxford Landscape Character Assessment. They sit outside of the city's historic core and have a different character to it. However, given their close proximity to the city's dreaming spires, some similarities exist within this Area of Focus, for instance, the relationship between historic views of the city's iconic skyline and the potential conflict with the scale of redevelopment ambitions in this area.

Osney Mead Industrial Estate is a Category 2 employment site. It is in a central location that offers one of the few opportunities for a range of employment uses in the city. It is in an accessible location close to the railway station and has some existing connections via walking and cycling to the wider area. The site is not intensively used at present. Changes in technology, how space is used, and the type of employment provided mean that the employment function could be provided in a smaller space, as well as being enhanced. It is important that this site maintains its role in creating a diverse employment base as it makes an important contribution to Oxford's employment land supply.

A transformation of the Osney Mead site has the potential to be delivered within the plan period. Planned infrastructure improvements including a pedestrian and cycle bridge linking Osney Mead directly to the West End via the Oxpens site are programmed to be delivered within the early part of the plan period which would provide better accessibility from Osney Mead and help create a natural extension of the city centre into this location.

Botley Road Retail Park is a large retail park within the western edge of the city boundary. Built from the 1980s, it features many large single storey retail stores with associated parking,

[6] East West Rail, Route Report Update May 2023 https://eastwestrail-production.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/public/Route-Update-Announcement/4c8cb5ea3b/Route-update-report.pdf

belonging to familiar brands in homewares, consumer electronics and DIY. The current urban environment is considered poor quality as it is dominated by cars and hard surfacing.

The retail park borders small scale residential properties to the east on Earl Street, Lamarsh Road and Brock Grove and to the opposite (to the north) on Botley Road. The fields to the south form an important part of the historic landscape setting for the city and the site is adjacent to the historic City and Liberty Boundary.

Osney Mead Industrial Estate and Botley Road Retail Park are both at risk from flooding. Flood mapping produced as part of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment shows that both sites contain land within flood zones 3a and 3b. The mapping also shows that both sites are surrounded by land in flood zone 3. This level of flood risk would have significant implications on the type and nature of development that would be permissible on the site, and where it can be located. A comprehensive flood risk management strategy needs to be developed in order to make ensure that any uses here are delivered in way which enables safe access and egress in times of flood. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 has been carried out.

Redevelopment at Botley Road has the potential to impact views into and out of the city. The Botley Road Retail Park Design Brief TAN should be consulted in relation to design principles, building heights and the assessment of views along with the High Buildings TAN. The Botley Road Development Brief TAN sets out an initial officer assessment of the impact of the site using the Vu.City model and suggest some heights which would be likely to be acceptable in terms of redevelopment proposals at the retail park. This initial assessment should be used to inform further testing and analysis to support individual development proposals that may come forward.

Policy WEAOF: West End and Botley Area of Focus

Planning permission will be granted for new development within this area of focus where it would ensure that opportunities are taken to deliver the following (where applicable):

a) Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure improvements must be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the Oxfordshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. All opportunities to optimise connectivity and permeability for people wishing to walk or cycle in the area to other parts of the city should be taken;
b) Positive contributions and enhancements to the character and setting of conservation areas and other heritage assets;
c) Making the best use of good urban design and place making opportunities with the redevelopment of Oxford Station and Becket Street Car Park to deliver a strong sense of arrival to Oxford and an improved environment for passengers;
d) Development proposals are expected to enhance Frideswide Square to facilitate the creation of a western gateway;
e) Building heights that are appropriate for their setting and that do not negatively impact on key views or historic skylines;
f) A reduction in car parking across the area;
g) Integration of servicing and plant infrastructure into the built form;
h) Mitigation of potential negative air quality impacts that arise during the construction and operational phases;
i) Enhanced landscaping, including tree planting and enhanced biodiversity and green corridors and SuDs;
j) Improved demarcation and legibility of public routes through the area, using urban design and wayfinding;
k) Public realm improvements should be undertaken in line with the infrastructure interventions set out in the West End and Osney Mead SPD; and
l) Development opportunities at the Botley Road Retail Park should follow the guidance set out in the Botley Road Retail Park Development Brief TAN.

Site allocation policies within West End and Botley Area of Focus

- Oxpens
- Osney Mead
- Nuffield Sites
- Botley Road Retail Park

Oxpens

Site Area: 6.29 hectares
Ward: Osney & St Thomas
Landowner: OXWED and several other ownerships
Current Use: Surface level car parking, green space and a variety of different buildings

including the ice rink, sorting office and sheltered housing.
Flood Zone: FZ3b but FZ2 for sequential test



The Oxpens site is bounded by the River Thames to the south and the railway line and Student Castle development form the western boundary. Oxpens Road forms the curved eastern boundary of the site and Osney Lane provides the boundary to the north. The Oxpens site includes a large amount of hard standing which is mainly used for either public or private car parking. The site also contains a number of buildings including the Ice Rink (a regional sports facility), the Royal Mail Sorting Office, some sheltered housing accommodation blocks and several other low-rise buildings along the frontage of Oxpens Road in fairly poor condition. The site also includes some green space and is adjacent to Oxpens Meadow which benefits from Fields In Trust status. The site has poor legibility and permeability, and it is not currently possible to navigate through the site.

Oxpens Road is a main vehicular route through the West End of the city. It acts as a barrier to movement, limiting pedestrian and cycle connections into and out of the Oxpens site and on into the city centre core beyond. Although the site is in close proximity to the railway station and the existing bus network at Frideswide Square, there are no local bus connections along Oxpens Road itself, which also lacks good quality pedestrian crossings and cycleways.

Much of Oxford's West End is sensitive to change given its location within the western historic fringe and pastoral flood plains located mainly to the west of the railway. The Oxpens site lies within the Raleigh Park view cone and the city's High Buildings Area. The site forms a part of other important views out of the city (for instance, from St. George's Tower and the University Church of St. Mary's Tower) and from further views (such as the potential for visibility within other view cones e.g., Elsfield and Doris Field).

This means that a visual impact assessment will be needed to ensure that development proposals do not harm these important historic views into and out of the city. The High Buildings Technical Advice Note (TAN) sets out that development proposals over 15m have the potential to create competition with existing built form in views out from the city's historic core. The placement of any taller buildings needs to be carefully considered to avoid causing harm to the heritage significance of views into and out from Oxford's iconic skyline.

This site has the potential to be transformed into a vibrant mixed-use quarter of the city centre supporting a range of different uses including residential and student accommodation, employment and other complementary uses including hotel, retail and other appropriate town centre uses. There is also the opportunity to provide infrastructure improvements to the area which include:

- High-quality public space at the heart of the Oxpens site;
- A safer pedestrian crossing over Oxpens Road along Castle Mill Stream to access Oxpens Meadow and associated public realm improvements
- Creation of the Oxpens Bridge northern landing point;
- Public realm improvements along Oxpens Road which could include tree-planting, cycle lanes, and the narrowing of vehicular carriageways;

Infrastructure interventions and improvements should be delivered in accordance with the West End and Osney Mead SPD.

An outline planning application has been submitted covering a large portion of the site controlled by the OXWED consortium. At the time of writing, this application (22/02954/OUT) was being considered by the Council alongside an application for detailed enabling works (22/02955/FUL).

The remainder of the Oxpens Site (outside the redline boundary of the current planning application) falls into a number of different ownerships and includes the Ice Rink, Kingsmead House (which includes the Royal Mail Sorting Office and a teaching college), some surface level car parking associated with the Sorting Office, the site of the former Esso Petrol Station, Richard Gray Court (18 units of sheltered housing), and Unit 16 of the Osney Business Centre.

Any redevelopment proposals for the Ice Rink will need to ensure that this regional sports facility is re-provided in line with Policy C3.

Redevelopment proposals involving the sheltered housing accommodation at Richard Gray Court will need to ensure that it is re-provided in line with Policy H7.

It is important that any development opportunities afforded by the redevelopment of this site demonstrate how the minimum number of homes are likely to be delivered across the whole site. It should be set out in a clear and transparent way that ensures the remainder of the homes can be brought forward as part of a well-designed development that fosters

good place-making given the sensitive nature of this location.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

The uses on this site, part of which is in Flood Zone 3b, have been justified through the sequential test. A Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out for this site to examine part b) of the Exception Test (which relates to whether the development is safe). The Level 2 SFRA considered the proposed development was appropriate and additional mitigation and/ or analysis may be required to demonstrate compliance with the Exception Test at the planning application stage. This is to be undertaken through a site-specific FRA supporting the planning application. The site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate how the development will be safe otherwise planning permission will not be granted.

Policy SPCW5: Oxpens

Planning permission will be granted for a mixed-use development that delivers residential and/ or student accommodation, employment uses, and complementary town centre, leisure and community uses including retail, cafés and evening economy uses, which activate ground floor frontages and help create a vibrant city quarter.

The development is expected to deliver a minimum of 450 dwellings (or, if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied).

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Planning permission will only be granted for development on Oxpens where it enhances Oxpens Meadow to create a high quality public open space.

Development proposals should demonstrate how green and blue infrastructure will be integrated across the site in particular opportunities should be taken to create links between the river with the city centre. Oxpens Meadow should be expanded into the heart of the site and development proposals should respond appropriately to the riverside setting.

A sequential approach should be taken to locating development on the site. More vulnerable development will be expected to be located away from the areas at highest risk of flooding. A drainage strategy will be required to manage run-off and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA. Some of the access route is at risk of flooding (with low hazard) so an evacuation strategy should be considered as part of the FRA.

A undeveloped buffer zone of at least 10m width should be left alongside the River Thames watercourse in accordance with Policy G2.

Urban design and heritage

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. New high quality and well-located public space should be provided at the heart of the site. Development should be designed to create an attractive public realm and the buildings to form active frontages in particular along Oxpens Road. Development proposals should have regard to the design principles set out in the West End and Osney Mead SPD

Development should be designed to enhance the relationship and connection between the site and the river and to enhance physical and visual permeability of the site.

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on views, particularly from Hinksey Hill to the historic core, from views out of the historic core and from further views of the site.

Development proposals that exceed the height that the High Buildings TAN states may have an impact on the historic core (which says competition impacts may be possible from 15m and above) will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts can be understood and assessed as listed in Policy HD9.

New development must take into consideration the potential presence of archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

The development should provide for the landing of the new Oxpens Bridge across the Thames in order to facilitate pedestrian and cycle access from south of the city, Grandpont and Osney Mead to the Station and city centre. Routes within the site should be designed to strengthen the link to Castle Mill Stream and the Westgate and to enable clear and direct access towards the station. The development should contribute towards the cost of new infrastructure improvements to the public realm along Oxpens Road, including better pedestrian and cycle crossing links as well as new cycle lanes.

Natural resources

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement to be submitted

in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from both Oxpens Road and the railway line.

Development proposals will be required to include an appropriate site contamination investigation and applications will be required to demonstrate how any contamination issues will be resolved (Policy R5).

Nuffield Sites (Island / Worcester St Car Park/ South of Frideswide Square)

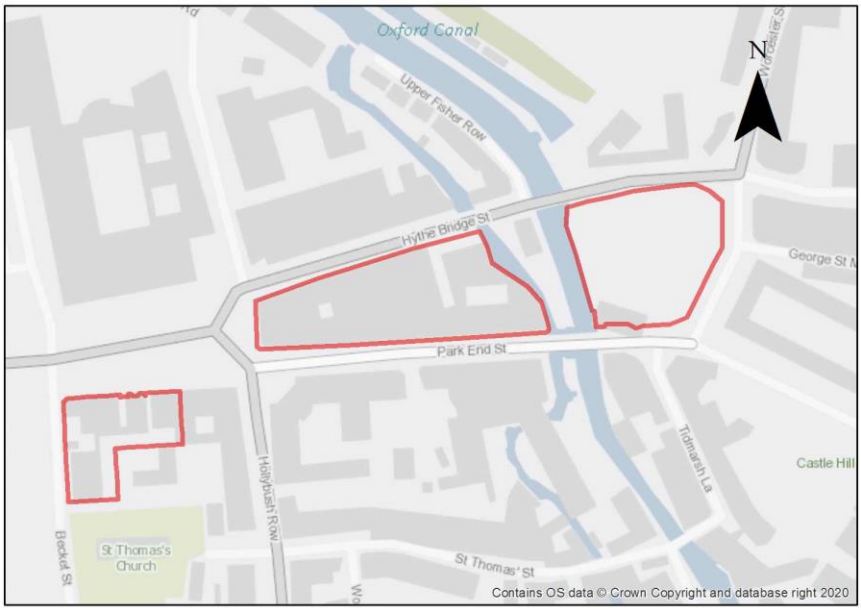
Site area: 1.41 hectares

Ward: Osney and St Thomas (Land South of Frideswide Square and Island Site) and Carfax & Jericho (Worcester St. Car Park)

Landowner: Nuffield College

Current use: Mix of uses across the sites including surface level car park, ground floor retail, residential and other town centre uses on upper floors.

Flood Zone: FZ3b but FZ2 for sequential test



The Nuffield Sites consist of the Island Site (0.63ha), Worcester Street Car Park (0.52ha)

and land south of Frideswide Square (0.26ha).

The Island Site runs between Park End Street and Hythe Bridge Street. The western edge of the site fronts on to Frideswide Square as the Royal Oxford Hotel. The eastern edge of the site is bounded by Fisher Row with Middle Fisher Row Gardens adjacent to Castle Mill Stream. The Island site contains a range of different uses including ground floor retail, hotel, cafés and bars with other uses (including office accommodation and a back-packers hostel) on the upper floors. Park End Street has a continuous frontage of mainly three storeys and with the distinctive former Hartwell's garage which runs through to Hythe Bridge Street, with an early 20th century brick former warehouse (also vacant) set back from the street frontage.

Worcester Street Car Park is a surface level car park on the site of a former 18th-19th century canal basin. Brick walls and Mature trees line the western edge of the car park along Castle Mill Stream. At the northern extent of the car park a retaining wall supports the raised causeway of the Hythe Bridge Crossing. The southern end of the car park retains an entrance pier from the Canal Basin with a 19th century Pub fronting onto Park End Street.

Land South of Frideswide Square comprises a well preserved late-Victorian group of commercial buildings along the southern edge of the Square with retail uses on the ground floor (but excluding the listed Coopers Marmalade Factory on the corner with Hollybush Row) and a further coherent group of early 20th century town houses along the Becket Street frontage.

Both Worcester Street Car Park and land south of Frideswide Square are within the boundary of the Central (City and University) Conservation Area. The Island site is just adjacent to the boundary. The redevelopment of Worcester Street Car Park presents an opportunity to enhance the setting of the adjacent listed buildings at Nuffield College and must consider local views towards the Castle motte. The car park also contains fragments of industrial archaeology of significant interest which should be sought to be preserved or incorporated within development proposals.

Some of the Nuffield Sites lie directly within the Raleigh Park View Cone and they are all within the city's High Buildings Area. These sites also form part of other important views out of the city (e.g., from St. George's Tower or the University Church of St. Mary The Virgin's Tower) and from further views (e.g., the potential for visibility from the South Park

and Doris Field view cones). This means that a visual impact assessment will be needed to ensure that redevelopment proposals do not harm these important historic views into and out of the city. The High Buildings Technical Advice Note (TAN) sets out that development proposals over 15m in this area have the potential to create competition with existing built form in views out from the historic city core in this area. The placement of any taller buildings needs to be carefully considered to avoid causing harm to the heritage significance of views into and out from Oxford's iconic skyline.

The Nuffield sites are suitable for a mix of uses including residential and town centre uses and should include uses that will activate ground floor frontages such as retail, cafes, restaurants and appropriate employment generating uses. Located within the western approach to the city centre, the redevelopment of these sites represents an opportunity to improve the urban fabric of the area. Their redevelopment provides an opportunity to enhance this area with high quality development, public realm and improved legibility and wayfinding to the historic city core.

Infrastructure interventions for the Nuffield Sites are considered within the West End and Osney Mead SPD. This SPD sets out a number of public realm, movement and green infrastructure improvements which could be incorporated as part of forthcoming development proposals including:

- Improvements to Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street to create a better environment for walking and cycling;
- Creation of a new active public space to help pedestrian and cycle movement;
- Appropriate tree planting;
- Introduction of safe, legible pedestrian crossings;
- Improvements to the location of bus stops.

Infrastructure interventions and improvements should be delivered in accordance with the West End and Osney Mead SPD.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on these sites currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. Whilst the overall proportion of green infrastructure across the site does not currently meet the policy target set in G3, the site contains a number of existing trees located within Middle Fisher Row Gardens and along the boundary of the Worcester Street Car Park with the Castle Mill Stream. These trees

perform an important public amenity function and provide valuable ecosystem services. The loss of existing trees should be resisted in line with Policy G1 and opportunities to plant new trees and improve connectivity within the Green Infrastructure network should be taken both on-site and in the wider public realm where appropriate. Development at this location would provide an opportunity to deliver significant enhancements along the stream corridor, which could include the provision of a natural buffer to the adjacent development.

The uses on this site, part of which is in Flood Zone 3b, have been justified through the sequential test. A Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out for this site to examine part b) of the Exception Test (which relates to whether the development is safe). The Level 2 SFRA considered the proposed development was appropriate and additional mitigation and/ or analysis may be required to demonstrate compliance with the Exception Test at the planning application stage. This is to be undertaken through a site-specific FRA supporting the planning application. The site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate how the development will be safe otherwise planning permission will not be granted. Some of the access routes are at risk of flooding, with high hazard in some places, so a flood warning strategy should be explored as part of the FRA.

A Masterplan for the Nuffield Sites should be developed in order to demonstrate how all the uses can be brought forward (including the minimum number of homes) in a way which addresses challenges (e.g., relationship with the historic city core, views and flood risk) and to ensure proposals make a positive contribution to the heritage significance of the area. Where a phased delivery strategy is proposed, this should ensure that all the residential development can be delivered across the whole development.

The site lies partially within the Central Conservation Area, and is in the setting of a number of listed buildings, including the Jam Factory, so development proposals need to ensure they do not detrimentally impact upon these.

Adjustments and considerations at design stage may be helpful in reducing the ongoing impact of poor air quality. Potential options may include considering layout options that place habitable spaces and openings away from pollution sources such as busy roads, landscape buffers, and designing in walking and cycling options as integral part of schemes.

Policy SPCW6: Nuffield Sites

Planning permission will be granted for a mix of uses across the three sites which delivers residential and/ or student accommodation, employment uses, and complementary town centre uses including retail, cafés and evening economy, which activate ground floor frontages. Active frontages should be delivered at ground floor level.

The minimum number of dwellings to be delivered is 59 (or if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied).

Development proposals should have regard to the principles set out in the West End and Osney Mead SPD.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. The Castle Mill Stream runs through the site and opportunities should be taken to improve access to it.

Opportunities should be investigated to demonstrate how access can be improved to Castle Mill Stream from the Worcester Street Car Park site.

Development Proposals should seek to enhance Middle Fisher Row. Such endeavours should be secured via financial contributions due to land ownership considerations.

A sequential approach should be taken to locating development on the site. More vulnerable development will be expected to be located away from the areas at highest risk of flooding. A drainage strategy will be required to manage run-off and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA. A flood warning strategy should be considered as part of the FRA.

<u>Urban design and heritage</u>

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. Development proposals must also be designed with consideration of their impact on views, particularly from Hinksey Hill to the historic core, from views out of the historic core and from further views of the site.

Development proposals that exceed the height that the High Buildings TAN states may have an impact on the historic core (which says competition impacts may be possible from 15m and above) will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts can be understood and assessed as listed in Policy HD9.

Development must be designed with consideration of its impact on the Central

Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings (Policy HD1 and HD2)

New development must take into consideration the potential presence of archaeological remains. Due to this potential, development should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access

A new active public space should be created on the Worcester Street Car Park site. The development should contribute to the cost of public realm improvements to Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street which could include new and improved pedestrian crossings, and other environmental improvements to create a safe and legible environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Natural resources

Because of uses on the site some areas of potential contamination are present on the site, so site investigation will be required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary (Policy R5).

The site is located in an air quality hot spot area. Development proposals must demonstrate compliance with policy R4 by ensuring that all necessary mitigation measures against poor air quality have been incorporated during the construction and operational phases and ensuring that any potential negative air quality impacts are adequately mitigated on an ongoing basis, within and surrounding the site.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from both the road and railway line.

Osney Mead

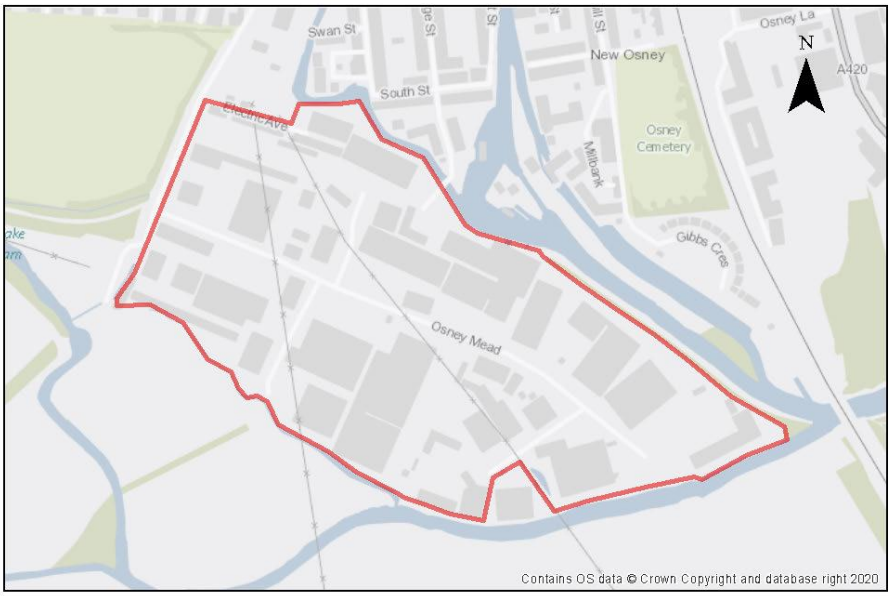
Site area: 17.4 hectares

Ward: Osney and St Thomas

Landowner: A number of landowners own various plots. The University of Oxford is the largest landowner

Current use: Industrial Estate

Flood Zone: FZ3b



Osney Mead Industrial Estate is located on an island between an arm of the River Thames, Botley Stream and Bulstake Stream, to the south of the Victorian terraces of New Osney. It comprises a number of large commercial and light industrial units of various sizes, styles and materials. Buildings are generally one- to two storeys with some taller units enclosed by a belt of trees along the southern boundary. Access is from Ferry Hinksey Road and Osney Mead. The boundary of the Osney Town Conservation Area extends across the River Thames and encapsulates the trees and the footpath to the north of the Osney Mead site.

Osney Mead is a Category 2 employment site that contributes to the local and wider economy and as such it is important that the jobs located here remain in the city. It is in a central location that offers one of the few opportunities for a range of employment uses in the city. It is in an accessible location close to the railway station and has some existing walking and cycling connections to the wider area. There is scope to use the site more intensively. It is important that this site maintains its role in creating a diverse employment base as it makes an important contribution to Oxford's employment land supply. There is significant potential to intensify existing uses at the site and to introduce new uses. There should be no loss in the number of jobs at the site.

The site is at high risk of fluvial flooding, the majority being in Food Zone 2 and 3a and a significant proportion being in Flood Zone 3b. This level of flood risk would have

significant implications on the type and nature of development that would be permissible on the site, and where it can be located. A comprehensive flood risk management strategy needs to be developed in order to make ensure that any uses here are delivered in way which enables safe access and egress in times of flood. The hazard rating is mostly low in the east of the site, but moving westwards the hazard rating increases to 'danger to most' in many areas. Early warning at the site is essential to ensure access routes can be utilised before they become flooded.

The largest landowner at the site is the University of Oxford. The site presents an excellent opportunity to create an innovation area in a central location close to the core of the university that will contribute to Oxford's role in the knowledge and high-tech economy. Academic uses linked to this could also be located at the site to maximise the benefit of linkages between academic research and innovation.

Osney Mead lies within the city centre boundary which means a wide range of town centre uses may be appropriate as part of the comprehensive redevelopment of the site. It will be important to activate the ground floor street frontage of existing and newly planned streets. Part of the site lies directly within the Raleigh Park view cone and part of the site lies within the city's High Buildings Area. The site also forms part of other important views out of the city (e.g., from St. George's Tower or the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin's Tower) and from further views (e.g., the potential for visibility from the Elsfield and Doris Field view cones). This means that a visual impact assessment will be needed to ensure that redevelopment proposals do not harm these important historic views into and out of the city. The High Buildings Technical Advice Note (TAN) sets out that development proposals over 15m in this area have the potential to create competition with existing built form in views out from the historic city core in this area. The placement of any taller buildings needs to be carefully considered to avoid causing harm to the heritage significance of views into and out from Oxford's iconic skyline.

Planned infrastructure improvements include a pedestrian and cycle bridge linking Osney Mead directly to the West End via the towpath (which itself needs improvements from Osney Mead, particularly for cyclists) and the Oxpens site which is programmed to be delivered within the early part of the plan period. This would provide better accessibility from Osney Mead and help create a natural extension of the city centre into this location.

A transformation of Osney Mead has the potential to be delivered within the plan period. The West End and Osney Mead SPD set out some infrastructure interventions to support this transformation. Suggested improvements to the Osney Mead site and surrounding

area include:

- Improved pedestrian crossings at Botley Road/ Ferry Hinksey Road;
- Public realm improvements to Ferry Hinksey Road (e.g., improved paving/ improved signage at Botley Road; tree planting etc.)
- Improvements to the Osney Mead road to create more welcoming environment including improved cycleways, widening of footpaths and green infrastructure
- Improvements to the public realm including the creation of a public space
- Potential for improved access to the river

Infrastructure interventions and improvements should be delivered in accordance with the West End and Osney Mead SPD.

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 may only be achieved by comprehensive development across the site, the potential benefits of which may in future justify a Compulsory Purchase Order.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

Osney Mead Industrial Estate contains a number of existing trees both individually and in groups. These on-site trees provide a public amenity function and make a valuable contribution to ecosystem services in this location. Groups of mature trees are present along the boundaries of the site which run along the River Thames, Bulstake Stream and the site's southern edge. The trees along the northern boundary are protected within the Osney Town Conservation Area. These trees (and the Thames) act as a visual (and sonic) buffer between the busy industrial estate and more tranquil residential streets of the Victorian suburbs on Osney Island.

The retention of trees within the site should be considered in accordance with Policy G1 and G3. The redevelopment of this site presents an opportunity to plant new trees to

benefit the public amenity of the area and improve the quality of the urban landscape and public realm.

Opportunities to improve the Green and Blue Infrastructure of the site (e.g., tree planting to benefit public amenity and improve the quality of the urban landscape and flood mitigation / sustainable urban drainage schemes) should be developed in accordance with guidance in the West End and Osney Mead SPD.

There are a number of mature trees within the site boundary and development proposals seek to minimise tree removal and seek to incorporate and introduce new semi-mature trees where possible within front gardens. All planting proposals should form part of a submitted landscape plan which demonstrates how trees will be retained and an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum green infrastructure targets set out in the Policy G3, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

The mix of uses on this site, which is at high risk of fluvial flooding, has been justified through the sequential test. A Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out for this site to examine part b) of the Exception Test (which relates to whether the development is safe). The Level 2 SFRA considered the proposed development was appropriate and additional mitigation and/ or analysis may be required to demonstrate compliance with the Exception Test at the planning application stage. This is to be undertaken through a site-specific FRA supporting the planning application. The site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate how the development will be safe otherwise planning permission will not be granted. The start of the proposed access route to/from the site is at significant flood risk. Approximately 1.2km from the site the route becomes flood free and onward travel is at minimal flood risk. For these reasons early warning will be essential to ensuring that the route can be utilised before floodwater inundates the site and wider area. A site-specific FRA should look into this in more detail and consider provision of a flood evacuation plan.

Policy SPCW7: Osney Mead

Planning permission will be granted for a mixed-use development that includes employment, academic and research and development uses, student accommodation, employer-linked affordable housing and market housing. The development of an innovation quarter is encouraged. The development is expected to deliver a minimum of 247 dwellings (or, if delivered as student rooms, the number of rooms that equate to this when the relevant ratio is applied) (unless further flood risk work undertaken cannot find a solution to ensure the safety of residents).

Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits, including uses which help activate appropriate ground floor street frontages. Such uses could include culture, arts and leisure uses.

The site would only be suitable for new academic institutional uses provided that the requirements of Policy H10 are met.

In order to maximise the full potential of Osney Mead, a comprehensive approach to future planning and development is required, in particular to ensure that site constraints, new infrastructure provision and land-use considerations are resolved on a site-wide basis.

A masterplan approved by the City Council should be developed prior to any development, and development should comply with the masterplan. This would ensure a comprehensive approach to development, which will maximise its potential, helping ensure site constraints, new infrastructure provision and land use considerations are resolved on a site-wide strategic basis. The masterplan and any subsequent development proposals should be delivered in accordance with the West End and Osney Mead SPD.

Any development proposals coming forward should not prejudice the comprehensive redevelopment of the site and should be delivered in accordance with an Oxford City Council approved masterplan.

Short-term incremental opportunities for development will be assessed on their merits and will need to have regard to the delivery of any agreed wider masterplanning ambitions for the site.

<u>Open space, nature and flood risk</u>
A 10-metre buffer to the watercourse should be maintained or re-instated where possible. Planning applications must be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment and development should incorporate any mitigation measures. The FRA should look at options for early warning and consider a flood evacuation plan. A sequential approach should be taken to locating development on the site, with car parks and other ancillary uses in higher risk areas where possible. A drainage strategy will be required to manage run-off and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA.

A sequential approach should be taken to locating development on the site. More vulnerable development will be expected to be located away from the areas at highest risk of flooding. A drainage strategy will be required to manage run-off and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA. The access route is at risk of flooding so an evacuation strategy should be considered as part of the FRA.

Urban design and heritage

Development proposals should have regard to the design principles set out in the West End and Osney Mead SPD. Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site.

Development should be designed to enhance the relationship and connection between the site and the river and to enhance the physical and visual permeability of the site.

Development proposals must also be designed with consideration of their impact on views, particularly from Hinksey Hill to the historic core, from views out of the historic core and from further views of the site, as well as consideration of impact on the Osney Town Conservation Area (Policy HD1).

Development proposals that exceed the height that the High Buildings TAN states may have an impact on the historic core (which says competition impacts may be possible from 15m and above) will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts can be understood and assessed as listed in Policy HD9.

Movement and access

New high quality public open space should be created on site. Footpaths and cycleways to and through the site should be provided and existing routes enhanced to increase accessibility and promote permeability. A masterplan should comprehensively address how new and enhanced pedestrian and cycle connections will be provided into the wider area, including connectivity across the river with a future bridge link from Grandpont to Oxpens.

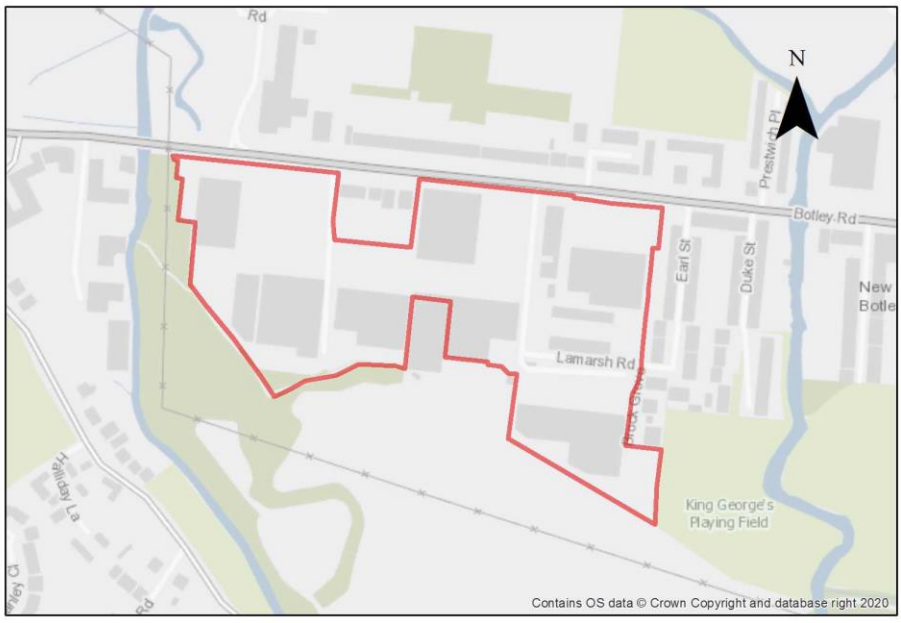
Natural resources

Because of uses on the site there are areas of potential contamination, so site investigation is required, and remedial works are likely to be necessary (Policy R5).

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from a number of sources.

Botley Road Retail Park

Site area: 8.85 hectares
Ward: Osney & St Thomas
Landowner: Various
Current use: Retail Park with associated car parking
Flood Zone: FZ3b



Botley Road Retail Park comprises single storey retail units with large areas of associated car parking. The site is made up of several subdivided plots of varying sizes with multiple landownerships and interests. To the rear of the site there are building suppliers yards and service yards for the retail units. These yards largely obscure views out to the landscape. The retail park is bounded by Botley Road to the North, open meadow to the South, with domestic scale residential properties to the East on Earl Street, Lamarsh Road, Brock Grove and opposite on the Botley Road.

There are few natural features of note. However green fields adjoin the site along the southern boundary, with ditches and trees screening the activities of the retail park. Today these fields form a local wildlife site and part of the Green Belt. There are two areas of Tree Preservation Order along this boundary. The Green Belt extends along the site's western boundary and includes the Seacourt Nature Park which connects into the site via a pedestrian/ cycle path. Seacourt Stream lies just beyond the north-west boundary of the site. To the east the site borders King George's Field. From here there are footpaths and cycleways providing connections towards Oatlands Road Recreation Ground and to Osney Mead Industrial Estate via Willow Walk which connects Ferry Hinksey Road with North Hinksey Lane to the west.

The fields to the south form an important part of the historic landscape setting for the city and the site is adjacent to the historic City and Liberty Boundary. There is the potential for

several protected views to be impacted by development proposals on this site. These include views out from Castle Mound, St. George's Tower, St. Michaels Tower, the Sheldonian Cupola, St. Mary the Virgin, and the Carfax Tower. Further views which may be impacted by proposals include the Crescent Hill and Rose Hill Viewcones, the view from Hinksey Meadow, views from Binsey Lane and the Road to Hinksey Heights Golf Course.

Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3. As such, proposals will need to ensure that an appropriate proportion of green features are incorporated into the design of development to meet the minimum targets set out in the policy, demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment.

The site is at high risk of fluvial flooding. Nearly 50% of the site area is within FZ3a, particularly towards the eastern side of the site and a central section (a section on the eastern side of Lamarsh Road comes within FZ3b). The rest of site lies within FZ2, with some patches showing low flood risk. Most of the surrounding area is within FZ3. The hazard rating is mostly low in the west but in the eastern part of the site towards Bulstake Stream the hazard rating is 'danger to most'. The access is also at high risk with some high hazard, so early warning of flood events it essential. The level of flood risk would have significant implications on the type and nature of development that would be permissible on the site, and where it can be located. In practice this will preclude the development of residential schemes on any part of the site.

The site is well served by various travel modes via Botley Road, including several bus routes to and from the city centre, dedicated cycle paths and footways. Vehicles access the site from Botley Road via three access points with right turn lanes, with a fourth access point from Lamarsh Road at the southeastern part of the site. The Seacourt Park & Ride is located directly opposite the site.

Cyclists can access the site via the cycle path on Botley Road which links to Oxford Station and the city centre. A cycle path (Oxford Cycle Route 24) goes east-west through the middle of the site in front of the retail units linking into Seacourt Nature Park for onward connections towards North Hinksey Lane to the west and to Lamarsh Road to the east. Other than this path, cyclists do not have a separated path once inside the site cyclists are compelled to share with cars and HGVs. Pedestrians can access the site via the footways on Botley Road or Lamarsh Road or via the Seacourt Nature Park. Footpaths and zebra crossings allow pedestrians to cross the car parks within the site.

Policy SPCW8: Botley Road Retail Park

Planning permission will be granted for employment uses that directly relate to key sectors of research led employment, and other economic and employment uses suitable for the location. Other complementary uses, including community and learning uses (Class F) will be considered on their merits.

Developers are encouraged to follow a coordinated masterplan approach for the site to encourage holistic development and avoid a situation where proposals coming forward in a piecemeal way.

Development proposals should have consideration for the policy and spatial guidance contained in the Botley Road Retail Park Development Brief (TAN 17).

Open space, nature and flood risk

Policies G1 and G3 require protection of existing green infrastructure features and enhancement of greening on site through the urban greening factor. Policy G5 requires onsite biodiversity enhancement, and Policy G2 requires new Green Infrastructure features and enhancement of existing features. It is expected that those requirements will be met in the following ways. Opportunities should be sought to enhance the spatial quality and environmental amenity of the site by reducing areas of hard surfacing, introducing natural features and other green infrastructure to improve landscaping and onsite biodiversity and environmental management, improving the quality of space between buildings, and making the most of the adjoining green setting with respect to views and direct connections.

Planning applications must be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment and development should incorporate any mitigation measures. The FRA should look at options for early warning and consider a flood evacuation plan. A sequential approach should be taken to locating development on the site, with car parks and other ancillary uses in higher risk areas where possible. A drainage strategy will be required to manage run-off and may need a raised floor level for some of the site, to be informed by the FRA.

This site is adjacent to the proposed site of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) therefore any future master planning of these sites should have consideration about the potential impact from the OFAS.

Urban design and heritage

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on views across the city and from the fields to the south which form an important part of the historic landscape setting for the city and demonstrate compliance with policy HD9. Dynamic views of the site should be tested along the Botley Road including from Osney Bridge, St. Frideswide's Church, Botley Road junction with Binsey Lane, Botley Road junction with Prestwich Place and the Westway.

Policy HD7 requires high quality design and the following sets out key considerations for achieving that on this site. The retail sheds sit a long way back

from the Botley Road to accommodate parking. Development proposals should aim to bring the buildings closer to Botley Road and creating an active frontage at ground floor level to give the development a presence on the Botley Road.

The site is bordered to the east and has a block of residential houses in the central edge of the site which must be treated sensitively to avoid overlooking or overbearing from new development. Massing should be tested in views identified and must not detract from the Osney Town Conservation Area. The roofscape should contribute to the rich and varied roofscape of Oxford and avoid long uninterrupted expanses at height.

Movement and access

Opportunities should be sought to enhance and promote more sustainable travel modes to the site, including significantly reducing the area of car parking, providing charging points to support low emission vehicles and providing dedicated segregated cycle/pedestrian routes through the site. The access and egress for cyclists and pedestrians to the site needs to be addressed in development proposals.

Natural resources

Any planning applications near the Seacourt Stream will also need to assess the potential for additional indirect impacts on the flora and fauna of those areas, including (but not limited to) potential impacts from lighting, noise, and dust, and provide adequate buffers and deliver ecological enhancements as required.

Additional protective and enhancement measures for river and wetland restoration as required around the watercourse and ecological buffers zones (minimum 10metres from bank top) should form part of development proposals.

There are areas of potential contamination, so a site investigation will be required, and remedial works undertaken as required in compliance with Policy R5.

Development proposals must include an acoustic design statement in compliance with Policy R7 as this site is part of an area which is subject to significant environmental noise from the traffic on the Botley Road.

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1. Non-Technical Summary

1.1 Introduction

The Oxford Local Plan 2040 will update the Oxford Local Plan 2036. It will allocate sites for housing, employment and other uses, and manage development in the city. It includes measures to improve public transport, protect the historic environment and nature, reduce carbon emissions, and protect against flooding. It will be used to make decisions about planning applications.

The environmental, social and economic impacts of Local Plans must be assessed through Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SA/SEA aims to ensure that the plan has few negative impacts and many positive impacts. An SA/SEA 'scoping report' was published in July 2021 alongside an Issues Consultation for the Local Plan 2040. In September 2022, an SA/SEA alternatives report assessed the impacts of plan options as part of the development of the Local Plan Preferred Options consultation ('Reg. 18').

This SA/SEA report updates the scoping report, and assesses the impacts of the submission Local Plan 2040 ('Reg. 19').

1.2 Policy context

The *National Planning Policy Framework* requires local authorities to deliver enough homes, build a strong economy, support non-car travel, protect the Green Belt, support good design, deal with climate change, and protect nature and heritage. The *Environment Act 2021* will require development to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain. The *Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill* would make many changes, including replacing SA/SEA with "environmental outcomes reports", setting up national development management policies that would apply to all local authorities, and removing local authorities' duty to cooperate with neighbouring authorities.

Government dropped its plans for an Oxford-Cambridge "*knowledge arc*" in 2022, as well as plans for an East-West expressway and 1 million new homes in the region: regional partnerships are expected to take forward any such work. The refresh of *Oxfordshire's Strategic Economic Plan* is likely to promote less population and jobs growth, but still higher than natural growth rates. Work on the *Oxfordshire Plan 2050* stopped in 2022. The *Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy* of 2017 supports an East-West rail link between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Bedford; redevelopment of Oxford Station; and upgrades to the A34. The *Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan* of 2022 aims, by 2040, to replace or remove about half of current car trips in Oxfordshire, and deliver a net-zero transport network.

Oxford declared a *climate emergency* in 2019, and has set out an Action Plan for bringing about a net zero carbon city by 2040. It has been piloting a *Zero Emission Zone* since 2022, and may expand this to much of the city centre. *Low Traffic Neighbourhoods* have been in place in Cowley and East Oxford since 2021. From 2024, six *pilot traffic filters* will prevent cars but allow other forms of transport.

1.3 Sustainability context and existing problems

Table 1.1 summarises the current status in Oxford, and the likely situation in 2040 if the Local Plan 2040 was not in place.

Table 1.1 Current situation and likely future without the plan

SA/SEA topic	Current situation	Likely future without plan	Summary findings
1. Carbon emissions	-	-	Despite an overall downward trend, carbon emissions are still much above the net zero carbon emissions that Oxford City Council aims to achieve by 2040.
2. Resilience to climate change	--	-	Between 2,000 and 5,000 homes are currently at flood risk. This is likely to increase with climate change. A flood reduction scheme is proposed for the west side of Oxford.
3. Efficient use of land	0	0	The high housing need and high cost of building on previously developed / contaminated sites means that there is more pressure to develop greenfield sites.
4. Housing	--	--	House prices in Oxford are very high and are likely to rise faster than average salaries. Delivering affordable housing is a priority. There is not enough capacity within Oxford to meet all of the city's housing needs to 2040.
5. Inequalities and health	-	-	The health of Oxford's residents is generally good, but the city's overall wealth masks local areas of poverty and health inequalities.
6. Services, facilities and infrastructure	+	+	The pandemic and other factors have led to the closure of some community and cultural facilities, and shown people's reliance on the Internet.
7. Green infrastructure	++	0	Oxford has much good quality green space. As the population increases there will be more pressure on this space.
8. Traffic and air pollution	--	0	Oxford's roads are congested and air quality is poor despite good bus services and high levels of cycling. The new zero emission zone, low traffic neighbourhoods and traffic filters should improve this.
9. Water	-	--	Oxford is in an area of serious water stress. There may not be enough water by 2040. Water quality in the area is mostly moderate but poor in some parts.
10. Biodiversity	-	0	Biodiversity is falling worldwide. The Environment Act requires 10% biodiversity gain in new development.
11. Urban design and historic env.	++	+	Oxford has a high-quality landscape and heritage. High levels of development and tourism continue to put a strain on historic sites and the landscape.
12. Employment and economy	++	++	Oxford has a very strong economy, with high employment. There is strong demand for research and development uses. Oxford's housing shortage cause problems for businesses.

Key problems in Oxford include:

- Oxford has very high housing costs, limited land available for housing, and difficulty in providing affordable housing.
- There are high levels of inequality across the city.
- Much of Oxford is prone to flooding: this is likely to increase with climate change.
- Oxford is still far from achieving its 2040 target of net zero carbon emissions.
- All of Oxford is an Air Quality Management Area because of transport pollution.
- Nature in Oxford, and nationally, is under pressure from climate change, air pollution, and development.
- Oxford is in an area of serious water stress.

1.4 SA/SEA Framework

This SA/SEA uses the framework at Table 1.2 to assess the impacts of the Local Plan 2040 policies. An adapted framework is used for development sites.

Table 1.2 SA/SEA Framework	
1.	To achieve the city's ambition to reach net zero **carbon emissions** by 2040
2.	To build **resilience to climate change**, including reducing risks from overheating, flooding and the resulting detriment to well-being, the economy and the environment.
3.	To encourage the **efficient use of land** through good design and layout, and minimise the use of greenfield and Green Belt land
4.	To meet **local housing needs** by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent affordable home
5.	To reduce poverty, social exclusion, and health **inequalities**
6.	To provide accessible essential **services and facilities**
7.	To provide adequate green infrastructure, **leisure and recreation** opportunities and make these readily accessible for all
8.	To reduce **traffic and associated air pollution** by improving travel choice, shortening journeys and reducing the need to travel by car/ lorry
9.	To achieve **water** quality targets and manage water resources
10.	To conserve and enhance Oxford's **biodiversity**
11.	To promote **good urban design** through the protection and enhancement of the **historic environment** and heritage assets while respecting local character and context and promoting innovation.
12.	To achieve sustainable inclusive **economic growth**, including the development and expansion of a diverse and knowledge-based economy and the culture/leisure/ visitor sector

Key throughout this report:

Very positive impacts (compared to the current situation)	++	Negative impacts (compared to the current situation)	-
Positive impacts (compared to the current situation)	+	Very negative impacts (compared to the current situation	--
Neutral / none	0	Unclear	?
Some positive and some negative impacts	+/-		

1.5 Alternatives

The planning team considered different ways of writing the plan.

A. Different approaches to **greenfield sites** (sites not previously developed):

A1. Direct development away from greenfield sites, but assess whether there are any Green Belt or other greenfield sites that are not important for biodiversity, flood storage, or the rest of the Green Belt.
A2. Allow development on greenfield sites only if no brownfield sites are available and needs are not being met on brownfield sites.

A1 is preferred because it provides the best balance between competing sustainability objectives.

B. Different approaches to **housing requirements**:

B1. Capacity-based / constraint-based housing requirement (thought to be c7,852 dwellings 2020-2040 at the options stage, now known to be 9,612)
B2. Housing requirement based on the government's Standard Method calculation of need. (c14,580 dwellings 2020-2040)
B3. Housing requirement that seeks to achieve and support economic growth; seek to meet full affordable housing need (more housing than B2).

B1 is preferred. It meets government requirements but prevents unsuitable sites from being developed.

C. Different approaches to **employer-linked affordable housing**:

C1. Allow employer-linked affordable housing to be built on specified sites.
C2. Do not have an employer-linked housing policy.

C1 is preferred because having this policy in the Oxford Local Plan 2036 has resulted in some employers exploring this option. It helps to provide affordable housing.

D. Different approaches to **Houses of Multiple Occupation** (HMOs):

D1. Allow a maximum of 20% HMOs in any area
D2. Allow new purpose-built HMOs in appropriate locations.
D3. Concentrate HMOs in certain areas
D4. Do not have any restriction on HMOs.

A combination of D1 and D2 is preferred because this approach has over time helped to manage the impact of HMOs.

E. Different approaches to the **balance of jobs and housing**:

E1.Try to meet employment needs, but prioritise housing, even if that means that employment needs cannot be met in full within the city.
E2. Grow employment-generating uses, to try to meet all forecast job needs within the city.

E3. Provide a broad employment base, including warehouse and small light-industrial sites.

E1 is preferred. Housing needs to be prioritised because lack of housing impacts on the economy, reduces housing affordability, and can lead to overcrowding.

F. Different approaches to the **location of new employment uses**:

F1. Intensify and modernise existing employment sites, and sites in the city and district centres.
F2. Do not allow new employment-generating uses outside of existing sites.
F3. As F1, but allow new employment uses next to a few existing sites.
F4. Use national policy and other plan policies to determine new employment sites.

A combination of F1 and F2 is preferred because focusing employment use on existing sites frees up other sites for other uses, particularly housing.

G. Different approaches for **delivering net gains in biodiversity**:

G1. Deliver 10% net gain ideally on site, otherwise in the local neighbourhood or in the Nature Recovery network.
G2. Require more than the legally-required 10% net gain on certain sites.

G1 is preferred. G2 can probably not be achieved onsite for many development sites in the city. Instead, the Local Plan seeks to drive onsite greening in other, more flexible ways tailored to context of city and its constraints.

H. Different approaches to **retrofitting existing buildings**:

H1. Support energy efficiency measures for all existing buildings that are not heritage assets.
H2. For heritage assets, support energy efficiency measures where their benefits outweigh harm.
H3. Do not include a retrofitting policy.

A combination of H1 and H2 are preferred, recognising that the Local Plan needs to enable and encourage retro-fit of existing buildings wherever possible.

I. Different approaches to **parking standards**:

I1. New housing to be car-free in sites with good access to public transport and local shops, and low-car in other sites.
I2. No additional parking on non-residential sites, and less parking where there is good access to a range of facilities.
I3. All new development to be car-free.
I4. Low car but not car-free parking standards, possibly differing according to location.

The preferred alternative is a combination of options I1, I2, and I4. Oxford is a compact city where land is scarce so land for parking should be limited. However, it is not realistic to

make development low car if it is not well served by public transport and local shops, and if opportunities for parking nearby are not limited by a Controlled Parking Zone. For non residential development, the Local Plan seeks a reducing in parking.

From an original list of 84 possible **development sites** which were consulted on at regulation 18 stage, 50 have been allocated. They were individually assessed, and measures have been identified to minimise the impacts of each site.

1.6 Assessment of the plan impacts

The vision, themes and policies in the Local Plan 2040 have been assessed using the SA/SEA Framework of Table 1.2. Table 1.3 shows the results. Appendix A gives more details. The impact of developing individual sites has also been assessed using a modified version of Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Assessment of plan vision, themes, policies and sites

	1. Carbon emissions	2. Climate change resilience	3. Efficient use of land	4. Local housing need	5. Inequalities	6. Services and facilities	7. Leisure, recreation	8. Traffic, air pollution	9. Water	10. Biodiversity	11. Design, heritage	12. Economic growth
Vision	++	++	+	0	++	0	+	0	+	+	+	++
Themes												
Healthy and inclusive	0	0	0	++	+	+	0	+-	0	-	0	0
Prosperous with a globally important role	-?	0	0	0	+	?	0	-	-?	-?	0	++
Green, biodiverse and resilient	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	+?	++	0	0
Utilizes its resources with care	+	+	+	0	0	+?	0	0	+	+	0	0
Respects its heritage, high-quality design	0	0	0	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	+-
Liveable, with strong communities	+-	0	+	0	+	++	0	+-	0	0	0	0
Policies												
S1 Spatial strategy & presumption in favour of	?	0	0	?	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	+
S2 Design code & guidance	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	++	0
S3 Infrastructure delivery in new developmen	+?	0	0	0	0?	0+	0	+	0	0	0	0
S4 Plan viability	-?	0	0	+-	0	0	0	-?	0	0	0	+
H1 Housing requirement	-	-	+-	+-	+-	-?	0	+-	0	?	?	+-
H2 Delivering affordable homes	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H3 Affordable housing contribution from new	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+-
H4 Affordable housing contributions from self	0	0	0	+-	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
H5 Employer-linked affordable housing	+	0	?	+	?	0	0	+	0	+-	?	+
H6 Mix of dwelling sizes (number bedrooms)	0	0	+?	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H7 Development involving loss of dwellings	0	0	0	0	0	+?	0	0	0	0	0	0
H8 Houses in Multiple Occupation	0	0	+	+-	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+-
H9 Location of new student accommodation	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+-
H10 Linking new academic facilities with the	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H11 Homes for travelling communities	0	0	?	+	+	0	?	0	0	0	0	0
H12 Homes for boat dwellers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

	1. Carbon emissions	2. Climate change resilience	3. Efficient use of land	4. Local housing need	5. Inequalities	6. Services and facilities	7. Leisure, recreation	8. Traffic, air pollution	9. Water	10. Biodiversity	11. Design, heritage	12. Economic growth
H13 Older persons and other specialist accom	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H14 Self-build & custom housebuilding	0	0	-?	+	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H15 Hostels	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H16 Boarding school accommodation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+-
E1 Employment strategy	+	0	++	+?	0	0	0	+?	0	0	0	+
E2 Warehousing and storage uses	0	0	+	+?	0	0	0	+-	0	0	0	-?
E3 Affordable workspace strategy & affordab	0	0	?	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+
E4 Community employment and procurement plans	0	0	0	+?	+?	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
E5 Tourism and short stay accommodation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+?	0	0	0	+
G1 Protection of green infrastructure	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
G2 Enhancement & provision of new green &	0?	+	-	+-	0	0	++	+	+?	+	+	0
G3 Provision of new green & blue features	+	+	-	+-	0	0	0	+?	0	+?	+	0
G4 Delivering mandatory net gains in biodiver	+?	0	-?	-?	0	0	+	0	+?	+?	0	0
G5 Enhancing onsite biodiversity in Oxford	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
G6 Protecting Oxford's biodiversity including	0	0	-?	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0
G7 Flood risk and Flood Risk Assessments	0	+	+-	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+-
G8 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	0	+	-	-?	0	0	+	0	+	+?	0	0
G9 Resilient design and construction	+-	++	0	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	+	0
R1 Net Zero buildings in operation	++	0	+-	+-	+	0	0	+?	0	+?	-?	+-
R2 Embodied carbon in the construction proc	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+?	0	0
R3 Retro-fitting existing buildings	+?	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R4 Air quality assessments and standards	+?	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+?	0	0
R5 Land contamination	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R6 Soil quality	0	0	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R7 Amenity and environmental health impact	0	0	+-	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+?
HD1 Conservation areas	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
HD2 Listed buildings	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD3 Registered Parks and Gardens	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD4 Scheduled Monuments	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD5 Archaeology	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD6 Non-designated heritage assets	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD7 Principles of high-quality design	0	0	0	+?	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
HD8 Using context to determine appropriate	+?	0	++	+	+	+?	0	+	0	0	+-	+?
HD9 Views and building heights	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD10 Health impact assessment	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD11 Privacy, daylight and sunlight	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD12 Internal space standards for residential	0	0	-	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD13 Outdoor amenity space	0	+?	+-	+-	+-	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
HD14 Accessible and adaptable homes	0	0	-?	+	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD15 Bin & bike stores & external servicing	0	0	?	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
C1 Town centre uses	+	0	+	?	0	++	0	++	0	0	0	+
C2 Maintaining vibrant centres	+	0	0	0	+	++	0	+	0	0	+?	0
C3 Protection, alteration & provision of local	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

	1. Carbon emissions	2. Climate change resilience	3. Efficient use of land	4. Local housing need	5. Inequalities	6. Services and facilities	7. Leisure, recreation	8. Traffic, air pollution	9. Water	10. Biodiversity	11. Design, heritage	12. Economic growth
C4 Protection, alteration & provision of learn	0	0	+	0	0	+	-?	0	0	0	0	0
C5 Protection, alteration & provision of cultur	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+
C6 Transport assessments, travel plans &	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0	+-	0	0	0	+-
C7 Bicycle & powered two wheelers parking	+	0	+-	+-	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
C8 Motor vehicle parking design standards	+	+	+	+-	+-	0	0	+	0	0	0	-?
C9 Electric vehicle charging	+	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	0	0	-?	0
Areas of Focus												
Northern Edge of Oxford	--	-	-	+-	0	--	+	--	-?	--	0	++
Cowley Branch Line and Littlemore	-	-	++	+	++	?	?	+-	-?	0	0	++
Marston Road and Old Road	-	0	+	+	0	+	0	+	-?	-	-	+
North of the City Centre	0	0	+	+?	0	0	0	0	0	-?	+	++
West End and Botley	-	-	++	?	0	0	0	-	0	-?	+	++

Table 1.4 is a summary of the plan's overall impacts. Other plans, projects and underlying trends will have additional impacts.

Table 1.4 Overall impacts of the Local Plan 2040

SA/SEA topic	Overall impact of the plan	
1. Carbon emissions	+/-	The plan policies on net zero carbon, employer-linked affordable housing, building retrofits, restricted car parking and vibrant local centres promote walking, cycling and public transport. However its plans for 9,612 new homes will increase the number of people in Oxford, which will increase carbon emissions, at least in near term though broader changes such as decarbonisation of energy grid and transition to EVs should reduce this over time.
2. Climate change resilience	+/-	The plan policies on flood risk, sustainable drainage systems and resilience strongly support climate change resilience. Green infrastructure and limited car parking will help to prevent the urban heat island effect and support shading. Providing 9,612 new homes could, however, further urbanise the city, and increase the potential for run-off and flooding. The sites at Osney Mead and Botley Road are particularly prone to flooding.
3. Efficient use of land	+/-	The plan policies on housing density, more intense use of employment land, student housing, and restricted car parking all help to make most efficient use of land in Oxford. Policy H1, which aims to provide 9,612 new homes in Oxford, would require use of greenfield land, but would reduce the need for housing land

SA/SEA topic	Overall impact of the plan	
		elsewhere in Oxfordshire, where it would typically not reach the same densities and would require more parking space.
4. Local housing need	-	Oxford currently has too few homes compared to jobs, making home ownership and market rental unaffordable for many people. There is also much in-commuting. Oxford needs 1,322 homes per year, including 740 affordable homes per year. This is more than the capacity of the city to deliver. Policy H1 provides for at least 9,612 new homes between 2020 and 2040 (481 homes per year). Policies H2-H5 aim to provide affordable homes, and policies H8-H15 focus on providing specialist accommodation for people who need temporary accommodation, students and boarding school pupils, Gypsies and Travellers, boat dwellers, and older people. Overall, the plan will reduce local housing need but there will still be under-provision which adjacent local authorities would need to fill. As a result of a memorandum of cooperation of 2016, the other Oxfordshire authorities' current local plans are providing for about 15,000 homes to deal with Oxford's unmet housing needs. However, Since the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 was shelved and with the Duty to Cooperate no longer being required, the other Oxfordshire authorities may be less likely in the future to provide for Oxford's outstanding housing need.
5. Inequalities	+	The plan strongly supports walking, cycling and public transport, helping people who do not have access to a car. The Local Plan also aims to provide significant amounts of affordable housing through policies H2-H5. Its focus on healthy travel and green infrastructure also helps to address health inequalities. Policy CBLLAOF will improve access and place-making in Cowley and Littlemore.
6. Services and facilities	0	The plan aims to ensure that adequate infrastructure, including services in district and local centres, are available to support Oxford's housing and employment growth. The plan aims to prevent the loss of community facilities, schools and cultural sites.
7. Leisure, recreation	0	The plan says little about leisure and recreation. Its policies on nature would have an indirect positive impacts.
8. Traffic and air pollution	++	Many of the plan policies, and the plan overall, strongly support walking, cycling and public transport. This includes policies on low-car development, vibrant centres, high(er) density development, limited car parking, and bike parking. Indirectly, these will help to reduce traffic and air pollution.
9. Water	-	The plan says little about water quality. It expects new housing to use no more than 110 litres of water per person per day. The policies on green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and sustainable drainage systems support good water quality. However, the planned 9,612 new homes will increase water use and run-off.
10.	+/-	The plan has strong policies to support and improve nature. Its

SA/SEA topic	Overall impact of the plan	
Biodiversity		policies on climate change, sustainable drainage and air quality also indirectly support nature. However, the planned 9,612 homes will involve building on 19 greenfield sites, reducing their biodiversity. Eight of the sites are on or next to nature conservation areas, and 10 are on or next to water bodies.
11. Design and heritage	-	The plan's heritage policies aim to protect the city's heritage. Its design policies promote high-quality design. However, the plan policies on renewable energy and electric vehicle charging, and the planned construction on 19 greenfield sites, will negatively affect the landscape and townscape. The proposed development include 15 in Conservation Areas and 7 that contain listed buildings.
12. Economic growth	+	The plan vision is to support research and development in Oxford. A key constraint to employment in Oxford is the lack of affordable housing. As such, the plan focuses on providing housing over new employment land. Job growth is planned to be mostly by building more intensely on existing employment sites. The scale of housing provision supports Oxfordshire's wider economic policies.

1.7 Minimising the plan's negative impacts, maximising its positive impacts

The SA/SEA makes suggestions for how to minimise the negative impacts of the Local Plan, maximise its positive impacts, and fine-tune some of the plan wording. The plan team have incorporated some of these suggestions into the plan. For the remaining suggestions, they have explained why the suggestions were not taken on board. Changes made to the plan in response to the SA/SEA suggestions include:

- Specifying what minimum proportion of the area of development sites should be provided for self-build and custom housebuilding;
- Clearer distinction between policies G1 (protection of green infrastructure) and G2 (enhancement and provision of new green infrastructure);
- Clearer links between policies G9 (resilient design) and R1 (net zero buildings);
- Clearer statement requiring bin and bike stores in new development.
- Setting out additional enviornmental protection measures in specific site allocation policies.

1.8 Monitoring the plan's impacts

The social, environmental and economic impacts of the Local Plan will be monitored, so that the plan can be changed if unexpected impacts come to light. Table 1.5 shows the proposed monitoring framework. The impacts of the plan will be monitored every year. The sustainability outcomes will be monitored every three years.

Table 1.5 Proposed SA/SEA monitoring

SA/SEA topic	Monitoring of Local Plan 2040 impacts (every year)	Monitoring of sustainability outcomes (every 3 years)
1. Carbon emissions	Contributions secured and proportion of fund spent against climate change offsetting fund	Change in per capita CO2 emissions
2. Climate change resilience	Applications permitted against Environment Agency flood risk advice	Change in no. homes in flood zone 3
3. Efficient use of land	Applications permitted on protected green space	
4. Local housing need	Net housing completions	Change in population / households
5. Inequalities	Net affordable housing completions	Index of Multiple Deprivation;
		Health dimension of Index of Multiple Deprivation
6. Services and facilities	Applications permitted for new community spaces, cultural venues and visitor attractions	Significant new community assets, cultural venues and visitor attractions
7. Leisure, recreation	Applications permitted on protected green space	
8. Transport and air quality	Air quality progress: NOx, PM10, PM2.5	Modal split of journey in Oxford
9. Water	Applications permitted on protected peat reserves	% river length assessed as fairly good or very good for chemical quality and biological quality
10. Biodiversity	Biodiversity net gain being delivered in the city	Area (ha) in areas of biodiversity importance
		Condition of SSSIs, integrity of SACs
11. Design and heritage	Applications permitted that result in the loss of listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, scheduled monuments	Change in no. heritage assets at risk
12. Economic growth	Net gain / loss of employment floorspace (sqm)	% employment / unemployment in the city

1.9 Next steps

The Regulation 19 Local Plan and this SA/SEA report will be consulted on in Autumn 2023. **Details of how to feedback on consultation to be added here closer to consultation**. The Local Plan will be submitted for examination in March 2024, and it is expected to be adopted in summer 2025.

2. Introduction

This Sustainability Appraisal (SA) / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) report accompanies the Regulation 19 consultation on the proposed Oxford Local Plan 2040. This chapter discusses the Oxford Local Plan 2040, SEA and SA, and the structure of the rest of this report.

2.1 Background to Oxford City

Oxford City Council is at the heart of Oxfordshire. It has a total area of about 46 km^2 (17.7 miles^2), with parts of the urban area very densely developed. The built-up area extends to the administrative boundary around much of the eastern side of the city, but the river corridors of the Thames and Cherwell penetrate as extensive green wedges into the heart of the city. This gives Oxford a distinct physical form, with much of the residential population concentrated to the east of the city centre (Figure 1.1).

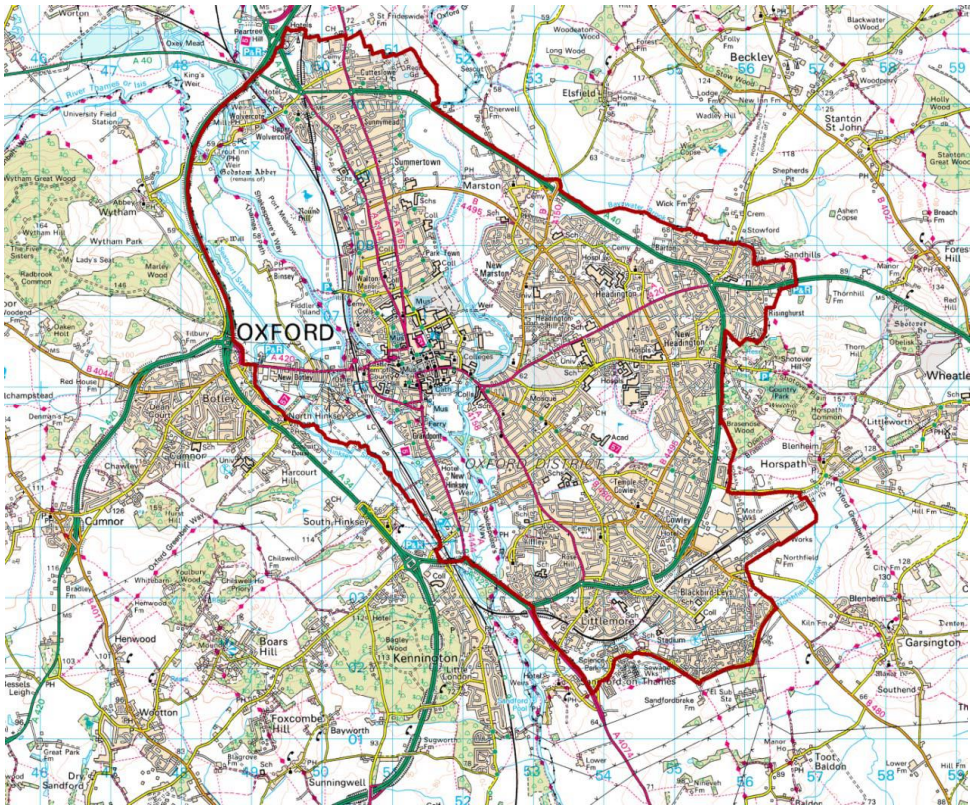


Figure 1.1 - Map of Oxford Map © Crown Copyright and database right 2016. Ordnance Survey 100019348.

Oxford's population is approximately 162,000[1]. One-third of the population is aged between 18 and 29. Oxford is home to 42,000 students, and 5,000 businesses providing 129,000 jobs. There is a high level of in-commuting in the City: more than 40% of the city's workforce lives outside Oxford.

Oxford is a compact city with a unique and world-renowned built heritage. Its original Saxon street pattern and some of the earliest buildings and monuments still survive. Around 27% of Oxford is within the Green Belt which, unusually, not only constrains development in the outer cordon of the city, but also through the city's centre. Oxford sits at the confluence of the Thames and Cherwell rivers and is quite flat, so it is prone to flooding from a range of sources. The historic city parks and

[1] ONS population estimates 2021: https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E07000178/

nature conservation areas create pockets and corridors of green within the administrative boundary; several have national and international nature conservation designations, further constraining development.

Oxford is one of the most unaffordable place to live in the country. In recent years, Oxford has experienced a booming housing market with rising house prices. This has led to open-market housing becoming expensive and difficult to obtain. It has also limited the supply of affordable housing, and there is now a huge need for affordable housing. There are severe pressures on the housing stock, with concentrations of Houses in Multiple Occupation, many homeless and vulnerable people, and areas of deprivation with relatively high crime rates, health deprivation and poor educational achievement.

Oxford has remained economically very successful despite the global recession of the 2000s, Brexit and the Covid pandemic. The government sees Oxford as playing a key role in the growth of the region, with high future housing and economic growth.

2.2 The Oxford Local Plan 2040

The Oxford Local Plan 2040 carries forward and updates policies set in the Oxford Local Plan 2036. It also allocates sites for housing, employment and other uses such as retail. It provides policies for the management of development in the city, including for the preservation and enhancement of the historic environment, the conservation of nature and biodiversity, urban design, achieving the city's net zero targets and flood risk management. It will be used in determining planning applications and to guide investment decisions across the city.

The Local Plan 2040 vision is:

> "In 2040 Oxford will be a healthy and inclusive city, with strong communities that benefit from equal opportunities for everyone, not only in access to housing, but to nature, employment, social and leisure opportunities and to healthcare. Oxford will be a city with a strong cultural identity, that respects our heritage, whilst maximising opportunities to look forwards to innovate, learn and enable businesses to prosper. The vision is one which supports research and development in the life sciences and health sectors which are and will provide solutions to global challenges. The environment will be central to everything we do; it will be more biodiverse, better connected and more resilient. We will utilise resources prudently whilst mitigating our impacts on the soil, water, and air. The city will be net zero carbon, whilst our communities, buildings and infrastructure will be resilient to the impacts of climate change and other emergencies."

Table 2.1 shows the policies in the Local Plan.

Table 2.1 Policies in the Local Plan 2040

Strategy	**S1**	Spatial Strategy and Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	S2	Design Code and Guidance
	S3	Infrastructure Delivery in New Development
	S4	Plan Viability
Ho usi	**H1**	Housing Requirement
	H2	Delivering affordable homes

	H3	Affordable housing contribution from new purpose-built student accommodation
	H4	Affordable housing contribution from self-contained older persons accommodation
	H5	Employer-linked affordable housing
	H6	Mix of dwelling sizes (number of bedrooms)
	H7	Development involving loss of dwellings
	H8	Houses in Multiple Occupation
	H9	Location of new student accommodation
	H10	Linking new academic facilities with the adequate provision of student accommod.
	H11	Homes for travelling communities
	H12	Homes for boat dwellers
	H13	Older persons and other specialist accommodation
	H14	Self-build and custom housebuilding
	H15	Hostels
	H16	Boarding school accommodation
Employment	**E1**	Employment strategy
	E2	Warehousing and storage uses
	E3	Affordable workspace strategy & affordable workspace provision on commercial sites
	E4	Community employment and procurement plans
	E5	Tourism and short stay accommodation
Green city	**G1**	Protection of the green infrastructure
	G2	Enhancement and provision of new green and blue features
	G3	Provision of new green and blue features – Urban greening factor
	G4	Delivering mandatory net grains in biodiversity
	G5	Enhancing onsite biodiversity in Oxford
	G6	Protecting Oxford's biodiversity including the ecological network
	G7	Flood risk and Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs)
	G8	Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
	G9	Resilient design and construction
Resources	**R1**	Net zero buildings in operation
	R2	Embodied carbon in the construction process
	R3	Retro-fitting existing buildings
	R4	Air quality assessments and standards
	R5	Land contamination
	R6	Soil quality
	R7	Amenity and environmental health impacts of development
Design & heritage	**D1**	Conservation Areas
	D2	Listed buildings
	D3	Registered Parks and Gardens
	D4	Scheduled Monuments
	D5	Archaeology
	D6	Non-designated heritage assets
	D7	Principles of high-quality design
	D8	Using context to determine appropriate density
	D9	Views and building heights
	D10	Health Impact Assessment
	D11	Privacy, daylight and sunlight
	D12	Internal space standards for residential development
	D13	Outdoor amenity space
	D14	Accessible and adaptable homes

	D15	Bin and bike stores and external servicing features
Liveable city	**C1**	Town centre uses
	C2	Maintaining vibrant centres
	C3	Protection, alteration and provision of local community facilities
	C4	Protection, alteration and provision of learning and non-residential institutions
	C5	Protection, alteration and provision of cultural venues and visitor attractions
	C6	Transport assessments, travel plans and service and delivery plans
	C7	Bicycle parking design standards
	C8	Motor vehicle parking design standards
	C9	Electric vehicle charging

2.3. Strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and Sustainability appraisal (SA)

The European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive requires planning authorities to carry out an environmental assessment as part of the preparation of land-use plans (e.g. Local Plans). SEA predicts and assesses the social, economic and environmental effects of the plan, and of other options considered while the plan was being developed. It aims to ensure that sustainable development is integrated into the plan making process. The Directive was transposed into English law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 SI No 1633 ('SEA regulations').

Table 2.2 shows the requirements of the SEA Directive and where they are covered in the SA/SEA for the Oxford Local Plan 2040.

Table 2.2 – SEA Directive requirements and where they are covered in the SA/SEA for the Oxford Local Plan 2040	
SEA Directive Requirements	**Where covered**
a) an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme…	Sec. 2 of this report
… and relationship with other plans or programmes	Sec. 2 of the scoping report, updated at Sec. 3.1 of this report
b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme	In individual Topic Papers
c) the environmental characteristics of the areas likely to be affected	In separate site appraisal forms, summarised at Table 6.2 of this report
d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;	In individual Topic Papers, summarised at Sec. 3.3 of this report
e) The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	In individual Topic Papers
f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. (Footnote: These	Sec. 4 and 6 of this report

effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects);	
g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;	Sec. 7 of this report
h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with...	Sec. 5 of this report
… and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;	Sec. 2.4 and 2.6 of this report
i) a description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10;	Sec. 8 of this report
j) a non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.	Sec. 1 of this report
Consultation: authorities with environmental responsibility, when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report (Art. 5.4)	Consultation findings on the Reg. 18 plan's SA/SEA report are summarised at Sec. 3.6 of this report
authorities with environmental responsibility and the public shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme (Art. 6.1, 6.2).	
other EU Member States, where the implementation of the plan or programme is likely to have significant effects on the environment of that country (Art. 7)	Not applicable
Taking the environmental report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making (Art. 8)	Will be carried out after consultation on the Reg. 19 plan and this SA/SEA report
When the plan or programme is adopted, the public and any countries consulted under Art.7 shall be informed and the following made available to those so informed: • the plan or programme as adopted; • a statement summarising how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme and how the environmental report pursuant to Article 5, the opinions expressed pursuant to Article 6 and the results of consultations entered into pursuant to Article 7 have been taken into account in accordance with Article 8, and the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and • the measures decided concerning monitoring (Art. 9 and 10)	Will be carried out after plan adoption
Monitoring of the significant environmental effects of the plan's or programme's implementation (Art. 10)	

In addition, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all local planning authorities to carry out a sustainability appraisal (SA) of their Local Plans. Sustainability appraisal is an iterative process to assist in the development of a Local Plan. It is used to appraise emerging options against the three elements of sustainability; the social, environmental and economic dimensions. It assists in selecting the options deemed to be the most sustainable for the area, and in fine-tuning the policies in the Local Plan.

Table 2.3 shows the requirements for SA. This SA/SEA report fulfils the legal requirements for both SA and SEA; where reference is made within this document to sustainability appraisal, it also implies where appropriate strategic environmental assessment.

Table 2.3 – The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Process
Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope Task A1: Identify other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives Task A2: Collect baseline information Task A3: Identify key sustainability issues and problems Task A4: Develop the SA framework Task A5: Consult the consultation bodies on the scope of the SA report
Stage B: Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects Task B1: Test the Local Plan objectives against the SA framework Task B2: Develop the Local Plan options including reasonable alternatives Task B3: Evaluate the likely effects of the Local Plan and alternatives Task B4: Consider ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects Task B5: Propose measures to monitor significant effects of implementing the Local Plan
Stage C: Prepare the SA report
Stage D: Seek representations on the SA report from consultations and the public
Stage E: Post adoption reporting and monitoring Task E1: Prepare and publish post-adoption statement Task E2: Monitor significant effects of implementing the Local Plan Task E3: Respond to adverse effects

This SA/SEA has been undertaken by Oxford City Council and Levett-Therivel sustainability consultants. Table 2.4 shows the stages in the development of the Oxford Local Plan 2040 and its SA/SEA.

Table 2.4 – Stages in development of the Oxford Local Plan 2040 and its SEA		
Plan stage	**SA/SEA stage**	**Date**
Early engagement – Issues Consultation https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/1235/oxford_local_plan_2040_-_issues_stage_topic_papers	SA/SEA scoping report https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/7647/occ_local_plan_2040_-_sustainability_appraisal_scoping_report	July 2021
Preferred options (Regulation 18) consultation https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/1325/oxford_local_plan_2040_-_preferred_options https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/1324/oxford_local_plan_2040_-_preferred_options_background_papers	Preferred options SA/SEA report https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/8122/occ_local_plan_-_sustainability_appraisal_of_selected_policy_options	September 2022
Pre-submission (Regulation 19) consultation	This report	Autumn 2023
Submission of the Local Plan for examination		March 2024
Expected adoption of Local Plan (subject to timings of examination)		June 2025

2.4 Habitat Regulations Assessment and Health Impact Assessment

Oxford is home to part of the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is a site of international nature conservation importance because of its lowland hay meadows and creeping marshwort (*Apium repens).* The site has benefited from the survival of traditional management, which has been undertaken for several centuries, and so exhibits good conservation of structure and function. Port Meadow is the largest of only two known naturally occuring sites in the UK for creeping marshwort.

The City Council has undertaken a Habitat Regulations Assessment, in close consultation with Natural England. Natural England flagged concerns about air quality and had emphasised the need to undertake air quality modelling in their representations at the Regulation 18 consultation.

At the time of writing, preliminary findings from the air quality modelling are showing that the amount of development proposed in Oxford is not of such an order of magnitude as to trigger Natural England's vehicular screening requirements. At this stage, we consider that impacts of development in Oxford 'alone or in-combination' with other plans and programmes, is unlikely to have a significant impact on the integrity of the Oxford Meadows SAC with regard to air quality. Recreational pressure at the meadows has also been assessed and mitigation measures have been suggested through a Stage 2 – Appropriate Assessment. The findings of the HRA will inform this SEA/ SA.

A separate Health Impact Assessment has also been carried out for the Local Plan.

2.5 Difficulties in compiling the SA/SEA

No significant difficulties were encountered in compiling the SA/SEA.

2.6 Structure of this report

This report was prepared by Oxford City Council with support from Levett-Therivel sustainability consultants. It comprises an update of Stage A of Table 2.3, and Stage B.

Chapter 3 provides an update of Stage A of Table 2.3 (policy context, sustainability context, existing problems, SA/SEA framework

Chapter 4 appraises the plan vision and objectives

Chapter 5 presents and appraises alternatives to the plan

Chapter 6 appraises the plan policies and sites

Chapter 7 presents mitigation measures to minimise the plan's negative impacts and maximise its positive impacts

Chapter 8 sets a monitoring framework for the plan

Chapter 9 discusses next steps

3. Scoping: summary and update

3.1 Introduction

Sections 3.2 – 3.4 of this chapter update the SEA/SA scoping report of July 2021 in terms of policy context, sustainability context and existing sustainability problems. Section 3.5 presents the SA/SEA framework used in Chapters 4-6 to appraise the Local Plan.

The 2021 scoping report was made available to statutory consultees (Environment Agency, Natural England, English Heritage) and the public for 6 weeks in July 2021. Section 3.6 discusses the comments received from that consultation, and how they have been taken into account in this report.

The following colour coding system will be used throughout this SA/SEA:

Very positive impacts (compared to the current situation)	++	Negative impacts (compared to the current situation)	-
Positive impacts (compared to the current situation)	+	Very negative impacts (compared to the current situation	--
Neutral / none	0	Unclear	?
Some positive and some negative impacts	+/-		

3.2 Task A1 update: Policy context

Much of the policy context for the Oxford Local Plan 2040 has changed since mid-2021. At a national scale, the **Environment Act 2021** gives government new powers to set binding environmental targets for issues such as air quality, water, biodiversity, and waste reduction. From January 2024 (April 2024 for small sites), it will also require planning applications to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain, based on a DEFRA Biodiversity Metric.

The government's **Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill**, which was at the report state in July 2023, would impose far-reaching changes to the planning and SA/SEA processes, including:

- Greater digitisation of planning documents
- SA/SEA replaced by "environmental outcomes reports"
- Community Infrastructure Levy replaced by a new national infrastructure levy
- Development of a common framework of National Development Management Policies (including on a national model design code), and commensurate focusing of Local Plans on locally specific matters
- Repeal of the Duty to Cooperate
- Speeding up of the plan-making process
- Removal of the requirement for a rolling five-year supply of housing land where the Local Plan is up to date.

In June 2022, government dropped its plans for an Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge "**Ox-Cam knowledge arc**", which would have included an 'East-West expressway' and 1 million new homes in the arc. Instead, regional partnerships are expected to take forward any such work. The refresh of **Oxfordshire's Strategic Economic Plan** is likely to promote levels of population and jobs growth for Oxfordshire that are less challenging, but still significantly higher than natural growth rates.

In December 2022, **England's Economic Heartland** published 'connectivity studies' for an East-West rail link from Oxford to Milton Keynes and Cambridge; rail links from Oxford to Northampton, Wellingborough and Peterborough; and other connectivity improvements.

Work on an **Oxfordshire Plan 2050** (and associated national government funding) stopped in August 2022 as the Oxfordshire authorities were not able to agree an approach to planning for future housing needs in Oxfordshire.

The **Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2022** (LTP5) has as targets, by 2040, to deliver a net-zero transport network; replace or remove about half of car trips in Oxfordshire; almost double the number of cycle trips; and halve road fatalities of life-changing injuries.

At the local scale, Oxford has been piloting a small city centre **Zero Emission Zone** since February 2022, and is considering expanding this to much of the city centre. **Low Traffic Neighbourhoods** have been in place in Cowley and East Oxford since 2021. From 2024, pilot **traffic filters** will be located at St. Cross Road, Thames Street, Hythe Bridge Street, St. Clement's Street, Marson Ferry Road and Hollow Way: these would prevent cars but allow public transport, HGVs and mopeds/ motorbikes. All of these changes aim to reduce the use of cars; facilitate public transport, walking and cycling; and improve air quality in Oxford.

In December 2022, Oxford City Council approved a £4.65 million package to progress work on re-opening the **Cowley Branch line** to passengers, although no date has been set for the actual re-opening.

3.3 Task A2 update: Sustainability context

The topic papers that accompany the plan and this SA/SEA update the sustainability context:

Topic paper names and web-links will be listed here closer to consultation

Table 3.1 summarises the current situation, and the likely situation if the current Local Plan 2036 continued but no new Local Plan 2040 was prepared.

Table 3.1 Current situation and likely future without the plan			
SA topic	**Current situation**	**Likely future without plan**	**Summary findings**
1. Carbon emissions	-	-	Per capita carbon emissions in Oxford have dropped by more than 40% since 2005, principally in line with decarbonisation of the national grid. Despite overall trend of reductions, emissions are still much above the net zero carbon emissions that Oxford City Council aims to achieve by 2040. The Local Plan can seek new net zero buildings but has limited powers in other respects, for instance, requiring more energy efficiency measures for existing homes. Greater energy efficiency and renewable energy requirements can also conflict with other priorities, such as providing affordable homes owing to viability issues. Outside of planning, there will be an ongoing need for significant retro-fitting of existing development, and behaviour change. The city's Net Zero Carbon Action Plan identifies the key steps/milestones that need to be met to secure net zero by 2040 The Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership aims to drive this through various initiatives (Local Plan 2040 is one part of the response).
2. Resilience to climate change	--	-	Between 2,000 and 5,000 homes are currently at flood risk. This is likely to increase with climate change. A flood alleviation scheme is proposed for the west side of Oxford. Given constraints on development in Oxford, there could be increased pressure to locate development in areas of higher flood risk. Oxfordshire County Council has undertaken a Climate Risk assessment for Oxfordshire: alongside flooding it identifies overheating as an increasing risk, particularly if future global climate change targets are missed. Resilience building will need to be achieved through variety of responses: Local Plan policies are one tool in the longer term, but other actions will also be needed.
3. Efficient use of land	0	0	Increased housing pressure means that there will be even more pressure on undeveloped land including green spaces which are important for sustainable communities and biodiversity. Without a new plan, housing may be developed in less sustainable locations. Without policies to prioritise delivery of new homes, many sites are far more likely to come forward for commercial uses (in unsuitable locations). Soil quality, development density and protection of undeveloped land have been good to date. The higher costs associated with dealing with any remaining contaminated sites could affect viability and increase pressure to develop greenfield sites.

SA topic	Current situation	Likely future without plan	Summary findings
4. Housing Need and supply	--	--	The housing need figure is identified through the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment, and considered in the context of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment which assesses capacity in Oxford. The housing need in Oxford is for 1,322 new dwellings per year. However, there is not enough capacity within Oxford to meet all of the housing needs to 2040. Some of Oxford's housing needs will need to be met outside the city. Owing to the limited number of sites to deliver large-scale development, the proportion of homes delivered through small infill sites is likely to increase, and could increase pressure on the existing infrastructure owing to the incremental nature of these proposal. There is also limited opportunity to deliver affordable housing from those developments. House prices in Oxford are already very high, and future prices are likely to continue to rise more quickly than average salaries. Housing to rent on the open market is also unaffordable to a significant proportion of people. So delivering affordable housing is also a priority for the Plan, particularly for those in greatest levels of need (social rent homes). The annual provision of affordable housing has been increasing as a result of new development and the city council's own house building and delivery programme. However national policy provides challenges, for example reducing the number of sites from which contributions can be sought towards affordable housing, and promoting home ownership models which are still not affordable in the Oxford context. The existing Local Plan sets a threshold on student numbers living outside of university owned or managed accommodation to reduce the loss of family homes, and to manage competition for residential sites.
Affordable housing	--	--	
Students and student accommodation	-	0	
5. Inequalities and health Inequality	-	--	Oxford's overall prosperity masks localized areas of deprivation. There are sharp inequalities across the city in terms of opportunities, wellbeing and health. These are being exacerbated by the cost of living crisis. Continued action needs to be taken to address these inequalities to enable all parts of Oxford's communities to experience a good quality of life. There are plans for improving the existing areas of regeneration in the city, such as Blackbird Leys and West End. Physical regeneration interventions, however, need to be supported with a package of social, economic and environmental measures to ensure the maximum wider benefits are delivered. The health of Oxford's residents is generally good, but there is great variation: for instance, men in wealthier parts of the city
General health	+	+	
Health and housing	-	--	

SA topic	Current situation	Likely future without plan	Summary findings
			live more than 13 years longer than men in more deprived parts of the city. This disparity needs to be reduced. Oxford residents' higher-than-average levels of activity and healthy weight need to be maintained and increased. The Local Plan can help to address wellbeing and mental health by improving housing quality, access to open spaces and building communities.
6. Services, facilities and infrastructure Community facilities	0	0	Availability of services and facilities plays a key role in quality of life. The pandemic and other factors have meant that some community and cultural facilities are closing and others have been supported as people realised the value of these facilities in their local areas. With an increase in population, it will become even more important to protect and enhance these facilities, and ensure that they are easy to access by walking, cycling and public transport.
'Grey' infrastructure	+	+	Wastewater treatment and energy infrastructure are likely to be adequate for the plan period. Transport is covered under 8. (Traffic and air pollution), and water infrastructure is covered under 9. Water.
Digital infrastructure	+	++	The pandemic has increased and highlighted people's reliance on the Internet. Broadband coverage in Oxford is generally good and increasing.
7. Green infrastructure and biodiversity	++	0	Oxford has a wide range of green spaces which are generally of good quality. However as Oxford's population increases there will be more demand for outdoor sports and recreation, and increasing pressure on Oxford's green spaces. It is unlikely that new large public open spaces will be created, although smaller spaces could be, and existing open spaces can be enhanced. In addition, any green space (unless it can be show to be surplus) lost to development has to be replaced elsewhere in the city. Green spaces will need to respond to climate change, providing long term flood protection and adaptable habitats.
8. Traffic and air pollution Air quality	-	0	Congestion on Oxford's main roads is endemic even though Oxford has very good bus services and higher levels of cycling and public transport use than many comparable cities. All of Oxford is an Air Quality Management Area for NO_2, and there are air quality 'hot spots' at many major road junctions. Most of the city centre's air pollution comes from buses. The pandemic lockdown sharply reduced traffic, but traffic levels

SA topic	Current situation	Likely future without plan	Summary findings
Traffic levels and congestion	--	-	have since grown to be greater than pre-pandemic levels. With the population and job growth envisaged for Oxfordshire, a continuation of existing levels of car use would threaten to over-burden the transport network. The Oxfordshire authorities are focusing on active travel, improving walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport, and restricting cars e.g. through low traffic neighbourhoods, traffic filters, work place parking levy, extending the area of the zero emission zones and supporting the introduction of non ICE bus fleets. The national phasing of petrol/diesel cars and shift to electric vehicles will help to improve air quality.
9. Water Water resources	-	--	Oxford is in an area of serious water stress. Water resources are currently adequate but may not be by 2040. This will be exacerbated with increased demand for water from a growing population. Thames Water is proposing a large new reservoir at Abingdon. Water quality in the Thames catchment is mostly moderate but poor in certain watercourses. Some of the causes of this are outside of Local Plan influence (e.g. agricultural practices and invasive species). Other causes have a more direct relationship to development, for instance, run-off from increased development could worsen this.
Water quality	-	?	
10. Biodiversity	-	0	Biodiversity is plummeting worldwide and in Oxfordshire. The Environment Act requires at least 10% net gain in biodiversity in new development nationally (irrespective of the Local Plan). Nature conservation areas such as Oxford Meadows SAC are currently relatively well protected, and policies in the Plan protect all green spaces identified as being of high biodiversity value at a local, regional or national level.
Nature conservation areas	+	0	
11. Urban design and historic environment	++	+	Oxford has a high-quality landscape and historic environment. High levels of development and tourism continue to put a strain on natural and historic sites and Oxford's landscape and townscape.
12. Employment and economy Employment	++	++	Oxford has a very strong economy, with high employment, low unemployment and high Gross Value Added. Oxford is a 'fast-growing', 'innovative' city that delivers significant economic growth. There is strong demand for research and development uses, which needs to be supported as a key sector of Oxford's

SA topic	Current situation	Likely future without plan	Summary findings
Unemployment	++	++	economy and a driver of the national economy. Oxford's economy has remained resilient in the face of recession and wider national economic challenges. Future employment growth in Oxford is likely to be in high-skill sectors: without appropriate skills and training, these jobs will not be accessible to local people. Oxford Economic Strategy includes a vision to deliver a more 'inclusive economy.' The city includes 9 areas amongst the most deprived in UK. Oxford's population overall is highly skilled, but 22% of people of working age have low or no qualifications. This disparity is strongest in the most deprived areas of the city. State schools across Oxford, and particularly in deprived areas, generally under-perform compared to regional and national averages. Skills mismatches increase in-commuting, exacerbating congestion problems. Greater opportunities for start-ups and SMEs are important for Oxford's economy to fully function, and diverse job opportunities are needed, otherwise an 'inclusive economy' will not be realised. It is unlikely that significant new employment sites will be identified in Oxford: the focus at present is on the redevelopment, intensification and renewal of existing sites. Ensuring the right balance of employment and housing growth supported by infrastructure is fundamental to ensuring sustainable growth in Oxford. It is important to ensure that the capacity for housing in the city is delivered including on employment sites. Oxford's housing shortage and its affordability cause problems for businesses and key sectors in both recruiting and retaining staff.
Education, skills and employability/ training	+	?	
Regeneration and economic revival	0	0	

3.4 Task A3 update: Existing problems

The policy context of Task A1 and sustainability context of Task A2 identified a range of issues and problems that could inform and affect the development of the Oxford Local Plan 2040. Table 3.2 summarises these.

Table 3.2 Sustainability issues and problems for the Oxford Local Plan 2040

SA objective	Key sustainability issues and problems
1. To achieve the city's ambition to reach net zero **carbon emissions** by	• Oxford is still very far away from achieving its 2040 target of net zero emissions and Local Plan cannot deliver it alone. • Retrofitting existing developments will be a significant challenge • New development must not further contribute to climate change • Policy should embed the energy hierarchy into the design of new buildings (fabric first, reducing energy use, mitigating remaining emissions)

SA objective	Key sustainability issues and problems
2040	• Embodied carbon is an ongoing challenge to be addressed as part of the construction process • There is potential for supporting larger amounts of renewable energy generation across city through greater uptake of micro-renewables in new development, and for supporting mitigation of emissions from the existing built environment.
2. To build **resilience to climate change**, including reducing risks from overheating, flooding and the resulting detriment to well-being, the economy and the environment.	• Between 2,000 and 5,000 properties in Oxford are at risk from river flooding, and additional properties are at risk of groundwater, surface water and sewer flooding. The Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme is expected to reduce this number • The Local Plan 2040 will need to take long term flood risk into account, including the impacts of climate change and how this could change flood risk in the city • New development should not exacerbate flood risk or overheating, such as through hard surfaces increasing surface run off into sewers, or exacerbation of the urban heat island effect. • There are links between flooding/overheating and human health (physical and mental), particularly in areas of the city that are most deprived or highly urbanised/lacking in green infrastructure. • There will be residual risks of flooding after applying the sequential approach to locating development and incorporating defence measures.
3. To encourage the **efficient use of land** through good design and layout, and minimise the use of greenfield and Green Belt land	• The plan must aim to use suitable brownfield sites and other underutilised land as a preferred option for development. • An increase in minimum housing density should be considered where a sufficient level of infrastructure is present. • Prioritising brownfield land for development may reduce opportunities to repurpose the sites for public amenity or as green infrastructure with a focus on ecological/biodiversity functions. • The cost of developing contaminated sites is likely to be higher than developing elsewhere. In turn, these higher costs increase pressure to develop greenfield sites • The City Council should only release land from the Green Belt or alter the boundary in exceptional circumstances. • The plan should consider a more comprehensive approach to Oxford's Green Belt.
4. To meet **local housing needs** by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent affordable home	• Housing costs in Oxford are very high, land available for housing is very limited, and affordable housing has historically been difficult to provide. • Oxford has limited capacity to deliver new homes within its boundary and has been unable to meet housing need in full without support from neighbouring authorities. • A continued reliance on smaller sites is likely to increase pressure on existing infrastructure. • The type of affordable housing delivered in Oxford is likely to be impacted upon by changes made through national policy, i.e., requirements for First Homes. • The Plan should assess and respond to the need for student housing: The links between provision of student housing and other types of housing should be considered when developing policies. • The potential implications of student housing in different locations, for

SA objective	Key sustainability issues and problems
	students, neighbourhoods and in terms of delivering sufficient housing of the right type should be considered.
5. To reduce poverty, social exclusion, and health **inequalities**	• Oxford has high levels of health inequalities across the city. • Covid and the cost of living crisis have exacerbated inequalities and harmed health for many. • Oxford's higher-than-average levels of activity and lower-than-average levels of obesity need to be maintained and improved. • The Local Plan can help to improve mental health and wellbeing through, for instance, improving quality of housing, improving access to open spaces, and focusing on building communities, particularly learning from the coronavirus pandemic. • Climate resilience measures will be essential for reducing impacts on health and wellbeing as the city moves towards a net zero future, particularly for the most vulnerable communities.
6. To provide accessible essential **services and facilities**	• The pandemic has led to the closure of some community and cultural facilities. Post-pandemic there may be changes in the way some services are delivered and facilities are run. Protection of facilities may become more difficult, given changes to government policy on permitted development. • With high pressure for housing, it will be important to make a case for the importance of the facilities that support this housing. The plan will need to meet the infrastructure needs of additional development in the city over the Local Plan period. • New infrastructure must address the climate emergency (low carbon, climate resilient). Natural solutions will be important in ensuring the resilience of infrastructure. • Infrastructure needs to help people to live healthy, active lives (e.g. walking/cycling, GP surgeries). • The city generally and its infrastructure should be adaptable to future changes in technology. • The retail and service sector plays a crucial role in Oxford's economy, providing job and leisure opportunities to local people. The city must offer a diverse range of retail uses and services.
7. To provide adequate green infrastructure, **leisure and recreation** opportunities and make these readily accessible for all	• Unequal access to, and distribution of, green infrastructure across the city exacerbate wider health inequalities. There are priority areas which would benefit particularly from increased greening. • Infill development within the city, particularly on garden land, can provide some green infrastructure and habitat for wildlife. • Increased recreational pressure and water quality impacts (run-off from roads etc.) as a result of new development puts pressure on green infrastructure and biodiversity.
8. To reduce **traffic and associated air pollution** by improving travel choice, shortening journeys and	• Although Oxford is known for its high levels of walking, cycling and public transport use, Oxford's roads are still congested, with high levels of commuting by car. • All of Oxford is an Air Quality Management Area because of NO_x, which mostly comes from vehicles. Tackling emissions from domestic and non-domestic sources is likely to improve air quality. • Past transport policy has focused on carrots: improving facilities for walking, cycling and public transport. However current policy is also to

SA objective	Key sustainability issues and problems
reducing the need to travel by car/ lorry	discourage car use, for instance through restricted parking, zero emission zones, and reallocation of some road space to sustainable forms of transport. • Restrictions in car use in the city must be supported via a strong and affordable public transport infrastructure network. • Improvements in renewable transport provision and the restriction of cars in the city centre will help to achieve a zero carbon Oxford. The uptake of low/zero emission vehicles should be encouraged, in particular buses and taxis which will continue to need to access the city centre. • Improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure must be inclusive and the benefits shared by all of Oxford's residents. • Improved public transport connections between the city and surrounding areas will improve the integration of settlements throughout Oxfordshire.
9. To achieve **water** quality targets and manage water resources	• Oxford is already in an area of serious water stress. • Increased demand for water is likely to put more pressure on water resources. Additional water efficiency measures will need to be investigated at through the plan-making process. • Climate change, particularly incidences of hotter, drier summers may exacerbate water supply issues and create increased water shortages. • Nutrients from wastewater could impact local water bodies, causing eutrophication. This may have knock on implications in terms of the Water Environment Regulations, and the city's ambitions for bathing water status for parts of the River Thames.
10. To conserve and enhance Oxford's **biodiversity**	• The Oxford Meadows SAC is already negatively affected by air pollution and is threatened by recreational pressure. Air pollution from increased vehicle movements also impacts other sensitive sites. • Three SSSIs out of the twelve in the city are in unfavourable condition and two are partly in unfavourable condition. • Development pressure on, or near to protected sites could result in direct loss of habitat or species, fragmentation of ecological networks, as well as indirect impacts e.g. from noise, light, air pollution. • Climate change is likely to impact habitats and species distribution. • Off-site areas for biodiversity net gain stemming from development will probably be needed in response to the Environment Bill.
11. To promote **good urban design** through the protection and enhancement of the **historic environment** and heritage assets while respecting local character and context and promoting innovation.	• Potential impacts of new development proposed in the plan on areas of archaeological and historical value should be considered. • Development pressures continue to put a strain on natural and historic sites and landscape/townscape features of Oxford. A good understanding of heritage value will be required to ensure continued development pressure does not adversely affect heritage assets, important townscape features and local character. • Local design guidance informed by local communities should reflect the special characteristics and needs of different parts of the city. • Green spaces and features should be woven into the urban fabric. • Mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change will require good design. This is a particular challenge for heritage assets. • Good design should focus on people within the spaces, how they move, interact and socialise; and should engender feelings of safety and security.

SA objective	Key sustainability issues and problems
12. To achieve sustainable inclusive **economic growth**, including the development and expansion of a diverse and knowledge-based economy and the culture/leisure/ visitor sector	• Employment in Oxford is high and likely to continue growing, but is constrained by the availability of appropriate housing. Ensuring the right balance of employment and housing growth is fundamental to ensuring Oxford's growth. • State schools across Oxford, and particularly in deprived areas, generally under-perform compared to regional and national averages. • Employment growth in Oxford is likely to continue to be in the key sectors of healthcare and STEM, especially those involving R&D. Without appropriate skills & training, those jobs will not be accessible to local people. • Ensuring expanded and robust digital infrastructure is available in as many settings as possible aligns with the expectations of flexibility to work and study anywhere. • Expanded ability to work remotely could provide work and educational opportunities for a wider range of people, overcoming locational constraints and financial/environmental costs associated with travel. • It is unlikely that significant new sites will be identified for employment. The focus will be on redevelopment and renewal of existing sites. • Dramatic changes, accelerated by the pandemic, are likely to the makeup of city and district centres, shifting from retail-dominated to other uses. Employment and education uses may have opportunities to fill in gaps in the form of co-working spaces, R&D spaces and other forms. • Small scale brownfield development across the city is more likely to put pressure on existing school places, and will not in itself provide new school sites.

3.5 Task A4: SA/SEA Framework

An SA/SEA Framework provides a method by which the sustainability effects of a plan can be identified, described, analysed and compared. Development of the Local Plan 2040 will involve two types of decisions: on the plan objectives, alternatives and policies (general directions for the plan); and on sites (specific locations for development). Assessing the impacts of the plan objectives, alternatives and policies involves a more general analysis against an overall framework of SA objectives. Assessing the impacts of sites involves analysing the site's location and future ability to support sustainable development. As such, two different appraisal frameworks have been used.

Table 3.3 shows the SA/SEA Framework for the plan objectives, alternatives and policies. Table 3.4 shows the framework for sites. Both are discussed in more detail in the scoping report.

Table 3.3 SA/SEA framework for plan objectives, alternatives and policies

SA Objective	Issues covered	SEA Themes
1. To achieve the city's ambition to reach net zero **carbon emissions** by 2040	• Building standards, energy efficiency • Renewable energy • Active travel, public transport • Waste reduction • Sustainable construction practices	Climatic Factors, Air
2. To build **resilience to climate change**, including reducing	• Flooding • Building design and layout	Water, Climatic

SA Objective	Issues covered	SEA Themes
risks from overheating, flooding and the resulting detriment to well-being, the economy and the environment.	• Overheating	Factors
3. To encourage the **efficient use of land** through good design and layout, and minimise the use of greenfield and Green Belt land	• Building densities and layout • Greenfield land • Green Belt • Biodiversity generally • Biodiversity designated sites	Soil, Material Assets, Biodiversity
4. To meet **local housing needs** by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent affordable home	• Housing numbers • Housing size • Affordable housing • Specialist accommodation, e.g. care homes, gypsies/travellers, homeless shelters • Student accommodation	Material Assets, Population, Human Health
5. To reduce poverty, social exclusion, and health **inequalities**	• Regeneration • Geographical spread of new development • Accessibility of areas of deprivation • Availability of services and infrastructure in areas of deprivation	Population, Human Health, Material Assets
6. To provide accessible essential **services and facilities**	• Daily needs met within a short walk/cycle ride • Thriving city/local centres • Retail/shops • Community facilities, health care/GP, schools • Facilities for young people, children's play areas • 'Grey' infrastructure: wastewater treatment, transport, energy etc.	Material Assets, Human Health
7. To provide adequate green and blue infrastructure, **leisure and recreation** opportunities and make these readily accessible for all	• Green and blue infrastructure • Leisure facilities • Playing fields and public open space (for all of the above, distribution/ location as well as sheer quantity)	Landscape, Biodiversity, Human Health
8. To reduce **traffic and associated air pollution** by improving travel choice, shortening journeys and reducing the need to travel by car/ lorry	• Walking, cycling • Reducing reliance on the private car • Public transport, incl. train station and branch line • Commuting and housing/ jobs balance • Parking • Electric vehicle charging points, zero emission zones, • Air quality and links to transport • AQMA	Air, Climatic Factors
9. To achieve **water** quality targets and manage water	• Water use • Water quality	Water, Biodiversity

SA Objective	Issues covered	SEA Themes
resources	• SuDS, buffers on streams etc.	
10. To conserve and enhance Oxford's **biodiversity**	• Habitat Regs Assessment, esp. air quality and recreational disturbance • SSSIs, Local Nature Reserves etc. • Biodiversity more generally (e.g. hedges, un-built up areas) • Biodiversity net gain	Flora, fauna, biodiversity
11. To promote **good urban design** through the protection and enhancement of the **historic environment** and heritage assets while respecting local character and context and promoting innovation.	• Listed buildings and archaeology • Setting/curtilage • Conservation areas • Good design, beauty • View cones • High buildings	Cultural Heritage, Landscape
12. To achieve sustainable inclusive **economic growth**, including the development and expansion of a diverse and knowledge-based economy and the culture/leisure/ visitor sector	• Jobs, incl. knowledge-based jobs • Visitor economy • Locations for start-up ventures • Jobs for local unskilled residents, apprenticeships • Keeping the high street alive amidst changing shopping habits, changes to permitted development etc. • Cultural provision	Population, Material Assets

Table 3.4 SA/SEA framework for sites

SA Objective 1: To achieve the city's ambition to reach net zero **carbon emissions** by 2040

See SA Objective 8 for decision-making criteria.

SA Objective 2: To build **resilience to climate change**, including reducing risks from overheating, flooding and the resulting detriment to well-being, the economy and the environment.

Decision-making criteria: Is the use proposed suitable given the flood zone of the site?

Category	Flood zones
--	Site is partially or wholly in Flood Zone 3b
-	Site is partially or wholly in Flood Zone 3a or Zone 2
0	Site is in Flood Zone 1

Category	Flooding of land surrounding site for access/ egress
--	There is no safe access/egress to/from the site
-	Access/egress from the site is over moderate to low hazard land
0	There is safe access/egress from the site – area surrounding site is FZ1

SA Objective 3: To encourage the **efficient use of land** through good design and layout, and minimise the use of greenfield and Green Belt land

Decision-making criteria: Will the site make use of previously developed land/ buildings?

Category	Previously developed land
--	Site is protected open space
-	Site is unprotected open space
0	Site is previously developed land (with buildings in use on site)
+	Site is previously developed land (with vacant buildings on site)
++	Site is previously developed land (cleared)

Decision-making criteria: Will the site be on Green Belt land?

Category	Green Belt
--	Site is on Green Belt land
0	Site is not on Green Belt land

SA Objective 4: To meet **local housing needs** by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent affordable home

Decision-making criteria: Will the site provide significant quantities of net new housing?

Category	Housing provision
-	Site would decrease the amount of net new housing
0	Site would provide no net new housing
+	Site would provide up to 10 new homes
++	Site would provide more than 10 new homes

Decision-making criteria: Will it improve the availability of decent affordable housing?

Category	Affordable Housing provision
-	Site is allocated for housing but would provide no affordable housing
0	Site is allocated for use other than housing or is not allocated
+	Site provides up to 50% affordable housing
++	Site provides more than 50% affordable housing

SA Objective 5: To reduce poverty, social exclusion, and health **inequalities**

Decision-making criteria: Will it improve opportunities for people in the most deprived areas?

Category	Regeneration Areas
0	Site is not in or adjacent to a regeneration area
+	Site is adjacent to a regeneration area
++	Site is in a regeneration area

SA Objective 6: To provide accessible essential **services and facilities**

Decision-making criteria: Will it increase the provision of essential services and facilities?

Category	Community facilities
-	Allocation leads to a decrease in community facilities
0	Site not allocated for community facilities OR amount of community facilities remain the same due to the allocation
+	Community facilities provided on site
++	Allocation leads to a significant increase in community facilities.

See also SA Objective 8.

SA Objective 7: To provide adequate green and blue infrastructure, **leisure and recreation** opportunities and make these readily accessible for all

Decision-making criteria: Will it increase the provision of public open space?

Category	Public open space
-	Allocation leads to a decrease in public open space
0	Site not allocated OR amount of public open space remains the same due to the allocation
+	Site allocated for housing – 10% public open space provided on site
++	Allocation leads to an increase in public open space greater than 10% of the total site area

SA objective 8: To reduce **traffic and associated air pollution** by improving travel choice, shortening journeys and reducing the need to travel by car/ lorry (also SA objective 1: To achieve the city's ambition to reach net zero **carbon emissions** by 2040)

Decision-making criteria: Will it encourage walking cycling and use of public transport?

Category	Sustainable transport links (bus stop)
-	> 400m from a bus stop
+	< 400m from a bus stop

Category	Sustainable transport links (rail station)
-	> 1600m from train station
0	1200-1600m from train station
+	800-1200m from train station
++	< 800m from train station

Category	Primary Schools
-	>800m from the nearest primary school with spaces
+	<800m from the nearest primary school with spaces

Category	Secondary Schools
-	>800m from the nearest secondary school with spaces
+	<800m from the nearest secondary school with spaces

Category	GP Surgeries
-	>800m from the nearest GP Surgery
+	<800m from the nearest GP Surgery

Category	Post office
-	>800m from the nearest post office
+	<800m from the nearest post office

Decision-making criteria: Is the site within an Air Quality Management Area?

Category	Air Quality
--	Site is within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)

-	Site is adjacent to an AQMA
0	Site is not within an AQMA

SA Objective 9: To achieve **water** quality targets and manage water resources

Decision-making criteria: Does the site contain, or is it near, a water body?

Category	Water
--	Site contains a water body (e.g. lake, pond, stream)
-	Site is within 30m of a water body
0	Site is not within 30m of a water body

SA Objective 10: To conserve and enhance Oxford's **biodiversity**

Decision-making criteria: Will it protect and enhance existing flora, fauna and habitats?

Category	Ecology and Biodiversity
--	Contains an internationally or nationally protected site: Oxford Meadows SAC or SSSI
-	Contains or is adjacent to a locally protected site. Within 100m of a nationally/ internationally designated site. Potential for legally protected species to be present.
0	Within 100m of a locally protected site or 200m of an internationally/nationally protected site
+	Contains no nature conservation designations but has potential for nature conservation interest. Can improve wildlife linkages or habitat continuity
++	Contains no nature conservation designations but has potential for significant nature conservation enhancement

SA Objective 11: To promote **good urban design** through the protection and enhancement of the **historic environment** and heritage assets while respecting local character and context and promoting innovation.

Decision-making criteria: Does the site contain any historical, or archaeological features?

Category	Archaeology
--	Site contains a nationally important archaeological site (Scheduled Ancient Monument)
-	Site provides the setting to a nationally important archaeological site OR site has known archaeological sites or potential (e.g. close to 'Sites and Monument' symbol or in local area of archaeological importance)
0	Site contains no known archaeological sites or has limited or uncertain archaeological potential

Category	Conservation Areas & Register of Parks and Gardens (RPG
--	Site lies in a conservation area or the site is on the RPG
-	Site lies on the edge of a conservation area or of a site on the RPG
0	Site is not in or on the edge of a conservation area or site on the RPG

Category	Listed Buildings
--	Site contains a listed building
-	Site forms the setting of a listed building or contains a locally listed building
0	Site contains no identified historic building constraint

Category	View Cones
-	Site lies within a view cone
0	Site lies outside of a view cone

Category	High Buildings Area
-	Site lies within the City Council's locally designated high buildings area.
0	Site lies outside the City Council's locally designated high buildings area.

SA Objective 12: To achieve sustainable inclusive **economic growth**, including the development and expansion of a diverse and knowledge-based economy and the culture/leisure/ visitor sector

Decision-making criteria: Will it support key sectors that drive economic growth?

Will it increase the quantity and quality of employment opportunities?

Category	Employment Opportunities
0	Do not allocate/ allocate for employment use
++	Allocate site for employment use

3.6 Task A5: Consulting on the SA/SEA

The Preferred Options Consultation Report of May 2023 reviews comments made on the Regulation 18 Local Plan and its SA/SEA. Table 3.1 summarises the consultation findings that relate to the SA/SEA, and explains how they have informed this SA/SEA report.

Table 3.1 Consultation comments on the Reg. 18 SA/SEA consultation

Reg. 18 consultation comment on the SA/SEA	Response to comment
SA does not appropriately consider the climate emergency/ ecological emergency and the impacts of continually growing population. SA does not address climate adaptation (as a distinct need from mitigation) enough. Consultee highlights work from EA which the Oxford work needs to dove tail with; also their own adaptation work which has previously been submitted to council.	The two first SA/SEA objectives relate to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and SA/SEA objective 7 relates to biodiversity. Sec. 6.4 of this report discusses the Local Plan's overall impacts on climate and biodiversity. The Council recognises the important role of climate change adaptation and has set out a number of policy options under chapter 4 of the Preferred Options document which were intended to cumulatively address this issue within the limits of the Local Plan's influence. This was supported by a climate risk background paper which we included as part of the consultation. We have developed these options into a set of policies in the Regulation 19 consultation which address the various climate risks the city faces – from flooding to overheating. We have prepared these policies with reference to a range of resources and strategies both national as well as local including emerging climate risk assessment work being undertaken by the county council.
Economic growth does not seem to fully consider potential growth in	The demand for employment space has remained high despite increased hybrid and home working for office-based

Reg. 18 consultation comment on the SA/SEA	Response to comment
remote working, nor does LP encourage it enough.	workers because of demand from the R&D market (particularly smaller offices and conference settings).
Concern that findings/data is not current or reflective of immediate issues; a lot of work is borrowed from the last Local Plan with updating. Concern about errors with site descriptions in SA, unclear on weight given to it at this stage.	The material prepared as part of the Regulation 18 consultation was supported by the most up-to-date data that could be accessed at the time, including where necessary (and where it was deemed still of relevance) work from the last Local Plan. The preparation of supporting evidence including updated studies on various topics is an iterative process and resource intensive process and has been ongoing over last couple of years and these will be referenced in the Regulation 19 consultation. Where errors have been identified, we have made best efforts to ensure these are corrected for the Regulation 19 consultation.
Feels there should be a separate consultation on the SA and its scoring before any further progress on Local Plan.	There have already been two consultations on the SA scoring: at the scoping and the Regulation 18 process.
SA brings into question the sustainability of the preferred options and indicates need for significant change	The purpose of the SA process is to identify the sustainability of different alternatives, to inform subsequent plan-making. Some alternatives that are not the most sustainable locally may be more sustainable or preferred overall: for instance high density development in Oxford may be more sustainable than the same number of dwellings being built at lower density outside Oxford.
Overconcentration on home rather than accommodation, Oxford has an unusual population mix consisting of key workers and students, most of whom will want rooms/small flats not large homes. Also overconcentration on providing space inefficient family homes which impacts ability to deliver medium/high density accommodation.	Policy H6 requires, for affordable accommodation, that 30-35% are 1 bedroom homes, and 25-35% are 2 bedroom homes. Policies H8-H15 focus on providing specialist accommodation for people who need temporary accommodation, students and boarding school pupils, Gypsies and Travellers, boat dwellers, and older people.
Disagreement with analysis/scoring of alternative S2b in objectives 7, 9, 10, 11, 12. Feels S2b should score better than other, e.g. adequate blue/green leisure - S2b is clearly better for leisure. Losing green-space brings more population in (increasing demand) and reduces greenspace so increases demand and reduces supply. Under SA objective 12, an unhealthy, overcrowded and undesirable city will not support economic growth.	Minor adjustments were made to the scoring of objectives 10 and 11 to clarify that S2b would have more negative impacts on biodiversity and the landscape than S2a. Objectives 7 and 9 on recreation and water already show this. For Objective 12, S2b would restrict economic growth more than S2a so the scores have remained unchanged.

Reg. 18 consultation comment on the SA/SEA	Response to comment
For SA objective 7, Natural England suggest the use of the biodiversity net gain metric 3.1 and Environmental Benefits from Nature Tool at this stage of plan making in order to establish a baseline position and inform the SA evidence base.	The Council has not used these tools specifically to establish a baseline, however, the site allocations in the Local Plan have been prepared in liaison with expertise from the Council's Environmental Sustainability team and other officers, including Ecology, Air Quality, Flooding, Land contamination and tree officers in order to help inform the wording of the policies. More broadly, we have used a range of environmental information to inform the Local Plan approach, including an updated Green Infrastructure study, Strategic flood Risk Assessment, reference to the emerging Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network and other data sources as referenced in the individual background papers.
The following types of plans relating to the natural environment should be considered where applicable to plan area: green infrastructure strategies, Biodiversity plans, Rights of Way Improvement Plans, River Basin Management Plans, Relevant landscape plans and strategies.	Where relevant, these types of plans have been used to inform the Local Plan and are referenced in the associated background papers and evidence base

4. Assessing the Local Plan vision and themes

The July 2021 issues consultation proposed a draft vision and objectives. These have since changed, with the plan objectives having been replaced by six themes. The vision has also been changed to emphasise Oxford's global role in research and development in the life sciences and health sectors. Table 4.1 shows the appraisal of the vision and themes of the Regulation 19 Local Plan, using the SA/SEA framework of Table 3.3.

Table 4.1 SA/SEA appraisal of the Local Plan vision and themes

	1. Carbon emissions	2. Climate change resilience	3. Efficient use of land	4. Local housing need	5. Inequalities	6. Services and facilities	7. Leisure, recreation	8. Traffic, air pollution	9. Water	10. Biodiversity	11. Design, heritage	12. Economic growth
Vision: (see Sec. 2.2)	++	++	+	0	++	0	+	0	+	+	+	++
Themes												
Oxford will be a healthy and inclusive city to live in	0	0	0	++	+	+	0	+-	0	-	0	0
Oxford will be a prosperous city with a globally important role in learning, knowledge and innovation	-?	0	0	0	+	?	0	-	-?	-?	0	++
Oxford will be a green and biodiverse city that is resilient to climate change	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	+?	++	0	0
Oxford will be a city that utilizes its resources with care, protects the air, water and soil and aims for net zero carbon	+	+	+	0	0	+?	0	0	+	+	0	0
Oxford will be a city that respects its heritage and fosters design of the highest quality	0	0	0	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	+-
Oxford will be a liveable city with strong communities and opportunities for all	+-	0	+	0	+	++	0	+-	0	0	0	0

5. Assessing the Local Plan alternatives

The Preferred Options SA/SEA report of September 2022 explains how the plan alternatives were identified, and provides the detailed appraisal of the policies. This chapter summarises the findings of that report.

All of the policies in the Regulation 18 draft plan were reviewed. Where there was only one uncontroversial approach to the policy; where all the alternatives would have similar sustainability impacts; or where alternatives were unlikely to have significant sustainability impacts, no alternatives were considered. Alternatives were available for the following policies:

1. Approach to greenfield sites
2. Housing requirement for the plan period / H2. Housing need for the plan period
3. Employer linked affordable housing
4. Houses of Multiple Occupation
5. Employment strategy / Allowing housing on existing employment sites
6. Location of new employment uses
7. Delivering mandatory net gains in biodiversity in Oxford
8. Retrofitting existing buildings including heritage assets
9. Motor vehicle parking design standard
10. Focusing town centre uses in district centres

For each of these policies, alternatives were appraised using the SA/SEA framework of Table 3.3, and an explanation is provided for why the preferred alternative was chosen. Section 5.11 describes the site selection process for development sites in the Local Plan.

5.1 Approach to greenfield sites

The alternatives considered were:

S2a. Assess all greenfield sites and set out reasons for their protection. Direct development away from protected greenfield sites. However, do not have a blanket protection of all greenfield sites. Do include policies to maximise efficient use of land on brownfield sites. This will include a review of Green Belt to assess whether there are any sites in the Green Belt that could come forward, that are not biodiversity sites or flood storage and would not have an unacceptable impact on the integrity of the remaining Green Belt.

S2b. Allow development on greenfield sites only if no brownfield sites are available and needs are not being met on brownfield sites.

SA Objective	S2a	S2b
1. Climate change	0	-?
2. Carbon change resilience	0	0
3. Efficient use of land	+/-	+
4. Local housing needs	-	-
5. Inequalities	0	0
6. Services and facilities	0	0
7. Leisure, recreation	-	-?
8. Traffic and air pollution	?	
9. Water	-	-?
10. Biodiversity	-	-?
11. Design, heritage	-	-?
12. Economic growth	+	?

S2a is preferred because it is considered to be the best balance between competing sustainability objectives. It protects the greenfield sites with the greatest benefits for the environment. However, it also recognises that greenfield sites in Oxford are likely to have sustainability benefits for housing and other developments compared to many sites further away from the city, because people are able to walk, cycle and use public transport easily. There is a great need for housing and other developments for social and economic reasons.

5.2 Housing requirement and need for the plan period

The alternatives considered were:

H1a. Set a capacity-based / constraint-based housing requirement (estimated at c7,852 dwellings 2020-2040 at the options stage, now confirmed to be 9,612)

H1b. Set a housing requirement in the Plan based on the identified housing need / H2a. Define housing need based on the Standard Method calculation of need. (approx. 14,580 dwellings 2020-2040)

H2b. Set a housing requirement based on achievement and support of economic growth, i.e. plan housing to support the forecast increase in workers. Set affordability-based target i.e., seek to meet full affordable housing need.

(This appraisal assumes that the economic growth led housing requirement is significantly greater than the need based on the Standard Method)

SA Objective	H1a	H1b / H2a	H2b
1. Climate change	0?	-	--
2. Carbon change resilience	-	-/--	--
3. Efficient use of land	?		
4. Local housing needs	-	+	++
5. Inequalities	-	-	+
6. Services and facilities	0?	+/-	+/--
7. Leisure, recreation	-	- /--	--
8. Traffic and air pollution	-	-/--	--
9. Water	-	-/--	--
10. Biodiversity	0?	-	--
11. Design, heritage	?		
12. Economic growth	0	+	++

H1a is preferred. The Government sets the Housing Delivery Test, whereby local planning authorities must show that they are delivering the number of houses in their housing requirement. Local authorities also need to show a 5-year supply of land for housing. If these test are not met, the policies in the Plan have less weight. Setting a requirement above assessed capacity risks unsuitable sites being developed, with potential sustainability impacts. Need is assessed differently, with co-operation with neighbouring authorities to try to get the unmet need met outside of but close to the city.

5.3 Employer linked affordable housing

The alternatives considered were:

H5a. On specified sites which would be listed in the Plan allow schemes that are available for employees who work for a specific organisation at a rent level affordable to them (as agreed with the local authority. Partial rent forms such as shared ownership may be possible if part remains in the ownership of the employer. Those on student placements may be considered employees).

H5b. Do not consider an employer linked housing policy.

SA Objective	H5a	H5b
1. Climate change	+?	0
2. Carbon change resilience	0	0
3. Efficient use of land	?	0
4. Local housing needs	+	0
5. Inequalities	?	0
6. Services and facilities	0	0
7. Leisure, recreation	0	0
8. Traffic and air pollution	+	0
9. Water	0	0
10. Biodiversity	+/-	0
11. Design, heritage	?	0
12. Economic growth	+	0

Including an employer-linked policy (H5a) is preferred. It enables housing to come forward on sites that wouldn't otherwise be suitable for general market and affordable housing, and it is restricted to these types of sites. It enables employers to provide accommodation for their staff, at affordable levels. This will help support the economy and services in the city, such as the hospitals, also reducing commuting distances for some of the staff. The housing would be affordable to the staff, so it has social benefits also.

5.4 Houses of Multiple Occupation

The alternatives considered were:

H8a. Prevent a concentration of HMOs in any area by only allowing a certain percentage of HMOs within a frontage (currently this is 20%).

H8b. Allow new purpose-built HMOs in appropriate locations.

H8c. Concentrate HMOs in certain areas so there is no restriction in particular areas and a complete or near complete restriction in others.

H8d. Do not have any restriction on HMOs.

SA Objective	H8a	H8b	H8c	H8d
1. Climate change	n/a			
2. Carbon change resilience	n/a	+	n/a	n/a
3. Efficient use of land	+			
4. Local housing needs	-/+	+	-	+/-
5. Inequalities	+	+	-	-
6. Services and facilities	n/a			
7. Leisure, recreation	n/a			
8. Traffic and air pollution	+			
9. Water	n/a			
10. Biodiversity	0			
11. Design, heritage	0	?	-	-
12. Economic growth	0	0	0	+

The preferred alternative combined options H8a and H8b to form the policy. This combination of options scored well against most of the sustainability objectives. The combination is preferred because this approach has over time helped to manage the impact of HMOs. It does not prevent

them, but recognises they are an important housing type. However, it also recognises that over-concentration of them may have negative impacts. Focussing HMOs in certain areas only means they may not be available where people want them, and those areas could have more significant impacts. No restriction means that these potential impacts on the local community could be widespread.

5.5 Employment strategy / Allowing housing on employment sites

The alternatives considered were:

E1a./E3a. Attempt to meet employment needs, but prioritise other uses, in particular housing, rather than employment, even if employment needs cannot be met in full within the city. This would mean making the best use of the city and district centres and existing prime employment sites, primarily through the delivery of continued employment uses at these locations. It could also mean allowing an element of housing to come forward on employment sites. (See options on "enabling housing on existing employment sites"; "making best use of employment sites"; and "location of new employment uses", below.); Allow an element of housing delivery on existing employment sites (if other policy requirements, for example around flood risk, are met).

E1b./ E3b. Allow growth of employment-generating uses throughout the city, including on sites not already in that use and outside of the city and district centres, to try to meet all forecast need within the city; Maintain employment sites for employment or commercial uses. Do not further diversity uses to include housing as well.

E1c. Focus on Oxford providing a broad employment base, trying to protect a wide range of employment-generating uses including those that don't make efficient use of land. This would include protection of warehouse sites and small light-industrial sites, for example, as well as key sites such as the MINI plant and Science Area.

SA Objective	E1a / E3a	E1b / E3b	E1c
1. Climate change	0	--?	?
2. Carbon change resilience	+	-	?
3. Efficient use of land	+	0	-
4. Local housing needs	+	-	+/-
5. Inequalities	+/-	-?	+
6. Services and facilities	?	?	?
7. Leisure, recreation	n/a		
8. Traffic and air pollution	++	--	?
9. Water	0	-	-?
10. Biodiversity	0	--	-?
11. Design, heritage	n/a		
12. Economic growth	-	++/+	+

See text under option 5.6 for full explanation of how preferred alternative was derived.

5.6 Location of new employment uses

The alternatives considered were:

E4a. Support new employment uses through intensification and modernisation of existing sites, including hospitals and universities, other Category 1 and 2 employment sites (E.g., supporting office and R&D in Oxford's West End and recognising innovation clusters such as the Business Park, Science Park Oxford North and Old Road Campus), together with the City and District Centres (subject to the role and function of each respective centre).

E4b. Do not allow any new employment-generating uses outside of existing sites (i.e., do not allow loss of existing housing sites outside of city and district centres to employment-generating uses).

E4c. As well as intensification on existing sites and in the city centre and district centres, allow new employment uses in a very few locations specified as suitable, which would be only adjacent to existing sites, potentially requiring this expansion to be part of mixed-use schemes only.

E4d. Rely solely on national policy and other policies within the plan (e.g., hierarchy of centres) to determine proposals for new employment floorspace in the city.

The appraisal assumed that E4b would allow no new employment sites; E4d would allow new uses in district/city centres plus edge of town; E4c would allow some existing employment sites to expand, potentially into housing or greenfield land; E4a would be similar to E4d but with a greater focus on themed employment clusters.

SA Objective	E4a	E4b	E4c	E4d
1. Climate change	0			
2. Carbon change resilience	+?	0	+?	?
3. Efficient use of land	-?	0	+?	?
4. Local housing needs	-	0	-?	-?
5. Inequalities	-?	0	+/-	-?
6. Services and facilities	n/a			
7. Leisure, recreation	0	0	-?	0
8. Traffic and air pollution	-/--	0	-/--	-
9. Water	0			
10. Biodiversity	-	0	-/--	-?
11. Design, heritage	?			
12. Economic growth	++	0	+	+?

The preferred alternative for the employment strategy (policy E1) combines aspects of options E4a, E4c and E4d. The two appraisal tables set out above (Table 5.5 and 5.6) show the sustainability benefits of combining options E1a/ E3a from Table 5.5 with options E4a and E4b from Table 5.6. Option E1a provides a clear ambition to meet Oxford's employment need on land within the city. Option E4a supports the intensification and modernisation of existing employment sites in the city and Option E4b provides a clear steer that new sites coming forward outside existing employment sites and the city and district centres should be resisted. Finally, E3a suggests that an element of housing could be suitable on the city's employment sites.

The Employment Land Needs Assessment shows that there is sufficient employment land available within the plan period across existing employment sites to meet the city's employment needs. This means that there would be no additional unmet employment need as a result of this approach. Allowing an element of housing on employment sites subject to certain specified criteria means that there are likely to be positive sustainability benefits for meeting local housing needs. Not allocating new employment sites in the city enables the existing clusters to intensify. Allowing an element of housing on the employment sites provides an opportunity to diversify single use areas to incorporate an element of housing where landowners are supportive of this approach.

5.7 Delivering mandatory net gains in biodiversity in Oxford

The alternatives considered were:

G4a. Set out a hierarchy for how 10% net gain as required through Environment Act should be delivered, particularly where on-site net gain is not possible. Guidance would seek to secure off-site delivery in the local neighbourhood in first instance, then within city boundary, then county. Off-site delivery within Oxfordshire, if no opportunities are available in the city, would be sought within the opportunity areas of the forthcoming Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and the Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network. Payment to a body managing schemes would be the final option in the hierarchy

G4b. Require higher than 10% net gain on certain sites, in excess of the minimum requirements of the Environment Act.

G4c. Do not include a policy addressing biodiversity net gain requirements as set out in Environment Act, defer to national guidance/policy.

National policy already recommends a hierarchical approach to delivering biodiversity net gain, with on site being preferable, near the site next best and so on, and purchasing national level statutory biodiversity credits from government as a last resort. G4a however proposed to set out more locally specific criteria for guiding any offsite delivery (tying this to areas of land identified as most suitable for ecological enhancement as set out in the Nature Recovery Network). For this reason, G4a and G4c were appraised together.

SA Objective	G4a/ G4c	G4b
1. Climate change	+?	
2. Carbon change resilience	n/a	
3. Efficient use of land	-?	-?
4. Local housing needs	-?	-
5. Inequalities	n/a	
6. Services and facilities	n/a	
7. Leisure, recreation	0/+	+
8. Traffic and air pollution	n/a	
9. Water	+?	+
10. Biodiversity	0	+
11. Design, heritage	n/a	
12. Economic growth	0	0/-?

The preferred alternative is to set out a local hierarchy for where net gain should be delivered in line with option G4a, although this has been slightly modified following further analysis of where opportunities for net gain delivery are likely to be within the city. The policy sets out the option of providing net gain either onsite or within an area identified in the Nature Recovery Network as the first level in the hierarchy, recognising that it may be more ecologically beneficial to enhance a nearby area of land identified for its ecological potential (preferably within the city in the first instance) instead of establishing an isolated area within the development area. This allows more flexibility to secure the best result for biodiversity within the parameters of the Environment Act.

Setting a target beyond 10% net gain was considered unlikely to be deliverable for many development sites in the city due to the various constraints on the sites and the Environment Act's very specific requirements for how net gain needs to be delivered. A higher policy target would ultimately result in greater proportions of offsetting payments being secured for delivery in other locations rather than onsite: this is explored further in the background paper on Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity. Instead, the Local Plan maintains a consistent 10% target in line with

the national requirements but encourages higher delivery where possible. However, because onsite delivery of ecological enhancements is considered an important objective for the Local Plan, policy G5 (enhancing onsite biodiversity) and policy G3 (urban greening factor) provide a robust framework for securing a range of greening and biodiversity measures onsite that go beyond habitat creation: they have been designed in a way that can work more flexibility for the various constraints on sites specific to Oxford. This more bespoke approach is considered to be in keeping with the spirit of going beyond the minimum required nationally as was proposed in the alternative option G4b and should secure more direct onsite delivery of features to support nature throughout the city.

5.8 Retrofitting existing buildings including heritage assets

The alternatives considered were:

R3a. Include a presumption in favour of retrofit measures for all existing buildings that are not heritage assets or in the setting of, subject to certain conditions, where these measures secure demonstrable carbon reduction/energy efficiency/climate adaptation.

R3b. In relation to designated heritage assets and historic buildings, or proposals within conservation areas, set out that carbon reduction/energy efficiency/climate adaptation measures will be considered as benefits that may outweigh harm. Be explicit in setting out a set of key principles to follow, potentially flagging which measures would be more or less likely to cause harm (e.g., permanent versus temporary), and how levels of harm would be assessed against public benefit.

R3c. Do not include policy addressing retrofitting of existing buildings and/or heritage assets.

SA Objective	R3a	R3b	R3c
1. Climate change	+	+	0
2. Carbon change resilience	+	+	0
3. Efficient use of land	n/a		
4. Local housing needs	+	+	0
5. Inequalities	n/a		
6. Services and facilities	n/a		
7. Leisure, recreation	n/a		
8. Traffic and air pollution	n/a		
9. Water	n/a		
10. Biodiversity	n/a		
11. Design, heritage	0	0	0
12. Economic growth	n/a		

The preferred alternative is a combination of options R3a and R3b as is set out in policy R3. This approach recognises that the Council needs to encourage retro-fit of existing buildings wherever possible and clearly sets out that the starting point will be to support this. It also recognises that Oxford has a significant proportion of traditional buildings which require a more nuanced set of considerations to be factored into design of retro-fit, and requires applicants to ensure these are factored into their proposals in order to minimise harm to these assets.

In this way, the policy tries to provide more clarity to help applicants plan for retro-fit of traditional buildings so that these are retro-fitted in the right way for these types of buildings. This should ensure that climate change benefits can be delivered without coming at the expense of the buildings' special features and qualities, which make an equally important contribution to the sustainability of the city in terms of heritage and the various benefits these provide.

5.9 Motor vehicle parking design standard

The alternatives considered were:

DH7a. Seek car free residential development across the city, subject to criteria to ensure accessibility to public transport and local shops, and low car in locations not suitable for car free. Car free would mean no spaces allocated to a house, but parking would be available to meet disabled and operational needs, for car clubs and potentially for those who can demonstrate a need for a personal vehicle for work that needs to be parked near home (potentially in a designated area within the site) (work vans, health visitors for example). The policy will consider setting a threshold for different levels of car free, because the larger strategic sites (over 50 units) have more scope for successful carpooling and more space for essential vehicles. The policy will set design guidance to ensure the parking provision makes the most efficient use of land, is landscaped, and allows for car free street design. The approach to car free development would be assessed against whole plan viability as set out in Strategic Policy Option S4.

DH7b. Do not allow any additional parking on non-residential sites which are proposed for redevelopment. Seek a significant reduction where there is good accessibility to a range of facilities.

DH7c. Require all new development to be car free across the city.

DH7d. Adopt low car but not car free parking standards. These could still vary by accessibility of the area of the city. These could be the same level of parking standards as for the rest of Oxfordshire, or potentially reduced from this but not car free, for example 1 car per 2 homes and additional parking for new non-residential developments.

The appraisal assumed that DH7c is the most restrictive as it applies to employment as well as residential parking; DH7a is next most restrictive; DH7b would be closest to the current situation; and DH7d would be less restrictive than the current situation.

SA Objective	DH7a	DH7b	DH7c	DH7d
1. Climate change	0			
2. Carbon change resilience	+	0	++	-
3. Efficient use of land	+	0	++	-
4. Local housing needs	+/-	0	++/--	0
5. Inequalities	+/-	0	++/--	+/-
6. Services and facilities	n/a			
7. Leisure, recreation	n/a			
8. Traffic and air pollution	+	0	++	0
9. Water	?			
10. Biodiversity	?			
11. Design, heritage	n/a			
12. Economic growth	-?	0	--	0

The preferred alternative is a combination of options DH7a, DH7b and DH7d, and is set out in Policy C8. This policy seeks to reduce parking in new development and supports low car developments. Maximum car parking standards would not be required for the development but there would only be dedicated parking spaces for service and delivery vehicles, blue badge holders, car clubs and visitors. Oxford is a compact city where land is scarce so the amount of land given over to parking should be limited. However, Policy C8 recognises that it is not realistic or practical to make developments low car if they are not well served by public transport, local shops and within a Controlled Parking Zone: in these instances the parking standards set out in the Plan's appendices would be applied.

For non residential development the intention is to seek a downward pressure on parking, and the level of parking on the site will be determined in the light of the submitted transport assessment or travel plan which will encourage a shift towards sustainable modes of travel.

5.10 Focusing town centre uses in district centres

The alternatives considered were:

C1a. Define the district centres as on the map above as areas that are highly accessible and include a broad range of facilities including shops, hospitality, community and leisure facilities. These include: City centre, Blackbird Leys, Cowley Centre, Cowley Road, Summertown, Headington. Identify the character of each area, strengths and weaknesses, and provide design guidance to ensure new developments enhance the character and attractiveness of these areas to encourage people to visit and linger and a sense of belonging. Allow new Use Class E uses in the district centres, including: Retail, cafes and restaurants; Leisure and entertainment and indoor sports uses (e.g. gyms, leisure centres); Health centres, GPs and clinics; Offices. Also allow: Community facilities (see options below), residential including student accommodation (where compliant with any policy on active frontages); Visitor attractions, Hotels, Flexible work-spaces, co-working spaces and live-work units.

C1b. Define local centres to include those on the map above, to ensure protection of facilities within 15 minutes' walk, which are: St Clement's, Walton Street and Little Clarendon Street, High Street east, Rose Hill, and Underhill Circus (not previously designated as a local centre). Allow new Use Class E uses in local centres, including: shops, cafes and restaurants; Leisure and entertainment and indoor sports uses (e.g. gyms, leisure centres); Health centres, GPs and clinics; Offices; Encourage flexible work-spaces, co-working spaces and live-work units. Do not allow student accommodation, hotels or visitor attractions (Sui Generis uses including cinemas, concert halls, dance halls).

C1c. Include a policy that sets out a sequential approach for locating new town centre uses based on: centres (city, district and local) first, then edge of centres and only out-of-centre locations where no alternative sites are available. Applicants would be required to demonstrate how they have applied the sequential approach if they are proposing town centre uses outside the centres, looking at edge of centre first. Include criteria that will be used to assess applications for town centre uses outside of the existing centres, including accessibility by public transport, that negative impacts on the road network can be mitigated, that there is no harm to adjoining land uses. Require an impact assessment for retail and leisure proposals outside of centres (currently required for those of 350m2 or more) demonstrating that there will be no adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the existing centres, and that there is good accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport.

C1d. Do not include a policy that sets a sequential approach requirement or criteria for town centre use proposals outside of centres.

SA Objective	C1a	C1b	C1c	C1d
1. Climate change	n/a			
2. Carbon change resilience	+	+	+	0
3. Efficient use of land	+	+	+	0
4. Local housing needs	n/a			
5. Inequalities	0			
6. Services and facilities	++	++	+	0
7. Leisure, recreation	n/a			
8. Traffic and air pollution	++	++	+	0

9. Water	n/a			
10. Biodiversity	n/a			
11. Design, heritage	n/a			
12. Economic growth	+	+?	+	0

The preferred alternative is a combination of options C1a, C1b and C1c as set out in Policy C1. This policy sets out the hierarchy of centres and ensure that town centre uses are directed to the city centre, district and local centres. The city and district centres are very accessible and include a broad range of facilities including shops, offices, community and leisure facilities. Their role in creating liveable neighbourhoods is very important in ensuring that local residents can access a wider range of facilities by walking. Local centres are suitable for Class E uses (shops, offices, cafes etc.) and local community facilities, but not student accommodation or hotels. Small parades of shops serving a very local function are not considered as local centres (NPPF definition), although they are locally significant and help to create liveable cities.

5.11 Site selection process

The Local Plan 2040 includes 50 site allocations. The site audit, https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/5563/bgp20_-_sites_audit, gives information about how these sites were appraised and chosen.

At the Preferred Options stage 471 sites across Oxford were identified. These were identified from a range of sources, including previously allocated sites; West End AAP identified sites; other sites from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment; calls for sites inviting landowners to nominate their sites; employment sites of greater than 0.25 ha; stakeholder consultation etc. A three stage process was then followed to identify which of these potential sites should be included as proposed site allocation policies in the Local Plan.

Stage 1: Exclude those sites with clear conflicts with national policy and/or insurmountable environmental or physical constraints**.** All sites underwent a Stage 1 filter process. Sites were rejected for allocation for development at Stage 1 only if they were:

- A Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);
- Greenfield in flood zone 3b;
- Less than 0.25 hectares in area;
- Already at an advanced stage in the planning process (i.e. development has commenced).

Stage 2: Assessment against the SA/SEA objectives. All sites that had passed the Stage 1 filter process were considered against the SA/SEA objectives of Table 3.4. Sites were scored accordingly, however sites were only rejected for allocation for development at Stage 2 if they:

- Were considered to be part of Oxford's Green Infrastructure network as determined in the Green Infrastructure Study;
- Had no clear access.

Stage 3: Assessment against the Local Plan Preferred Options Strategy and deliverability considerations. All sites that had passed the Stage 2 assessment were considered at Stage 3. Sites were rejected for allocation for development at Stage 3 only if:

- They were extremely unlikely to become available during the plan period;
- The landowner had indicated they have no intention to develop;
- There was serious conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework/Oxford Local Plan Preferred Options strategy and no mitigation was possible.

In total, 387 sites were rejected at Stage 1, 2 or 3. The remaining 84 sites were all taken forward and subjected to further detailed assessment. This assessment considered:

- Detailed assessment of each individual site including SA/SEA*;*
- Protecting sites for employment uses (Category 1, 2 and 3 sites);
- Protecting sites that are identified as part of the Green Infrastructure Network.
- Protecting the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Areas of Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites, Wildlife Corridors and other sites with biodiversity interest (those with protected species);
- Protecting playing pitches and allotments – unless criteria can be met such as replacement facilities provided nearby or improvements to nearby facilities or demonstration they are surplus to requirements;
- Protecting pubs;
- Protecting community facilities, allowing loss under certain circumstances, such as replacement nearby; or improvement to nearby facilities; or demonstration they are surplus to requirements; or that opportunities have been explored for multi-use;
- Protecting existing state primary and secondary school sites and supporting extensions and more extensive uses on site;
- Identifying sites where employer linked housing could be provided; and
- Likely deliverability of the site.

Of the 84 sites included at the preferred options stage, 50 have been allocated. Some of the other sites have been merged. Others were not allocated because of issues such as limited site capacity, the site being within an Area of Focus[2], planning permission already having been granted, or landowners no longer being interested in developing their sites: Table 5.1 provides further information. Table 6.2 lists the 50 allocated sites and shows their sustainability impacts.

Table 5.1 Preferred Options sites that have not been taken forward, and reasons for this

Preferred Options Sites	Reason not taken forward
Central and West Area	
Science Area and Keble Road Triangle 062	Academic and research uses only. Within North of City Area of Focus. No need for allocation
Radcliffe Observatory Quarter (ROQ) 579	Academic and research uses only. Within North of City Area of Focus. No need for allocation
Oxford University Press, Walton Street - Cat 1 Employment Site	Category 1 employment site. No site allocation
Oxford Railway Station 075	Covered by West End Area of Focus
Worcester Street Car Park 081	Combined with 070 and 624 to form Nuffield Sites
Oxford Centre for Innovation 448	Category 1 employment site. No site allocation.
Units 1 and 2, 135-137 Botley Road 607a	Employment only. Within West End Area of Focus.
Faculty of Music 021	Uncertain whether site will be available in plan period (HELAA Appendix A)
Oriel College Land at King Edward St and High St 044	No confirmed interest from landowner to develop within plan period (HELAA Appendix A)

[2] An area of focus sets out design principles and infrastructure commitments over a wider area providing relative certainty for development proposals within that area – as such, site allocations are not needed in these areas for certain uses/quantum of development

Preferred Options Sites	Reason not taken forward
Sites adjacent to the east of Osney Bridge to the north and south of Botley Road 613	No need for allocation given proposed use
Site to the south of Cripley Place 614	Capacity less than 10 (HELAA Appendix C)
Osney Warehouse and St Thomas School 616	Capacity less than 10 (HELAA Appendix C)
St Stephen's House, Norham Gardens 609	Current use is student accommodation. Landowner wishes to intensify use. No need for allocation as existing student accommodation.
1-3 Cambridge Terrace 611	Capacity less than 10 (HELAA Appendix C)
East Area	
Old Road Campus 043	Site built out. Category 1 employment site. Any future developments would be assessed against other policies in the plan.
Barton Community Centre and Underhill Circus 354	Not allocated but instead upgraded to a local centre
Oxford Trust Wood Centre for Innovation 437	Not allocated but now a Category 1 employment site
Park Farm 462	Change in landowner circumstances. No interest to develop in plan period
Carpenters Yard 446	Capacity less than 10
Valentia Road 329	Capacity less than 10
Former Bartlemas Nursery School 346	Capacity less than 10
Halliday Hill/ Westlands Drive 602	Permission granted. Site at an advanced stage. Likely to commence before plan adopted.
North Area	
Jordan Hill Business Park 512	Site in use for economic function. No landowner interest to develop.
Frideswide Farm 107	Permission granted. Site at an advanced stage. Likely to commence before adoption of plan.
Pear Tree Farm 590	combined with 001 to form "Northern Gateway" Allocation
Summertown House Apsley Road 580	No intention to develop within the plan period.
Wychwood Tennis Courts, Charlbury Road 623	No evidence that sports use is surplus or could be re-provided. Site not available.
South Area	
Court Place Gardens 013	Development has commenced on site. Due for completion in plan period.
Northfield Hostel 039	Small number of homes remaining (less than 10)
Between Towns Road on corner of St Luke's Road 95a2	Planning permission granted. Site at advanced stage. Likely to commence before adoption of plan.
Royal British Legion Club, Lakefield Road 604	Complex land ownership issues, unlikely to be resolved within plan period.
Workshops Lanham Way 98	Planning permission granted. Site at an advanced stage. Likely to commence before adoption of plan.
Grandpont Car Park 106	No landowner interest.
Littlemore House (former Littlemore Park, SAE Institute) 401	Site suitable for intensified economic uses. No allocation needed.

6. Assessing the Local Plan policies and sites

6.1 Introduction

This chapter assesses the impacts of the Local Plan 2040 policies and allocated sites. Section 6.2 assesses the sustainability impacts of the plan policies; Section 6.3 assesses the sustainability impacts of the allocated sites; and Section 6.4 discusses the overall impacts of the Local Plan.

6.2 Task B3: Predicting the impacts of the Local Plan policies

Table 6.1 summarises the impacts of the plan policies, using the SA/SEA framework of Table 3.3. More details are available at **Appendix A**.

Table 6.1 Summary assessment of the Local Plan 2040 policies

	1. Carbon emissions	2. Climate change resilience	3. Efficient use of land	4. Local housing need	5. Inequalities	6. Services and facilities	7. Leisure, recreation	8. Traffic, air pollution	9. Water	10. Biodiversity	11. Design, heritage	12. Economic growth
S1 Spatial strategy & presumption in favour of sustainable development	?	0	0	?	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	+
S2 Design code & guidance	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	++	0
S3 Infrastructure delivery in new development	+?	0	0	0	0?	0+	0	+	0	0	0	0
S4 Plan viability	-?	0	0	+-	0	0	0	-?	0	0	0	+
H1 Housing requirement	-	-	+-	+-	+-	-?	0	+-	0	?	?	+-
H2 Delivering affordable homes	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H3 Affordable housing contribution from new purpose-built student accommodation	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+-
H4 Affordable housing contributions from self-contained older persons accommodation	0	0	0	+-	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
H5 Employer-linked affordable housing	+	0	?	+	?	0	0	+	0	+-	?	+
H6 Mix of dwelling sizes (number bedrooms)	0	0	+?	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H7 Development involving loss of dwellings	0	0	0	0	0	+?	0	0	0	0	0	0
H8 Houses in Multiple Occupation	0	0	+	+-	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+-
H9 Location of new student accommodation	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+-
H10 Linking new academic facilities with the adequate provision of student accom	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H11 Homes for travelling communities	0	0	?	+	+	0	?	0	0	0	0	0
H12 Homes for boat dwellers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H13 Older persons and other specialist accommodation	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H14 Self-build & custom housebuilding	0	0	-?	+	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H15 Hostels	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H16 Boarding school accommodation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+-
E1 Employment strategy	+	0	++	+?	0	0	0	+?	0	0	0	+

	1. Carbon emissions	2. Climate change resilience	3. Efficient use of land	4. Local housing need	5. Inequalities	6. Services and facilities	7. Leisure, recreation	8. Traffic, air pollution	9. Water	10. Biodiversity	11. Design, heritage	12. Economic growth
E2 Warehousing and storage uses	0	0	+	+?	0	0	0	+-	0	0	0	-?
E3 Affordable workspace strategy and affordable workspace provision	0	0	?	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+
E4 Community employment and procurement plans	0	0	0	+?	+?	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
E5 Tourism and short stay accommodation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+?	0	0	0	+
G1 Protection of green infrastructure	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
G2 Enhancement & provision of new green and blue features	0?	+	-	+-	0	0	++	+	+?	+	+	0
G3 Provision of new green and blue features - Urban Greening Factor	+	+	-	+-	0	0	0	+?	0	+?	+	0
G4 Delivering mandatory net gains in biodiversity	+?	0	-?	-?	0	0	+	0	+?	+?	0	0
G5 Enhancing onsite biodiversity in Oxford	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
G6 Protecting Oxford's biodiversity including the ecological network	0	0	-?	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0
G7 Flood risk and Flood Risk Assessments	0	+	+-	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+-
G8 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	0	+	-	-?	0	0	+	0	+	+?	0	0
G9 Resilient design and construction	+-	++	0	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	+	0
R1 Net Zero buildings in operation	++	0	+-	+-	+	0	0	+?	0	+?	-?	+-
R2 Embodied carbon in the construction process	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+?	0	0
R3 Retro-fitting existing buildings	+?	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R4 Air quality assessments and standards	+?	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+?	0	0
R5 Land contamination	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R6 Soil quality	0	0	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R7 Amenity and environmental health impacts of development	0	0	+-	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+?
HD1 Conservation areas	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
HD2 Listed buildings	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD3 Registered Parks and Gardens	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD4 Scheduled Monuments	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD5 Archaeology	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD6 Non-designated heritage assets	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD7 Principles of high-quality design	0	0	0	+?	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
HD8 Using context to determine appropriate density	+?	0	++	+	+	+?	0	+	0	0	+-	+?
HD9 Views and building heights	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD10 Health impact assessment	0	0	0	0	+?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD11 Privacy, daylight and sunlight	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD12 Internal space standards for residential	0	0	-	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD13 Outdoor amenity space	0	+?	+-	+-	+-	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
HD14 Accessible and adaptable homes	0	0	-?	+	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HD15 Bin & bike stores & external servicing	0	0	?	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0

	1. Carbon emissions	2. Climate change resilience	3. Efficient use of land	4. Local housing need	5. Inequalities	6. Services and facilities	7. Leisure, recreation	8. Traffic, air pollution	9. Water	10. Biodiversity	11. Design, heritage	12. Economic growth
C1 Town centre uses	+	0	+	?	0	++	0	++	0	0	0	+
C2 Maintaining vibrant centres	+	0	0	0	+	++	0	+	0	0	+?	0
C3 Protection, alteration & provision of local community facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C4 Protection, alteration & provision of learning and non-residential institutions	0	0	+	0	0	+	-?	0	0	0	0	0
C5 Protection, alteration & provision of cultural venues and visitor attractions	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+
C6 Transport assessments, travel plans and service and delivery plans	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0	+-	0	0	0	+-
C7 Bicycle & powered two wheelers parking design standards	+	0	+-	+-	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
C8 Motor vehicle parking design standards	+	+	+	+-	+-	0	0	+	0	0	0	-?
C9 Electric vehicle charging	+	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	0	0	-?	0
Areas of Focus												
Northern Edge of Oxford	--	-	-	+-	0	--	+	--	-?	--	0	++
Cowley Branch Line and Littlemore	-	-	++	+	++	?	?	+-	-?	0	0	++
Marston Road and Old Road	-	0	+	+	0	+	0	+	-?	-	-	+
North of the City Centre	0	0	+	+?	0	0	0	0	0	-?	+	++
West End and Botley	-	-	++	?	0	0	0	-	0	-?	+	++

6.3 Task B3: Predicting the effects of the site allocations

Table 6.2 summarises the impacts of the site allocation, using the SA/SEA framework of Table 3.4. More details are available at **web links to be added closer to consultation**

Table 6.2 Summary assessment of the Local Plan 2040 site allocations

	Flood zone	Flood egress	Prev. devel. land	Green Belt	Housing provision	Affordable housing	Regeneration	Community facilit	Public open space	Biodiversity	Bus stop	Rail station	Primary school	Secondary school	GP	Post office	Air quality area	Water body	Archaeology	Conservation area	Listed building	View cone	High building area	Employment
Central and West area																								
SPCW01	0	0	0	0	++	I	0	I	I	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	--	0	-	--	-	0	-	I
SPCW02	0	0	0	0	++	I	0	0	I	0	+	-	+	+	+	+	--	0	-	--	--	0	-	0
SPCW03	--	0	-	0	++	I	0	0	I	-	-	0	-	-	+/-	-	--	-	-	--	-	-	-	0
SPCW04	--	-	0	0	I	I	0	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	--	-	0	--	--	0	-	0
SPCW05	--	-	0	0	++	+	0	I	I	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	--	-	-	0	0	-	-	+
SPCW06	--	-	0	0	++	I	0	I	I	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	--	-	-	--	-	-	-	+
SPCW07	--	--	0	0	++	I	0	I	I	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	--	-	0	--	0	-	-	+

	Flood zone	Flood egress	Prev. devel. land	Green Belt	Housing provision	Affordable housing	Regeneration	Community facilit	Public open space	Biodiversity	Bus stop	Rail station	Primary school	Secondary school	GP	Post office	Air quality area	Water body	Archaeology	Conservation area	Listed building	View cone	High building area	Employment
SPCW08	--	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	-	-	-	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
East area																								
SPE01	0	0	0	0	++	I	0	I	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	--	0	-	--	-	-	0	I
SPE02	--	0	-	0	++	+	0	0	+	0	+	-	+	-	-	+	--	-	0	--	-	0	0	0
SPE03	0	0	0	0	++	I	0	I	I	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	--	0	-	--	--	-	0	0
SPE04	0	0	0	0	I	I	0	I	I	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	--	-	0	-	0	0	0	I
SPE05	0	0	-	0	++	+	0	0	0	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	--	0	0	--	0	0	0	0
SPE06	0	0	0	0	I	I	0	I	I	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	--	-	-	0	0	0	0	I
SPE07	0	0	0	0	I	I	0	I	I	0	+	-	+	-	-	-	--	0	-	0	0	0	0	I
SPE08	0	0	0	0	I	I	0	I	I	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	--	0	0	-	--	0	0	I
SPE09	0	0	-	0	++	+	+	0	0	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	--	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
SPE10	0	0	-	0	++	+	0	I	+	0	+	-	-	-	-	-	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SPE11	0	0	-	0	++	+	0	0	+	0	+	-	-	-	-	-	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SPE12	0	0	-	0	++	+	0	0	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
SPE13	0	0	0	0	I	I	0	0	I	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	--	0	0	0	0	-	0	I
SPE14	0	0	0	0	I	I	0	0	I	0	+	-	-	-	+	-	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SPE15	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	I	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	I
SPE16	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	0	I	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	--	0	-	0	0	-	0	0
SPE17	0	0	-	0	++	I	0	I	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	--	-	0	-	-	-	0	0
SPE18	0	0	0	0	++	I	0	0	I	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	--	0	-	--	--	0	0	0
SPE19	0	0	-	0	++	I	+	0	I	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	--	0	-	--	--	0	0	0
SPE20	0	0	0	0	I	I	0	0	I	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	--	--	0	--	--	0	0	I
SPE21	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	-I	0	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	--	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
North area																								
SPN1	0	0	-	0	++	+	0	++	++	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	--	0	0	--	0	0	0	+
SPN2	0	0	-	0	++	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	-	-	-	-	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SPN3	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	++	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	--	0	-	--	-	0	0	+-
South area																								
SPS01	0	0	0	0	I	I	0	I	I	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	--	0	-	-	-	0	0	+
SPS02	--	-	0	0	++	+	++	I	+	+	+-	I	+-	-	+-	-	--	-	0	0	0	0	0	+
SPS03	--	-	0	0	++	+	++	I	+	+	+-	I	+-	-	+-	-	--	-	0	0	0	0	0	+
SPS04	0	0	0	0	I	I	0	0	I	0	+-	-I	-	-	-	-	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SPS05	--	-	0-	0	I	I	0	0	I	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	--	--	-	0	-	0	0	+
SPS06	0	0	-	0	++	+	+	0	-	0	+	I	+	-	-	-	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SPS07	0	0	0	0	I	I	0	I	I	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	--	-	-	0	0	0	0	+I
SPS08	--	-	-	0	++	+	0	I	-	0	+	-	+	-	+	-	--	-	0	0	0	0	0	0
SPS09	0	0	0	0	++	++	++	++	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	--	0	0	-	--	0	0	I
SPS10	--	0	-	0	++	++	++	I	-	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	--	-	0	0	0	0	0	0
SPS11	-	-	0	0	++	+	0	0	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	--	-	0	0	0	-	0	0
SPS12	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	0	I	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	--	0	-	-	-	0	0	0I
SPS13	--	0	-	0	++	+	0	0	I	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	--	0	-	--	0	-	0	0
SPS14	0	0	-	0	++	+	+	0	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	--	0	-	-	0	0	0	0
SPS15	--	0	-	0	++	+	0	0	+	0	+	-	-	-	-	-	--	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
SPS16	0	0	0	0	++	I	0	0	0	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	--	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
SPS17	0	0	-	0	++	+	+	0	0	+	+	I	+	+	-	-	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SPS18	-	-	+	0	++	+	0	0	0	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 6.2 suggests that two of the proposed site allocations would have a significant number of negative sustainability impacts.

- SPCW03, Land off Manor Place, is partly in flood zone 3, seemingly distant from local services, and in an area with sensitive heritage assets, all of which are negative based on the criteria of Table 3.4. However, only a small amount of the site is in flood zone 3b; the site is proposed for graduate accommodation so access to e.g. primary and secondary schools is less essential; and the accommodation can be designed to be in keeping with the conservation area and nearby listed buildings.
- SPCW07, Osney Mead, there are no insurmountable constraints at this site however flood risk is an issue with most of the site in flood zone 2 or higher and some parts of the site in flood zone 3b. The SFRA Level 2 shows issues with access and egress and if left unmitigated, this is likely to have implications for the type of uses that can safely be delivered. For the Local Plan 2036 wording was agreed with the Environment Agency to overcome an objection on flood risk grounds. It will be important for new development to address the specific requirements set out in the policy and the broader flood risk policy to be found acceptable. It is also relatively far from local services, however, the Local Plan proposes the site as an extension of the city centre so this increases the potential for a wide range of class E uses including small scale retail and other uses that activate frontages at ground floor level.

6.4 Overall impacts of the Local Plan

Table 6.3 shows the overall impacts of all of the Local Plan 2040 policies and sites; and the cumulative impacts of the Local Plan 2040 plus other plans, projects and existing trends.

Table 6.3 Overall and cumulative impacts of the Local Plan 2040

SA/SEA topic	Overall impact	Cumulative impact	
1. Carbon emissions	+/-	+	The Local Plan 2040 expects new housing to be net zero carbon (R1); promotes employer-linked affordable housing that will reduce the need to commute (H5); encourages building retrofits that reduce carbon emissions (R3); restricts car parking with indirect benefits for carbon emissions (C8); requires electric vehicle charging points to be provided (C9); and supports vibrant local centres that can be accessed by walking, cycling and public transport (C2). More generally, the Local Plan refers to "being prepared for a net zero carbon future" meaning that we are enabled to live our lives in ways that do not contribute to exacerbating climate change further, e.g. sourcing our heat and power for buildings from renewables, being able to travel in active and sustainable ways. Providing homes in Oxford, where access to services and facilities by non-car means is easier than in more rural areas, also helps to reduce carbon emissions. However the provision of 9,612 new homes (H1) will increase the number of people in Oxford, with associated carbon emissions during construction and operation. The overall effects of the Local Plan on carbon emissions are likely to be roughly neutral. Cumulatively with other policies, for instance, national policies on electric vehicles and the provision of electricity by renewable means, carbon emissions are likely to go down, although not at the speed needed to achieve a net-zero carbon Oxford by 2040.
2. Climate change resilience	+/-	+	The plan policies on flood risk (G7), sustainable drainage systems (G8) and resilience (G9) strongly support climate change resilience. More indirectly, policies promoting green infrastructure (G2, G3) and minimising car parking (C8) will help to prevent the urban heat island effect and support shading. The provision of 9,612 new homes (H1) will, however, further urbanise the city, and increase the potential for run-off and flooding. Seven allocated sites (six in the Central and West Area) are partly in flood zone 3b, and another seven are partly in flood zone 2 or 3a. Sites SPCW07 (Osney Mead) and SPCW08 (Botley Road retail units) have constrained egress in the case of flooding, as well as being partly in flood zone 3b. The overall effects of the Local Plan on climate resilience are likely to be roughly neutral. Development upstream of Oxford is likely to increase runoff, leading to increased flooding in Oxford. The Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, expected to be in operation by 2030, will reduce the risk of flooding to about 1000 properties in Oxford, leading to a cumulative improvement in climate change resilience.
3. Efficient use of land	+/-	+/-	The plan policies on housing density (HD8), intensification and modernisation of employment land (E1), providing space-efficient

SA/SEA topic	Overall impact	Cumulative impact	
			housing for students and short-term accommodation (H8, H9), and limiting parking spaces (C8) all help to make most efficient use of land in Oxford. Policy H1, which aims to provide 9,612 new homes in Oxford, would have significant impacts on greenfield land. Nineteen of the allocated sites are in greenfield land, with Northern Gateway (SPN1, 29.7ha) and Oxford Science Park (SPS5, 26.5ha) by far the largest of these. None of the allocated sites are on Green Belt land (although some are on land that was formerly Green Belt, but which was removed from the Green Belt under the Local Plan 2036). Providing housing land within Oxford will reduce the need for housing land elsewhere in Oxfordshire, where it would typically not reach the same densities and would require more parking space. The plan's green infrastructure, biodiversity and heritage policies reduce the 'efficiency' of land used for housing, but provide necessary safeguards for nature and heritage. Overall, the plan would have significant negative impacts on greenfield land, but significant positive impacts in terms of optimising development density and reducing the need to build elsewhere. Cumulatively with other Local Plans, again it would reduce the amount of undeveloped land, but less than under other alternatives.
4. Local housing need	-	--	Oxford needs 1322 homes/year including 740 affordable homes/year. More information on this is in the Housing Need Consultation of Feb. 2023. Policy H1 provides for at least 9,612 new homes between 2020 and 2040 (481 homes/year). Policies H2-H5 aim to provide affordable homes, and policies H8-H15 focus on providing specialist accommodation for people who need temporary accommodation, students and boarding school pupils, Gypsies and Travellers, boat dwellers, and older people. Overall, the plan will reduce local housing need but there will still be under-provision which adjacent local authorities would need to fill. As a result of a memorandum of cooperation of 2016, the other Oxfordshire authorities' current local plans are providing for about 14,300 homes to deal with Oxford's unmet housing needs. However, since the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 was shelved, and without the Growth Deal, the other Oxfordshire authorities may be less likely in the future to provide for Oxford's outstanding housing need.
5. Inequalities	+	--	Indirectly, the Local Plan will help to redress Oxford's inequalities. The plan strongly supports walking, cycling and public transport, helping people who do not have access to a car. Its focus on healthy travel and green infrastructure also helps to address health inequalities. Policy CBLLAOF aims to improve access and place-making in Cowley and

SA/SEA topic	Overall impact	Cumulative impact	
			Littlemore. The Local Plan also aims to provide significant amounts of affordable housing through policies H2-H5, and housing for vulnerable groups such as transient workers, people experiencing homelessness, Gypsies and Travellers, and older people through policies H8-H15. However, Oxford continues to have some of the most expensive housing in the country compared to income, and this is unlikely to change soon. The plan cannot provide the amount of affordable housing that is needed in the city. Nationally, austerity and the cost of living crisis have hit deprived communities particularly hard, and this is likely to continue at least in the short term.
6. Services and facilities	0	0	Policy S3 aims to ensure that adequate infrastructure is available to support Oxford's housing and employment growth. Policies C1 and C2 on town/district/local centres also support the provision of services and facilities, and policies C3-C5 aim to prevent the loss of community facilities, learning institutions and cultural venues. The redevelopment of the Oxford train station, work towards a Cowley Branch Line, and other transport works (e.g. traffic filters) aim to ensure that services and facilities are easily accessible. The provision of 9,612 new homes, and the consequent increase in population, will increase pressures on existing services and facilities. However overall the plan, cumulatively with other plans and projects, is unlikely to significantly change access to services and facilities.
7. Leisure, recreation	0	0	The plan says little about leisure and recreation. Policy G1 on protection and G2 on enhancement of green and blue infrastructure would have a positive impact; policies G4, G6 and G8 on nature conservation would support leisure and recreation; but policy C4 could allow some school playing fields to be built on. Policy C5 aims to protect cultural venues. More widely, Oxfordshire's planned Nature Recovery Network may improve the provision of leisure and recreation, but these benefits are likely to be limited for Oxford residents.
8. Traffic and air pollution	++	++	Many of the plan policies, and the plan overall, strongly support walking, cycling and public transport. This includes policies on low-car development where there is good access to services (S1), vibrant centres and high(er) density development which reduce the need to travel (HD8, C1, C2), limited car parking (C8), and provisions for bicycles (HD15, C7). Cumulatively with other City Council policies on zero emission zones, low traffic neighbourhoods and traffic filters, this should significantly improve air pollution and, to a lesser extent, traffic levels in Oxford.

SA/SEA topic	Overall impact	Cumulative impact	
9. Water	-	--	The plan says little about water quality or water resources. Policy G9 requires new housing to achieve water consumption of 110 litres/person/day. Indirectly, the policies on green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and sustainable drainage systems (G2, G4, G8) will support good water quality. However, these are unlikely to outweigh the negative impact on water resources and water quality of a significant increase in new housing. The plan, cumulatively with other pressures - including existing water stress, significant development in adjacent local authorities, and climate change - is likely to have a significant negative impact on water resources. Water quality is also likely to worsen with increased runoff and pressures on the region's wastewater treatment systems.
10. Biodiversity	+/-	-	The Local Plan supports biodiversity through its policies on biodiversity protection, enhancement, net gain, and green infrastructure (G2-G6). Indirectly, the plan policies on climate change (R1, R2), sustainable drainage (G8), and air quality (R4) will also support biodiversity. However, the provision of 9,612 homes will involve building on greenfield land, reducing its biodiversity. Eight allocated sites are on or adjacent to designated nature conservation sites (SPCW02, SPCW03, SPE04, SPE08, SPN1, SPS5, SPS10); and ten include or are adjacent to significant water bodies (e.g. SPCW02, SPCW03, SPCW06, SPCW07, SPE06, SPS2, SPS5, SPS7, SPS10, SPS15). Cumulatively, biodiversity has been plummeting nationally. Adjacent local authorities are building significant development in the Green Belt, also negatively affecting biodiversity.
11. Design and heritage	-	0	The local plan's heritage policies (HD1-HD6) are protective rather than focusing on enhancement. Policies SD2 and HD7 both promote high-quality design; policies G2 and G3 will indirectly improve design through green infrastructure; and resilience is a key component of good design (G9). Renewable energy (R1) and electric vehicle charging infrastructure (C9), and construction in greenfield locations (H1, C4) could negatively affect the land/townscape. Fifteen allocated sites are in Conservation Areas; and seven (SPCW04, SPE03, SPE08, SPE18, SPE19, SPE20, SPS09) contain listed buildings or walls. The NPPF and National Design Guide promote heritage protection and good design. Cumulatively with the Local Plan, change is likely to be insignificant.
12. Economic growth	+	++	The Local Plan vision is to support Oxford's excellence in research and development in the life sciences and health sectors. However, a key constraint to employment in Oxford is the shortage of affordable accommodation. As such, the plan focuses on providing housing

SA/SEA topic	Overall impact	Cumulative impact	
			(including employer-led housing) over providing new employment land, with employment growth planned to be primarily through the intensification of existing employment sites (E1, H5). This will indirectly support economic growth by ensuring that the city remains attractive for employers and employees. The scale of housing provision supports Oxfordshire's wider economic policies. Policy E3 also supports affordable workspaces, which can act as starting points for new businesses. Oxford will continue to be the economic heart of Oxfordshire, with Oxfordshire's Strategic Economic Plan promoting high levels of housing and employment growth despite a bleaker national picture.

The Local Plan's main **direct** impacts are likely to be the provision of housing, including affordable housing with associated benefits for health and inequality; more energy-efficient development with associated climate change benefits; higher density development with land use efficiency benefits but possible negative townscape impacts; a neutralisation of biodiversity impacts through its policies on net biodiversity gain, urban greening etc.; and development

Indirectly, the Local Plan will encourage walking, cycling and public transport, with associated benefits for health, air quality and congestion. It encourages a gradual shift from employment land to housing land (but keeping jobs in the city by intensifying existing employment sites), and supports for high-tech employment, thus helping to indirectly support the local and regional economy. The plan's environmental policies help to protect and enhance the city's green areas, indirectly improving air quality, recreation, and climate change adaptation.

The Local Plan's main **short-term, temporary** impacts are the construction of new homes, with associated loss of greenfield land, dust, noise, traffic and other impacts. The plan responds to an increase in the city's population, helping to reduce housing need. **Long-term, permanent** impacts of the plan include a gradual improvement in the city's jobs-housing balance, reduced car traffic and air pollution, reduced carbon emissions, increased provision of affordable housing, reduced deprivation, and support for the region's economy; but also increased urbanisation, an intensification of development and probably taller buildings, and increased water stress.

7. Mitigating the Local Plan's impacts

7.1 Task B4. Mitigating negative impacts of the Local Plan policies

Table 7.1 shows suggestions for mitigating negative impacts of the Local Plan policies and enhancing their positive impacts, based on the policy appraisal of **Appendix A**. It also shows the planning team's response to these suggested mitigation measures.

Table 7.1 Suggested mitigation measures for plan policies and planning team response

Draft policy	SA recommendations / suggested mitigation	Planning team response
H2 Delivering affordable homes	Does the policy need to specify that the affordable housing will be affordable 'in perpetuity'?	This is not permitted under Right to Buy.
	Should the policy specify that students would not be allowed to bring any cars, and park anywhere in Oxford, rather than not parking on site?	An old version of the 2036 plan policy tried to do this, but the Inspector changed it because it was considered unimplementable. The intention is for the city's Controlled Parking Zone expansion to deal with this.
H11 Homes for travelling communities	Does the policy need to say anything about maximising the density of development?	Difficult to determine what this should look like in practice, e.g. caravans per hectare
H12 Homes for boat dwellers	Should the policy say anything about providing services for boat dwellers, e.g. supporting the delivery of water provision, storage, communal areas?	The policy requires there to be access to services such as potable water and waste disposal. It is not considered feasible for new residential moorings to be able to ensure there are communal areas or storage.
H14 Self-Build & Custom housebuilding	Need to specify the 'proportion of the site area' left for self-build?	This policy will be amended to state a proportion.
H16 Boarding school accommodation	Boarding school accommodation really shouldn't be causing much of a traffic impact at all (except when boarders are initially being delivered and finally picked up). Is 'severe impact' too generous here?	Agree, but it needs a threshold and this level is generally used in Transport Appraisals. The term 'unacceptable' is too vague.
Green city policies	Do Policies G1-G6 all apply to all developments? Can they be rationalized, e.g. using one checklist or calculator?	G1, G2, and G5 and G6 will relate to all developments. G3 is only mandated for major developments, though encouraged for others. We have considered whether requirements could be rationalised further but this would be challenging. G4-G6 have very specific focus on supporting biodiversity, whilst G1-G3 could support biodiversity but have a broader focus. G1 and G6 deal with protection of Green Infrastructure and designated sites specifically (which is

Draft policy	SA recommendations / suggested mitigation	Planning team response
		subject to different and more prescriptive considerations than other types of green space).
G1 Protection of the Green Infrastructure	• Clarify wording on important hedgerows in the final paragraph. • The first sentence of this policy refers to enhancement of GI. Refer to Policy G2 as part of that?	Hedgerows are addressed in the earlier section of the policy thus were not covered by this section which we were trying to make clear in the wording, but agree the caveat is not helpful and confuses things so have amended. The policy has been amended make a clearer distinction between G1 and G2.
G3 Provision of new Green and Blue features – Urban Greening Factor	Unclear what developments would require this, and how it differs from biodiversity net gain and Green Infrastructure enhancement policies.	The policy sets out that the specific targets are expected of major development. This was not so clear in the supporting text, so we have amended this. The considerations set out in G2 are essentially the design standards that the Green Infrastructure provided to meet requirements of G3 should follow. Biodiversity Net Gain as set out in G4 is a statutory requirement focussed purely on habitat creation and must meet specific requirements set out in DEFRA Metric. Meanwhile, the greening under G2 and G3 could support biodiversity but also a range of other green functions.
G4 Delivering mandatory net gains in biodiversity	Reduce duplication/overlap: there seems to be duplication between para. 5 and paras. 3 and 4.	We have amended the policy wording to reduce duplication as suggested.
G9 Resilient Design and Construction	Should this policy cross-refer to policy R1 on renewable energy, for instance requiring any air conditioning units to be powered by renewables?	We have amended the reference to passive cooling to include reference to energy efficient features and cross ref to R1 as suggested. We will also expand on this consideration in the design appendix.
	Is it worth specifying that passive cooling includes shade trees, and linking that to the urban greening policy? The one big sustainability concern about this policy is whether it will involve the installation of air conditioning units where they otherwise might not be, with associated impacts on energy consumption.	Policy R1 should ensure that all energy demands (including those for cooling) are met through onsite renewables (or else offsetting). We agree however that passive cooling (and this would include green features to a degree), should be the preference. The amendment addressed above (cross ref to R1) should help reinforce this. It is difficult to cover every potential measure that policy G9 could include so do not propose to amend further. We will however also

Draft policy	SA recommendations / suggested mitigation	Planning team response
		discuss adaptation measures part of the design guide appendix and will address this point there also.
R1 Net Zero buildings in operation	Clarify the OCC policy towards wood fuel /pellet burners: are they 'zero carbon'? Are wood burners allowed at all in new build?	Depending on fuel source it could be argued that they are carbon neutral. The policy is agnostic on technology used for space heating/renewables, so in effect does not explicitly support or ban them and we would not propose to run through every tech option within the policy (in part to future-proof against changing technologies). However, their installation could come into conflict with air quality policy and smoke control areas, so there may be other considerations which make the inappropriate.
	Are there any concern about double-counting of off-site offsetting, e.g. 1000 households contribute to an offsite solar farm which only provides 800 homes worth of energy?	The way offsetting is delivered (where an applicant has paid into the Council's fund) would need to be managed through a transparent and logical process which will fall under the management of the fund. This will need to include avoiding double-counting. This is not considered to be something the policy wording can directly address.
R2 Embodied carbon in the construction process	If an existing building is very energy inefficient, should it still be re-used rather than replaced?	The answer will depend on the circumstances of each proposal and there is not a simple yes or no. In effect, this will form part of the 'robust exploration' of feasibility of retaining building as is covered under part A. A TAN will likely expand on what this means (including energy efficiency of existing building).

Draft policy	SA recommendations / suggested mitigation	Planning team response
R3 Retro-fitting existing buildings	Can the policy be made stronger, e.g. require energy efficiency level X, renewable energy provision etc. for all refurbishments?	Policy RE1 comes into effect for a lot of new development including where it affects existing builds - e.g. conversion or extension of existing buildings. Whilst not all of RE1's standards apply, it still enforces certain standards of retro-fit there - e.g. follow energy hierarchy. It is tricky to go further here, as we cannot force buildings to be retro-fitted - instead this policy seeks to provide clarity that the council will wherever possible look positively on such applications where they come forward.
HD1 Conservation Areas to… HD6 Non-designated heritage assets	Is it possible to enhance conservation areas/listed buildings/ etc? If so, should that be encouraged here, and possibly ideas provided about what such enhancement could look like?	The emphasis in the National Planning Policy Framework and therefore the policy is weighing up harm to significance against benefits the scheme bring, and mitigating harm- so enhancement would be welcome but is not the intention of the policy.
HD4 Scheduled Monuments	Policies HD1-HD3 each includes a statement explaining the circumstances under which planning permission would not be granted, e.g. exceptional, wholly exceptional, substantial harm. Does this policy need something similar?	This has now been amended to be consistent with the other policies.
HD8 Using Context to Determine Appropriate Density	Does the policy need to say anything about minimum density? Otherwise b. suggests that the density of new development should be 'anchored' at the existing density of the neighbourhood where the development is proposed.	The policy gives an indicative (very high) density for city and district centres of 100dph
HD10. Health Impact Assessment	Ensure that the Technical Advice Note includes health issues regarding climate change (e.g. need for shading); also active travel.	The Technical Advice Note will need to expand on the relevant considerations that HIAs may need to cover which would include these considerations. Requirements under policy G9 (Resilient design) also address the need for considering the risks of climate change on occupants (such as overheating) and set out measures to address these e.g. requiring applicants to incorporate a cooling strategy into the design approach.
HD15 Bin and Bike Stores and External	The policy does not REQUIRE bin or bike storage, or explain how much must be provided.	Words added to policy about requirement, meanwhile it is envisaged that the TANs would provide the details

Draft policy	SA recommendations / suggested mitigation	Planning team response
Servicing Features		behind the policy
C1 Town Centre Uses	Are any new Local Centres needed, for instance in Littlemore, Oxford North, or Osney Mead/West End/Botley Road?	Areas have been assessed as to whether they qualify as Local Centres and the Barton Underhill Circus added from previous plan
C2 Maintaining vibrant centres	Does the City Centre section need to say anything about Westgate v. Cornmarket?	Both are considered important and the evidence suggests no additional need, but no pressing need to 'shrink' the area of the city centre protected for active frontages and mixed use.
	Does the policy need to say anything about public art; maintenance/ enhancement of existing public spaces in the centres; shading, e.g. by trees or sails/structures as resilience to future climate change?	These points are all covered in the design appendix, but also public realm and Green Infrastructure is referred to for a number of the centres in the policy.
C6 Transport Assessments, Travel Plans and Service and Delivery Plans	Can anything more be said to encourage zero carbon transport, e.g. car-free development; Transport Plan should show how new develop-ment will be zero carbon in terms of transport as well as housing?	This is covered by approach to low car (term instead of car free) policy C9
C7 Bicycle and Powered Two Wheelers Parking Design Standards Policy C9: Electric Vehicle Charging	Can something be said that links provision of on-site renewables with electric vehicle charging? Shading of parking bays would also support resilience to climate change.	We would envisage that this is a level of detail that could ultimately be picked up by one of the Technical Advice Notes (TAN) supporting the new Local Plan.
Northern Edge AOF	Clarify that future development requires an appropriate assessment which must consider hydrology as well as air pollution impacts on Oxford Meadow SAC	Air quality and hydrological impacts for the plan will be addressed by the Local Plan HRA.
Cowley Branch Line and Littlemore AOF	Will the redevelopment of the Blackbird Leys centre provide adequate services/facilities for the area, or are more required?	The focus is on maintaining provision.
	Can more publicly accessible green space be provided as part of the redevelopment of the area: for instance could a walking/cycling route between Blackbird Leys and Littlemore be provided via the Oxford Science Park? Or alongside the future Cowley Branch Line?	The policies for individual sites mention where there is potential for enhanced sustainable travel routes.

Draft policy	SA recommendations / suggested mitigation	Planning team response
	Development at Kassam and Oxford Science Park would need to be flood-resistant.	Applicants will need to refer to the main policy for this.
Marston Road and Old Road AOF	This area may be prone to HMOs, and especially to HMOs that might be turned into student accommo-dation in the future. This may require specific standards to be put in place to help maintain the character of the area.	The HMO policy sets a maximum concentration of HMOs, over which new HMOs will not be permitted. This applies everywhere. Likewise, student accommodation is limited to particular locations anyway.
	Specify that accommodation in the area is expected to be car-free (student accommodation, employer-linked housing)	Probably not needed to repeat the requirements of the low car policy, as they will not be applied in any bespoke way to this area.
North of the City Centre AOF	Specify that all housing development (maybe all development) in this area is expected to be car-free	As above
West End and Botley AOF	Development should be required to be flood-resilient (e.g. with parking on the ground floor)	This is picked up by the flood risk policy.
	Given the good public transport in the area, should most or all new housing by car free?	The low car policy sets out the parking requirements.

7.2 Mitigating negative site-specific impacts

Where development on allocated sites is likely to have significant impacts, the site allocation policies of the Local Plan (Chapter 8 of the plan) include mitigation measures to minimise or obviate those impacts. Many of these refer to the plan's development management policies. These include mitigation measures related to:

A. Tall buildings (HD9 Views and Building Heights)
B. Urban design (HD7 Principles of High-Quality Design)
C. Buffer area around adjacent wildlife site (G6 Protecting Oxford's Biodiversity)
D. Walking, cycling, public transport
E. Protection of view cone (HD9 Views and Building Heights)
F. Protection of archaeology (HD5 Archaeology)
G. Provision/protection of community facilities (C3 Protection, Alteration and Provision of Local Community Facilities)
H. Protection of biodiversity, HRA related (G6 Protecting Oxford's Biodiversity)
I. No net loss of biodiversity, urban greening (G1 Protection of Green Infrastructure, G3 Provision of New Green & Blue Features – Urban Greening Factor)
J. Compensation re. green belt
K. Conservation area management (HD1 Conservation Areas)
L. Air quality management (R4 Air Quality Assessments and Standards)
M. Provision of public open space (G2 Enhancement & Provision of New Green and Blue Infrastructure)
N. Listed building management (HD2 Listed Buildings)

O. Protection of water body / SuDS (G8 Sustainable Drainage Systems)
P. Protection from flood risk / sequential approach (G7 Flood Risk and Flood Risk Assessments)

As part of the SA/SEA process, the site assessments, which are summarised at Table 6.2 of this SA/SEA, were compared to the wording of the site allocation policies in Chapter 8 of the Local Plan. Table 7.2 shows those negative impacts identified as part of the site assessment process (in amber and red, from Table 6.2), and the mitigation measures proposed in the site allocation policies (the letters relate to the mitigation measures listed above). This allows for a cross-check to ensure that all significant impacts are mitigated.

Table 7.2 Mitigation measures (letters) for negative impacts identified as part of the site assessment process (red and amber in Table 6.2)

	Flood zone	Flood egress	Prev. devel. land	Green Belt	Housing provision	Affordable housing	Regeneration	Community facilit	Public open space	Biodiversity	Bus stop	Rail station	Primary school	Secondary school	GP	Post office	Air quality area	Water body	Archaeology	Conservation area	Listed building	View cone	High building area	Employment
Central and West area																								
NCC AOF								G		I							L						A	
SPCW1												D	D	D	D	D			F	K	N			
SPCW2												D	D	D	D	D		O	F	K	N			
SPCW3	P		I							I	D	D	D	D	D	D		O	F	K	N	E		
SPCW4	P	P							M	H	D	D	D	D	D	D	L	O		K	N			
SPCW5	P	P								I		D	D	D	D	D		O	F			E	A	
SPCW6	P	P								I		D	D	D	D	D	L	O	F	K	N	E	A	
SPCW7	P	P							M		D	D	D	D	D	D		O		K		E	A	
SPCW8	P	P								I		D	D	D	D	D		O		K				
East area																								
MROR AOF										I		D	D	D	D	D	L			B K			A	
SPE1										I		D	D	D	D	D	L	O	F	K	N	E		
SPE2	P		I						M	I		D	D	D	D	D		O		K	N			
SPE3										H		D	D	D	D	D	L	O	F	K	N	E		
SPE4										I		D	D	D	D	D		O		K				
SPE5			I							I		D	D	D	D	D				K				
SPE6										I		D	D	D	D	D		O	F					
SPE7										I		D	D	D	D	D		O	F					
SPE8								G		I		D	D	D	D	D		O	F	K	N			
SPE9			I					G				D	D	D	D	D	L		F					
SPE10			I	J					M	I		D	D	D	D	D	L			K			A	
SPE11			I	J						I		D	D	D	D	D	L			K				
SPE12			I	J						I	D	D	D	D	D	D	L			K				
SPE13												D	D	D	D	D						E		
SPE14										I		D	D	D	D	D	L	O						
SPE15								G		I		D	D	D	D	D	L						A	
SPE16										I		D	D	D	D	D			F			E		
SPE17			I					G		I		D	D	D	D	D		O		K	N	E		
SPE18										I	D	D	D	D	D	D			F	K	N			
SPE19			I							I	D	D	D	D	D	D	L		F	K	N			
SPE20										I		D	D	D	D	D		O		K	N	E		
SPE21								G				D	D	D	D	D	L					E		
North area																								
NEO AOF										I	E		D	D	D	D				B			A	

	Flood zone	Flood egress	Prev. devel. land	Green Belt	Housing provision	Affordable housing	Regeneration	Community facilit	Public open space	Biodiversity	Bus stop	Rail station	Primary school	Secondary school	GP	Post office	Air quality area	Water body	Archaeology	Conservation area	Listed building	View cone	High building area	Employment
SPN1			J	J				G		H		D	D	D	D	D	L		F	K				
SPN2			I						M	H I		D	D	D	D	D								
SPN3			I							I		D	D	D	D	D			F	K	N			
South area																								
CBLL AOF										I		D	D	D	D	D							A	
SPS1										I		D	D	D	D	D			F	K	N		A	
SPS2	P	P							M	I		D	D	D	D	D		O						
SPS3	P	P								I C		D	D	D	D	D		O	F					
SPS4										I		D	D	D	D	D	L						A	
SPS5	P	P	I							I C		D	D	D	D	D		O	F		N		A	
SPS6			I					G	M	I		D	D	D	D	D		O	F				A	
SPS7										I		D	D	D	D	D		O	F					
SPS8	P	P	I					G	M	I		D	D	D	D	D		O						
SPS9										I		D	D	D	D	D				K	N		A	
SPS10	P		I							I		D	D	D	D	D		O						
SPS11	P	P								I		D	D	D	D	D		O				E		
SPS12										I		D	D	D	D	D			F	K	N		A	
SPS13	P		I							I		D	D	D	D	D		O	F	K		E		
SPS14			I					G	M	I		D	D	D	D	D			F	K		E		
SPS15	P		I	J						I		D	D	D	D	D		O	F	K				
SPS16			I					G		I		D	D	D	D	D				K				
SPS17			I							I		D	D	D	D	D	L							
SPS18	P	P								I		D	D	D	D	D			I					

This comparison identified some impacts flagged in the site assessments that had not initially clearly been mitigated in the site allocation policies. Subsequently the team have updated the policies to pick up the additional mitigations needed and strengthen their alignment with the analysis of the site assessments. In some instances, the policies have not been amended further because of subsequent work that has refined the initial site assessment findings or where an overarching policy elsewhere in the Local Plan will address the issue without need for more site specific guidance. For example:

- For air quality the whole city is an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) which was why all sites scored double negative in initial site assessment. The reason the whole city was declared an AQMA was because there are a number of hotspots dispersed across the area generally corresponding with high traffic areas, so the decision was taken to declare the whole city AQMA. When drafting policy mitigation, further analysis was undertaken to determine proximity of sites to these hotspots and where sites were in proximity, additional wording is included in the policy. A generic policy also applies across the city for air quality.

- Where lack of access to a service such as bus stop or rail station has been noted as a negative impact, the focus on policy mitigation is generally around setting out that proposals will need to consider measures that can support active travel and improve connectivity to services in wider area where the expected growth from the site is not expected to generate enough demand for a new stop.

- In relation to tall buildings, in certain locations such as the West End area it was considered that there is more pressure on building heights so we have included specific reference to

policy HD9, however in other locations this was not deemed as necessary (for example SPCW3 and SPCW4. Equally some sites are covered by the guidance in the area of focus which references policy HD9 where it is deemed necessary such as SPCW1 and SPCW2.

8. Monitoring the Local Plan's impacts

The City Council have been monitoring the effectiveness of the current Local Plan 2036 every year, and making the findings public in Authority Monitoring Reports, which are available at https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/420/annual_monitoring_report. As part of this some (but not all) of the monitoring indicators proposed in the SA/SEA report for the Local Plan 2036 have also been monitored. The lack of monitoring reflects resource constraints on the council, and the fact that some underlying data (e.g. on water quality, condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Index of Multiple Deprivation) are collected nationally and only available sporadically.

Reflecting these realities, Table 8.1 aims to propose a realistic SA/SEA monitoring framework. It is in two sections. The first section relates to Local Plan outcomes; would be monitored annually; and would be made available annually in the Authority Monitoring Reports. These indicators relate to the effectiveness of specific plan policies that are particularly important for achieving sustainability outcomes. The second section relates to more long-term sustainability outcomes; would be monitored every 3 years; link to some environmental standards; and would be made available in an SA/SEA appendix to the appropriate Authority Monitoring Reports. They focus on sustainability outcomes that are particularly important to Oxford. They also aim to act as a step towards the government's proposed Environmental Outcome Reporting.

Education and tourism are not proposed for monitoring because their links to sustainability impact of the plan are limited.

Table 8.1 Proposed SA/SEA monitoring

SA/SEA topic	Monitoring of Local Plan 2040 outcomes (every year)	Monitoring of sustainability outcomes (every 3 years)	Target/ standard
1. Carbon emissions	Contributions secured and proportion of fund spent against climate change offsetting fund (assumes that all other developments are net zero carbon)	Change in per capita CO2 emissions	Net zero carbon city by 2040
2. Climate change resilience	Applications permitted against Environment Agency flood risk advice	Change in no. homes in flood zone 3	Reduction of homes in flood zone 3
3. Efficient use of land / 7. Leisure and recreation	Applications permitted on protected green space		Resist loss of protected green space
4. Local housing need	Net housing completions	Change in population / households	
5. Inequalities	Net affordable housing completions	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Reduced deprivation

SA/SEA topic	Monitoring of Local Plan 2040 outcomes (every year)	Monitoring of sustainability outcomes (every 3 years)	Target/ standard
		Health dimension of Index of Multiple Deprivation	
6. Services and facilities	Applications permitted for new community spaces, cultural venues and visitor attractions	Significant new community assets	
8. Transport and air quality	Air quality progress: NOx, PM10, PM2.5	Modal split of journey in Oxford	City/UK air quality standards
9. Water	Applications permitted on protected peat reserves	% river length assessed as fairly good or very good for chemical quality and biological quality	Water Framework Directive targets
10. Biodiversity	Biodiversity net gain being delivered in the city	Area (ha) in areas of biodiversity importance	No reduction
		Condition of SSSIs, integrity of SACs	Good condition and integrity
11. Design and heritage	Applications permitted that result in the loss of listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, scheduled monuments	Change in no. heritage assets at risk	No loss in protected heritage
12. Economic growth	Net gain / loss of employment floorspace (sqm)	% employment / unemployment in the city	

9. Next steps

Any comments on the Regulation 19 plan and this SA/SEA report should be **details of how to respond to consultation inc web address to be added closer to publication.**

The Local Plan will be revised as appropriate after this consultation, and is expected to be submitted for examination in March 2024. Once submitted for examination, the timetable is not within the City Council's control. Based on the timescales for the examination of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 the examination period is expected to be around 15 months, from submission to adoption meaning that the Local Plan is expected to be adopted in June 2025.

Planning Policy

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Habitat Regulations Assessment

For the Oxford Local Plan 2040

September 2023

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Introduction

1.1 This report discusses Stage 1 (screening) of the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Oxford Local Plan 2040.

1.2 The Oxford Local Plan proposed submission document:

- Sets a capacity-based/ constraint-based housing target aimed at meeting as much housing need as possible with appropriate consideration of other policy aims. As a result of this policy option the level of housing development proposed by the Local Plan 2040 will deliver more than 9,500 homes throughout the plan period.
- Proposes to meet as much employment need as possible on existing employment sites and in accessible locations i.e., city and district centres (but prioritises other uses, in particular housing, even if employment needs cannot be met in full in the city).
- Proposes to modernise, intensify and regenerate existing employment sites in the city as well as proposing the diversification of employment sites including allowing an element of housing delivery on certain employment sites;
- Recognises the need to continue to work neighbouring authorities to help deliver opportunities for housing or employment needs that cannot be met within Oxford's administrative boundary
- Allows employment sites that are not considered to be important to Oxford's economy to be redeveloped (e.g., for housing).
- Proposes to develop a detailed site allocation policy for the Northern Gateway strategic site as the Northern Gateway AAP expires in 2026.

Requirements of the Habitat Regulations

1.3 Appropriate Assessment of plans that could affect Special Conservation Areas (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar Sites (jointly called 'European sites) is required by paragraph 63 of the Habitat Regulations 2017 (as amended)[1], which states:

> *63. (1) A competent authority, before deciding to undertake, or give any consent, permission of other authorisation for a plan or project which*
> *(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or European offshore marine site (in combination with other plans or projects), and*
> *(b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site*
> *must make an appropriate asssessment of the implications of the plan or project for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives.*

[1] The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) SI No. 1012 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents/made

1.4 Paragraph 64 discusses alternative solutions, the test of 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' (IROPI) and compensatory measures:

64. (1) if the competent authority is satisfied, there being no alternative solutions, the plan or project must be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (which subject to paragraph 2) may be of a social or economic nature, it may agree to the plan or project notwithstanding a negative assessment of the implications for the European site or the European offshore marine site (as the case may be).

1.5 The precautionary principle is applied to European sites which are subject to appropriate assessment. Plans and projects can only be permitted if it can be shown that they will have no significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site, or if there are no alternatives to them and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest as to why they should go ahead. In such cases, compensation will be necessary to ensure the overall integrity of the site network.

Methodology used for this Habitat Regulations Assessment

1.6 A Habitat Regulations Assessment can involve up to a four-stage process:

1. Screening. Determining whether or not a plan 'alone or in-combination' is likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

2. Appropriate Assessment. Determining whether, in view of the site's conservation objectives, the plan 'alone or in-combination' would have an adverse effect (or risk of this) on the integrity of the site.

3. Assessment of alternative solutions. Where the plan is assessed as having an adverse effect (or risk of this) on the integrity of a site, there should be an examination of alternatives.

4. Assessment where no alternative solutions remain and where adverse impacts remain.

1.7 This section of the HRA covers stage 1 (screening). Oxford City Council has undertaken this HRA 'in-house' with third party transport modelling commissioned using the Atkins Oxfordshire Strategic Model (OSM).

HRA Screening

European Sites

2.1 This section begins by describing the European sites that could possibly be affected by the Oxford Local Plan 2040. For this Habitat Regulations Assessment a 20km area of search outside of the Oxford City Council administrative area was used. The following European sites are within 20km of the Oxford City Council administrative boundary.

Table 2.1 - European sites within 20km of Oxford City administrative boundary (Oxford Local Plan 2040 Proposed Submission Document).

Name of site	Distance from boundary	Reason for designation[2]
Oxford Meadows SAC	Part of site within the city boundary. Site extends into administrative area for Cherwell District Council and into the administrative boundary of West Oxfordshire District Council	**Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for the selection of this site** **6510 Lowland hay meadows** (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis) Together with North Meadow and Clattinger Farm, also in southern England, Oxford meadows represents **lowland hay meadows** in the Thames Valley centre of distribution. The site includes vegetation communities that are perhaps unique in the world reflecting the influence of long-term grazing and hay-cutting on **lowland hay meadows**. The site has benefited from the survival of traditional management, which has been undertaken for several centuries, and so exhibits good conservation of structure and function. **Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site** **1614 Creeping marshwort** (Apium repens) Oxford Meadows is selected because Port Meadow is the larger of only two known sites in the UK for **creeping marshwort *(Apium repens)***
Cothill Fen SAC	Located 7km from the city boundary	**Annex I habitats that area primary reason for selection of this site** **7230 Alkaline Fens** This lowland valley mire contains one of the largest surviving examples of alkaline fen vegetation in central England, a region where fen vegetation is rare. The M13 *Schoenus nigricans – Juncus subnodulosus* vegetation found here occurs under a wide range of hydrological conditions, with frequent bottle sedge *Carex rostrata*, grass-of-Parnassus *Parnassia palustris*, common butterwort

[2] www.jncc.gov.uk

		Pinguicula vulgaris and marsh helleborine *Epipactis palustris*. The alkaline fen vegetation forms transitions to other vegetation types that are similar to M24 *Molinia caerulea – Cirsium dissectum* fen-meadow and S25 *Phragmites australis – Eupatorium cannabinum* tall-herb fen and wet alder *Alnus* spp. wood. **Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not as a primary reason for selection of this site** 91E0 Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxiinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicon albae).
Little Wittenham SAC	Located 19km from the city boundary	**Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site** **1166 Great Crested Newt** Triturus cristatus One of the best-studied great crested newt sites in the UK, Little Wittenham comprises two main ponds set in a predominantly woodland context (broad-leaved and conifer woodland is present). There are also areas of grassland, with sheep grazing and arable bordering the woodland to the south and west. The River Thames is just to the north of the site, and a hill fort to the south. Large numbers of **great crested newts *Triturus cristatus*** have been recorded in the two main ponds, and research has revealed that they range several hundred metres into the woodland blocks.

Local Plan 2040 Proposed Submission Document

2.2 Oxford City Council has produced a Local Plan 2040 Proposed Submission Document which sets out the proposed strategy for development in the city to 2040 along with site allocations and development management policies.

2.3 The Local Plan 2040 Proposed Submission Document:

- Sets a capacity-based/ constraint-based housing target aimed at meeting as much housing need as possible with appropriate consideration of other policy aims. As a result of this policy option the level of housing development proposed by the Local Plan 2040 will deliver more than 9,500 homes throughout the plan period.
- Proposes to meet as much employment need as possible on existing employment sites and in accessible locations i.e., city and district centres (but prioritises other uses, in particular housing, even if employment needs cannot be met in full in the city).
- Proposes to modernise, intensify and regenerate existing employment sites in the city as well as proposing the diversification of employment sites including allowing an element of housing delivery on certain employment sites;

- Recognises the need to continue to work neighbouring authorities to help deliver opportunities for housing or employment needs that cannot be met within Oxford's administrative boundary
- Allows employment sites that are not considered to be important to Oxford's economy to be redeveloped (e.g., for housing).
- Proposes to develop an detailed site allocation policy for the Northern Gateway strategic site as the Northern Gateway AAP expires in 2036.

Screening Methodology

2.4 Previous HRAs undertaken for Oxford City looked at how policies in the plan could potentially have an impact on European sites within 20km of the city. Of the three sites identified within 20km of the city, two sites were screened out at this stage and one was looked at in more detail. The sites screened out were Cothill Fen SAC and Little Wittenham SAC. The paragraphs below provide a short summary as to why these site were screened out previously.

2.5 Cothill Fen SAC is over 7km from the Oxford city boundary and lies within a different river catchment. The site itself is in a relatively remote location and can be accessed by private car or by local residents on foot. The site has four conservation objectives – high water table; calcareous, base-rich water supply; minimal air pollution; and recreational impacts. Given that the city is in a different river catchment, there is unlikely to be a significant impact on the water-related conservation objectives as a result of policies in the Oxford city Local Plan 2040. Air pollution impacts are highly localised. Given the distance from the site, it unlikely that there will be significant air quality impacts. Finally recreational impacts are unlikely to be significant (as result of proposed development in the Oxford Local Plan 2040. This is due to a number of factors including the remote location of Cothill Fen, its limited accessibility by modes other than private car and the fact that Oxford city has a number of alternative recreation opportunities for residents to enjoy within the city itself (e.g., University Parks, Christchurch Meadow, South Park, Bury Knowle Park, Cutteslowe Park, etc.).

2.6 Little Wittenham SAC is located 19km away and only has two conservation objectives which do not relate to site management (the Oxford Local Plan 2040 does not propose policies that will alter the way the site is managed). As such the two remaining conservation objectives for this site relate to the maintenance of water quality and levels to support the ponds suitability as breeding ponds; and potential impacts of increased recreational pressure. In relation to water, levels are managed along the river Thames, and controlled through a series of locks and weirs to ensure a balanced flow, as such impacts resulting from the Oxford Local Plan 2040 are unlikely to be significant. With regard to potential recreational pressure from the increased population as a result of the Oxford Local Plan 2040 is also unlikely to be significant. This is due to the relatively remote location (access only by private car) and the fact that Oxford

city has a number of alternative opportunities for residents to enjoy within the city itself (e.g., University Parks, Christchurch Meadow, South Park, Bury Knowle Park, Cutteslowe Park, etc.).

2.7 The one site that has been 'screened in' to the assessment process in the Oxford Meadows SAC. Table 2.1 explains the reasons for which the Oxford Meadows has been designated as an SAC. Natural England's report on the condition of the SSSI's that make up the Oxford Meadows provides some infromation on the condition of the SSSI units. Although a lot of data is historical, there have been some recent assessements, for instance in July 2022 part of the Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common SSSI was found to be in favourable condition.

2.8 In January 2019, Natural England produced the Oxford Meadows SAC Conservation Objectivces Supplementary Advice Note[3] which "brings together the findings of the best available scientific evidence relating to the site's qualifying features, which may be updated or supplemented in further publications from Natural England and other sources".

2.9 City Council Officers have had regard to the information provided within this document, which has been supplemented by discussions and meetings with Natural England colleagues. A HRA background paper was produced at Preferred Options setting out the proposed scope of works that was intented to inform the HRA workstream.

2.10 Broadly speaking, it was agreed that there was no change to the key requirements that have been assessed as part of previous HRA work undertaken by the Council. As such, the following key requirements form the basis of this HRA Screening document:

- Minimal Air Pollution;
- Absence of nutrient enrichment of waters/ good water quality;
- Balanced hydrological regime – alteration to adjacent rivers may alter flooding and botanical diversity;
- Ensuring recreational impacts are managed at reasonable level (this relates to the impacts on creeping marshwort only as set out in the Natural England publication: Oxford Meadows SAC Conservation Objectives Supplementary Advice Note);
- Absence of direct fertilisation;
- Maintenance of traditioanl hay cut and aftermath grazing.

2.11 At a meeting with Natural England on 08 June 2022, it was agreed that the following should be considered as forming they key elements of the Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening for the Oxford Local Plan 2040:

- Air Pollution;
- Water Quality;
- Balanced Hydrological Regime;

[3] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5815888603250688

– Recreational Pressure.

2.12 In addition to the above requirements, this HRA considers the vulnerabilities listed in the Natura 2000 – Standard Data Form for the Oxford Meadows SAC submitted by DEFRA to the European Commission in December 2015[4]. This form states that the Oxford Meadows SAC is vulnerable to impacts from the following sources:

- Pollution to surface waters (limnic & terrestrial, marine & brackish);
- Invasive non-native species; and,
- Human induced changes in hydraulic conditions.

2.13 Requirements for the maintenance of traditional hay cut and light aftermath grazing; and the absence of direct fertilisation are related only to the management of the SAC. They are not affected by the location of, for example, housing or employment development.

2.14 Also, the control of invasive species cannot be easily influenced by the planning regime. A Site Improvement Plan for the Oxford Meadows SAC[5] issued by Natural England in December 2014 highlights that the rare *Apium repens* could be affected by *Crassula* and other invasive species. However, the Plan does not indicate that the concern of C*rassula* spreading to the lower areas of Port Meadow could be dealt by control mechanisms directly linked to, or facilitated by new development. Instead, the Plan suggests that these mechanisms need to be identified at the national level. The other requirements are the subject of this report.

How the draft policies were screened out of the assessment

2.15 This section sets out the considerations that have been given as to why certain policies have been screened out in relation to each of the conservation objectives of the site.

Air Quality

2.16 In June 2018, Natural England published an internal operational guidance note entitled, *Natural England's approach to advising competent authorities on the assessment of road traffic emissions under the Habitat Regulations*[6]. Section 4 of the note provides, "Advice on Screening for Likely Significant Effects". Paragraph 4.10 of the note sets out that, "with regard to potential risks from road traffic emissions, Natural England and Highways England are in

[4] Available at: http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/n2kforms/UK0012845.pdf
[5] Available at: http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4942743310696448
[6] Available at https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4720542048845824

agreement that protected sites falling within 200m of the edge of a road affected by a plan or project need to be considered further."

2.17 Oxford City Council has undertaken transport modelling to understand the impact of the Oxford Local Plan 2040 alone and in-combination with other relevant plans and projects, on the road network close to the Oxford Meadows SAC.

2.18 Natural England Guidance suggests that only sites within 200m of a road sensitive to air pollution need to be considered. There are two roads which could have a potential impact on air quality at the Oxford Meadows SAC. These are the A34 and the A40.

2.19 Work has been carried out by Atkins to look at the impact of planned development in Oxford City, 'alone and in combination' with other relevant plans and programmes. A technical note has been provided at Appendix X.

2.20 At the time of writing, preliminary findings from the air quality modelling are showing that the amount of development proposed in Oxford is not of such an order of magnitude as to trigger Natural England's vehicular screening requirements. At this stage, we consider that impacts of development in Oxford 'alone or in-combination' with other plans and programmes, is unlikely to have a significant impact on the integrity of the Oxford Meadows SAC.

Balanced Hydrological Regime

2.21 "Three main sources of water to the meads have been identified to support the plant communities on the Oxford Meadows SAC. These are direct rainfall, surface water, and groundwater flowing in from outside the area. Any of these sources, or a combination, may contribute to the soil water, which supports the plant communities on the meads"[7].

2.22 HRAs for previous Plans in Oxford ruled out the likelihood of impacts on the SAC from surface water and direct rainfall. Previous HRA work explained that the abstraction license for Farmoor Reservoir did not impact the SAC, and no increases to this abstraction licence are proposed. As such the amount of surface water is likely to remain the same throughout the Local Plan period.

2.23 The HRA Screening Report for the Draft Drought Plan (2022)[8] for Thames Water confirms that no likely significant effects are anticipated from any of the proposed drought schemes (in particular at Farmoor Reservoir) on the Oxford Meadows SAC, either alone, or in combination with other licenses and consents.

[7] A. Dixon (2005), The Hydrology of Oxford Meadows

[8] Available at https://www.thameswater.co.uk/media-library/home/about-us/regulation/drought-plan/strategic-environmental-assessment/habitats-regulations-assessment-screening-report.pdf

2.24 The Environment Agency's flood alleviation scheme for Oxford, which is likely to consist of enlargement of existing watercourse and/ or creating flood relief channels, may affect the flooding regime of the River Thames. However, Natural England has stipulated that a key requirement of the Oxford flood alleviation scheme is that it does not have an adverse impact on the Oxford Meadows hydrological regime.

2.25 Figure 2.1 shows the location of the North Oxford Gravel Terrace in relation to the Oxford Meadows SAC. It should be read in conjunction with Figure 2.2. to provide the locational context of the direction of groundwater movement on the North Oxford Gravel Terrace.

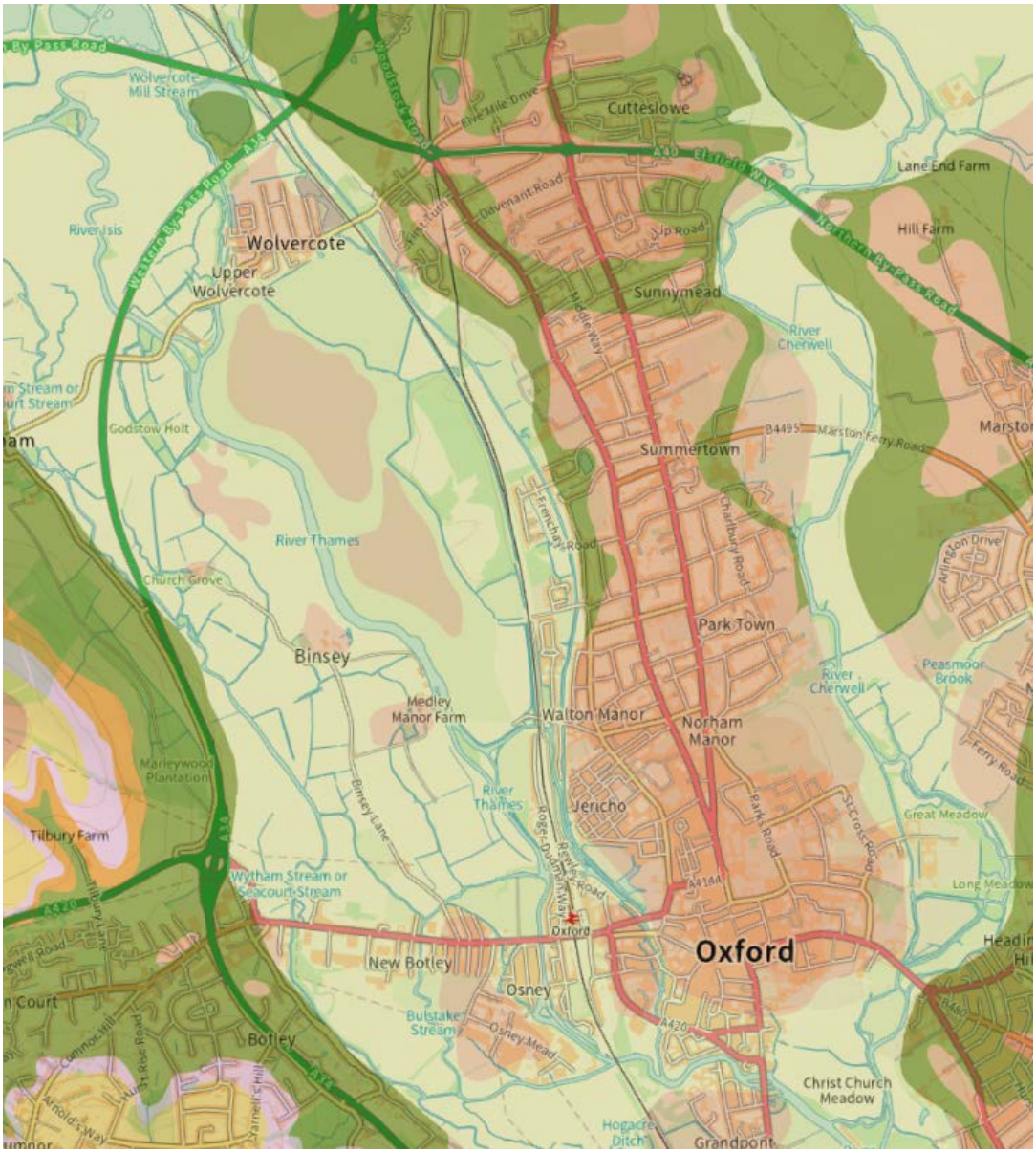


Figure 2.1: Map showing the North Oxford Gravel Terrace and Port Meadow within the context of Oxford (*Reproduced with the permission of the British Geological Survey © NERC. All rights Reserved')*

2.26 Figure 2.1 shows the geology of Oxford. The salmon pink colouring reaching from the city centre right up through Summertown and beyond to the north represents the North Oxford Gravel Terrace. These deposits are a source of groundwater recharge to the Oxford Meadows. It is recognised that this is not the only source of groundwater recharge, as it is likely that there is a much larger groundwater catchment area that serves the Oxford Meadows.

2.27 Previous HRA[9] work to support the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan (AAP) investigated the issue of connectivity between the North Oxford Gravel Terrace and the Oxford Meadows SAC and confirmed that there is a large catchment area for groundwater recharge supporting the Oxford Meadows.

2.28 This HRA was backed up with an Interim and Full Hydro-geological Assessment, both of which were submitted into the Examination Library at the time when the AAP was examined by an Independent Planning Inspector. These reports undertook a number of boreholes and found that groundwater was imperceptible within the Oxford Clay Formation and as such was not likely to make a significant contribution to the Oxford Meadows SAC. In the small portion of the Gravel Terrace that was found within the Northern Gateway site area, groundwater entry was not observed. The consultants conclude that groundwater within Alluvium found on site are likely to be in hydrological continuity with the alluvial deposits beyond the site boundary. These soils are likely to have some contribution to the groundwater regime feeding the Oxford Meadows SAC.

2.29 The conclusions of the Fully Hydrogeological Statement[10], and Interim Hydrogeological Note were both submitted as evidence to the Examination Library for the Northern Gateway AAP. The findings of the Full Statement backed up those initial findings in the Interim Note .

2.30 The Full Hydrogeological Statement documented further boreholes that were dug to assess the hydrology of part of the site. This Statement found that there was an area that ran along the southernmost part of the site which was not noted on the Geological Map. The Full Hydrological Statement referred to this section of land as the "Alluvial Ribbon".

2.31 The Full Hydrogeological Statement concluded (in paragraph 5.1 on p.12) that:

> *Overall, it is considered that groundwater flow from the Alluvial Ribbon is likely to have some contribution to the groundwater regime feeding the environmentally sensitive sites off site. However, the recharge area of the Alluvial Ribbon on the site compared to the groundwater catchment of the river valley is miniscule and the overall contribution of the Alluvial Ribbon to the groundwater regime of the river valley as a whole is considered to be insignificant.*

[9] The HRA for the Northern Gateway AAP is available online: https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/423/northern_gateway_area_action_plan

[10] CD4.24 Full Hydrogeological Assessment, Peter Brett Associates (September 2014) and CD4.23 Interim Hyrdogeolgical Summary Note, Peter Brett Associates (May 2014) formed part of the evidence base for the Northern Gateway AAP Examination Library.

2.32 What this shows is that there is a large catchment area within which groundwater can be recharged to the Oxford Meadows and that development at the Northern Gateway site would be unlikely to have an impact on it.

2.33 Older evidence (from D MacDonald, A Dixon, et al (2007)), shows that there may be some hydrological connectivity between the North Oxford Gravel Terrace and the Oxford Meadows. This research showed the potential connectivity using a conceptual groundwater model. It is worth noting that this model only looked groundwater flow from the North Oxford Gravel Terrace and did not take account of any wider catchment area. This model showed that water recharged to groundwater on the North Oxford Gravel Terrace had the potential to be connected to the Oxford Meadows SAC.

2.34 Previous HRAs have taken a precautionary approach which assumes that groundwater flows follow direction of travel as set out in Figure 2.2 below.

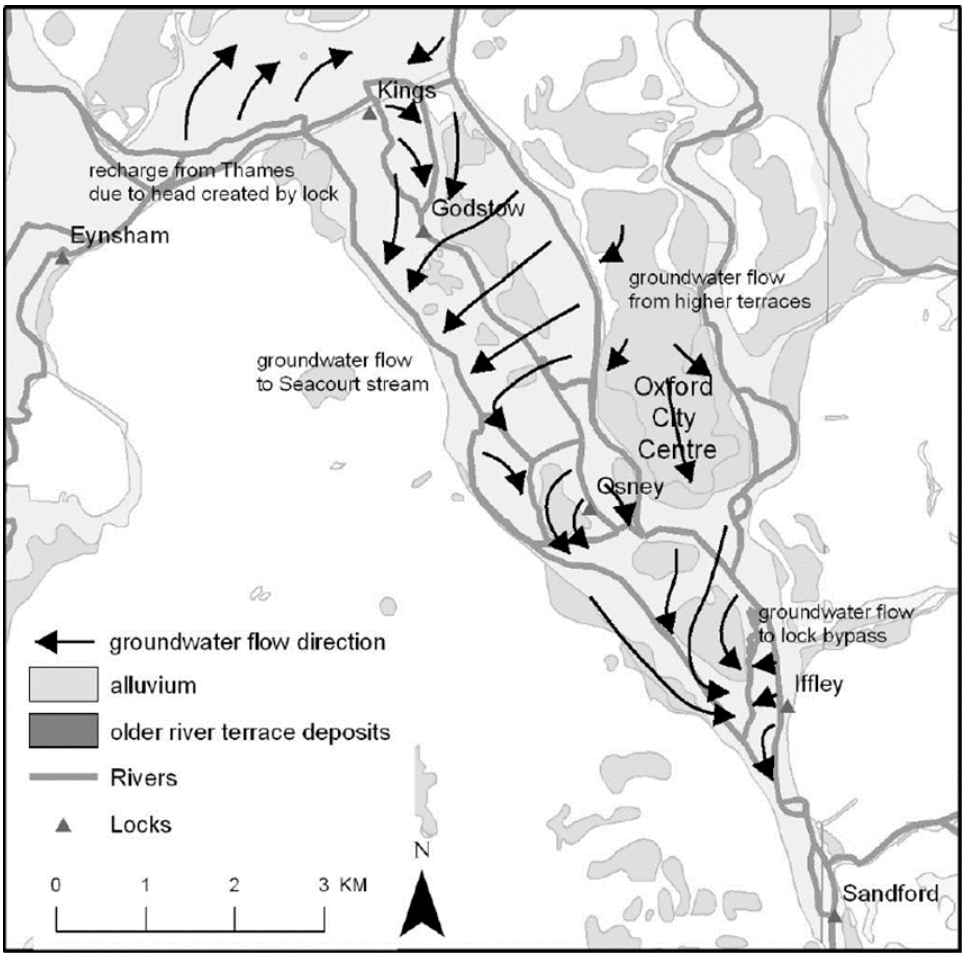


Figure 2.2 Conceptual model of groundwater flow for Oxford (2007)[11]

[11] D MacDonald, A Dixon, *et al*, (2007) Investigating the Interdependencies between surface and

2.35 At a series of meetings with Natural England during 2023 it was agreed that, in the absence of additional data, that a precautionary approach should be taken to addressing the potential impacts of development proposed in the Local Plan 2040 on groundwater. If mitigation measures are likely to be needed, e.g., through a form of policy wording, then a Stage 2 "Appropriate Assessment" will be required. This Screening Note contains a policy screening which will assess whether further work in this area is needed.

Water Quality

2.36 Water quality issues have been discussed in previous HRA work. This previous work resolved issues of potential pollution through effluents from wastewater treatment works and potential groundwater pollution. Previous HRA work recognised that pollution of groundwater could occur through the development of site allocations in locations (e.g., North Oxford Gravel Terrace), which showed a degree of hydrogeological connectivity with the Oxford Meadows SAC. This previous HRA work suggested mitigation (in the form of policy wording) to ensure that development in the plan would not be likely to have a significant effect on the Oxford Meadows SAC. It also concluded that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be used to ensure that the quality of groundwater would not be adversely affected.

2.37 It is proposed that a similar precautionary approach is applied to the Oxford Local Plan 2040 and that appropriate policies should require developers to ensure that surface water and groundwater quality are not likely to be affected by development proposals. Where any policy wording (mitigation) is proposed, it will be undertaken through the Stage 2 "Appropriate Assessment" stage HRA.

Recreational Impacts

2.38 Previous studies have shown that residents of Oxford are generally willing to walk approximately 1900m to large green spaces. As such, where a site is over 1900m away, the site has been screened out for recreational impacts. Non-residential sites within the 1900m buffer have also been screened out. Where a residential use is proposed within 1900m from the Oxford Meadows SAC, the location and proximity of other green spaces have also been considered. Consideration has also been given to whether the site is proposed for student accommodation or for houses/ flats.

2.39 It was previously confirmed by Natural England that *A. repens* (creeping marshwort) is not particularly sensitive to trampling. It is however sensitive to dog fouling. Student

groundwater in the Oxford area to help predict to timing and location of groundwater flooding and to optimise flood mitigation measures. Presented at the 42nd Flood and Coastal Management Conference, York, 2007

accommodation does not allow pets and as such this type of development has been screened out of the assessment process. Similarly, all non-residential uses which are proposed in the plan have also been screened out of the assessment process. Only residential development is likely to lead to an increase in the number of dog-walkers at the Oxford Meadows SAC.

Screening Assessment

2.40 Table 2.2a looks at the proposed submission policies and Table 2.2b looks at the site allocations. Also see the schedule of the effects of the plan in para 2.10. Proposed Submission Policies have been screened out of the assessment where it was considered that they were not likely to have a significant impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC. Individual Site Allocations have been screened out where it is considered that they are unlikely to have a significant impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC.

2.41 For previous HRA screening assessments carried out by the City Council, Natural England recommended that the effects of the plan be categorised in the form of a schedule. This approach has been adopted for the Oxford Local Plan 2040. This allows policies with no negative effect on European sites to be eliminated (screened out) from further appraisal, so that the appraisal can concentrate on those poilcies with possible effects.

2.42 The schedule previously applied by the City Council is as follows:

A – Policies or proposals cannot have any negative impact;
B – Effects will be addressed in assessments “down the line”, including project assessment under Regulation 48
C – Could have an effect, but would not be likely to have a significant (negative) effect, (alone or in combination with other plans and projects);
D – Likely to have a significant effect alone and would require an Appropriate Assessment
E – Likely to have a significant effect in combination with other plans or projects and which require Appropriate Assessment of those combinations;
F – Likely to have a significant effect, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, but which would not adversely affect the integrity of a European site;
G – Likely to have a significant effect, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and for which it cannot be ascertained that they would not adversely affect the integrity of a European site.

Proposed Submission Policy Reference:	Categorisation of the effects of elements of the policy option	Description of the policy	Key environmental considerations likely to give rise to significant effects or not
S1: Spatial Strategy and Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development		Policy setting broad spatial parameters for development in the city including making reference to the NPPF and neighbourhood plans	Policy encourages development towards sustainable locations across the city including ensuring vitality and vibrancy of centres and focusing employment development towards existing employment sites and accessible locations. This policy approach is considered to have no likely significant effects on the designated site but the allocations arising from it will need to be considered so this option has been taken forward for further assessment as part of the appropriate assessment.
S2: Design Code and Guidance	A	Policy promoting the use of design codes and guidance	Policy unlikely to lead to significant effects
S3: Infrastructure Delivery in New Development	A	Policy setting out the need for development proposals to make contributions toward infrastructure delivery	Policy unlikely to lead to significant effects
S4: Plan Viability	A	Policy setting out that the policies in the plan should not result development becoming unviable and the mechanisms	Policy unlikely to lead to significant effects

		for how to addressing development viability in individual schemes.	
H1: Housing requirement		Policy setting out the housing requirement for the plan period. A the time of writing the plan required over 10,000 homes to be delivered in the city. The policy sets a capacity based housing requirement for the city aimed at meeting as much of the OAN as possible over the plan period to 2040	The policy for the overall housing target for the plan period does not allocate specific sites for development but the amount of housing dictates the number of development sites that are allocated in the plan. Specific development sites will address the likely impacts on the SAC in more detail however as an overall approach this policy is taken forward in terms of recreational impacts, air quality and water (balanced hydrological regime and quality). This policy approach is considered to have no likely significant effects on the designated site but the allocations arising from it will need to be considered so this option has been taken forward for further assessment as part of the appropriate assessment.
H2: Delivering affordable homes	A	Policy setting the requirements for the provision of affordable housing within the city.	Policy not locationally specific as requires a proportion of affordable homes to be provided as part of qualifying developments.
H3: Affordable housing contributions from new purpose-built student accommodation	A	Policy setting out when contributions from new purpose-built student accommodation will be collected	Policy not locationally specific and sets out when contributions for new purpose-built student accommodation will be collected

H4: Affordable housing contributions from self-contained older persons accommodation	A	Policy setting out when contributions from new self-contained older persons accommodation will be collected	Policy not locationally specific and sets out when contributions will be collected from self-contained older persons acommodation.
H5: Employer-linked affordable housing	A	Policy setting out which locations are suitable for employer-linked affordable housing instead of market housing	Sites all referenced in this policy have all been assessed separately as part of the site allocations section. No need to duplicate that assessment.
H6: Mix of housing sizes (no. of bedrooms)	A	Policy setting out the appropriate mix of dwelling sizes to be provided as part of development proposals (dwelling mix applies to affordable element only)	Not likely to have significant effects as policy only applies to affordable dwellings mix.
H7: Development involving loss of dwellings	A	Policy setting out approach for development proposals involving losses of dwellings.	Not likely to have significant effects as policy is only dealing with proposals involving the loss of dwellings.
H8: Houses of Multiple Occupation	A	Policy setting out the approach taken in considering planning applications for the conversion or creation of new HMOs.	Not likely to have significant effects as policy is concerned with how the location of new HMOs impact the existing residential environment.
H9: Location of new student accommodation	A	Policy restricting the location of new purpose-built student accommodation including the city and district centres.	Summertown is identified as a district centre and as such it is likely that some additional residential and non-residential development would be delivered on brownfield sites in this location. Any sites allocated for development within Summertown will be captured in the site allocations and bespoke policy wording to mitigate likely impacts will be captured through this process. As such this policy is screened out from the assessment.

H10: Linking new academic facilities with the adequate provision of student accommodation	A	Policy linking the delivery of new academic floorspace at the universities to whether or not a certain number of students (for each university) is housed in purpose-built student accommodation.	Not likely to have significant effects as the policy does not allocate development but rather seeks to ensure that no additional academic floorspace comes forward at either university unless the specified accommodation requirements are met.
H11: Homes for travelling communities	A	Policy setting out criteria to be met when considering new residential pitches for travelling communities	Policy unlikely to have significant effects on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it does not outline development proposals that could have a potential impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC.
H12: Homes for Boat Dwellers	D	Policy setting out criteria to be met when considering proposals for new residential moorings.	Limited scope and capacity for additional moorings in close proximity to the Oxford Meadows SAC. As such policy unlikely to have significant effects.
H13: Older persons and other specialist accommodation	A	Policy setting out criteria to be met when considering development proposals for new older persons and specialist accommodation.	Policy unlikely to have significant effects on the Oxford Meadows as it does not specifically outline locations where there is a higher potential for adverse impacts
H14: Self-build and custom housebuilding	A	Policy setting out requirements for delivery of self-build and custom-build housing as part of qualifying developments (sites over 100 homes)	Policy unlikely to have a significant effect as it promotes a requirement on larger residential development proposals, which will themselves be assessed separately as part of this process (see Table 2.2b)
H15: Hostels	A	Policy restricting the location of new hostels including to the city and district centres	Summertown is identified as a District Centre and as such it is likely that some additional residential and non-residential development would be delivered on brownfield sites in this location. Any sites allocated for development within Summertown will be captured in the site

			allocations and bespoke policy wording to mitigate likely impacts will be captured through this process. As such this policy is screened out from the assessment.
H16: Boarding school accommodation	A	Policy restricting the location of new boarding school accommodation to sites on or adjacent to a teaching campus of the school the children will attend	Summertown is identified as a District Centre and as such it is likely that some additional residential and non-residential development would be delivered on brownfield sites in this location. Any sites allocated for development within Summertown will be captured in the site allocations and bespoke policy wording to mitigate likely impacts will be captured through this process. As such this policy is screened out from the assessment.
E1: Employment Strategy	D	Policy restricting new employment development to city and district centres and existing employment sites. Policy also allows for an element of housing to be delivered on all categories of employment sites.	Summertown is identified as a district centre and as such it is likely that some additional residential and non-residential development would be delivered on brownfield sites in this location. Any sites allocated for development within Summertown will be captured in the site allocations and bespoke policy wording to mitigate likely impacts will be captured through this process. As such this aspect of the policy is screened out from the assessment. However policy includes ability to enable an element of housing to be delivered on employment sites. This aspect of the policy should be further considered as part of the recreational impact assessment in Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment

E2: Warehousing and storage uses	A	Policy restricting warehousing and storage uses (B8) to supporting Category 1 employment sites only	Policy unlikely to have significant impact on SAC as relates to allowing specific type of employment development on sites where employment is already allowed.
E3 Affordable Workspaces	A	Policy enabling certain key employment to help deliver affordable workspaces	Policy unlikely to have significant impact on SAC as it relates to delivering employment floorspace on allocated sites at a reduced rental rate.
E3: Employment and Skills Plans	A	Policy requiring opportunities for local people in the construction and operational stage of developments and training opportunities etc.	Policy unlikely to have a significant impact on SAC as relates to improving training and learning opportunities for local people
E4: Tourism and Short-stay accommodation	A	Policy sets out locations where new short-stay accommodation should be located in the city. Locations include city and district centre and main arterial routes into the city.	Summertown is identified as a District Centre and as such it is likely that some additional residential and non-residential development would be delivered on brownfield sites in this location. Any sites allocated for development within Summertown will be captured in the site allocations and bespoke policy wording to mitigate likely impacts will be captured through this process. As such this policy is screened out from the assessment.
G1: Protection of the Green Infrastructure	A	Policy sets out approach for protecting and enhancing the GI network, defines residential garden land and provides policy protection for trees and ancient woodland and other GI features (e.g., hedgerows)	Policy unlikely to have impacts on the Oxford Meadows SAC as provides protection for GI network and features and provides a definition of residential garden land.
G2: Enhancement and provision of	A	Policy about delivering new green and blue infrastructure features as part of new development proposals including	Policy unlikely to have impacts on the Oxford Meadows SAC as related to delivering

new green and blue features		public open space and management arrangements.	opportunities for green and blue features and associated management arrangements
G3: Provision of new GI features – Urban Greening Factor	A	Policy regarding delivering new GI features in new developments using urban greening factor metric	Policy unlikely to have impacts on the Oxford Meadows SAC as related to delivering a range of on-site improvements for new developments.
G4: Delivering mandatory net gains in biodiversity	A	Policy setting out the percentage of net gain to be delivered as part of developments in Oxford	Policy unlikely to have impacts on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it sets the amount of net gain required to be delivered as part of new developments in the city
G5: Enhancing on-site biodiversity in Oxford	A	Policy seeking ecological enhancements as part of new development proposals	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it requires developments to deliver a minimum amount of ecological enhancements.
G6: Protecting Oxford's biodiversity including the ecological network	A	Policy providing protection of Oxford's ecological network of designated sites and other features of interest	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as seeks to provide for the safeguarding conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Oxford
G7: Flood Risk and Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs)	A	Policy setting out how flood risk will be considered as part of development proposals, including when the LPA will require a flood risk assessment.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as sets out the types of development that require a flood risk assessmet.
G8: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	A	Policy setting out circumstances when Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) will be required as part of development proposals and how SuDS should be incorporated into schemes.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it sets out when development proposals will require SuDs and how they should be delivered.

G9: Resilient Design and Construction	A	Policy setting out how design and construction measures that help mitigate climate change have been incorporated into development proposals	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it relates ensuring the design of development proposals helps to mitigate the impacts of climate change.
R1: Net zero buildings in operation	A	Policy setting out how development proposals are to achieve energy reductions to deliver net zero.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows as concerned with how the developments will reduce energy use in their operational stages.
R2: Embodied Carbon	A	Policy setting out how embodied carbon will be limited during the construction process	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as concerned with limiting the carbon used in the construction process.
R3: Retro-fitting existing buildings including heritage assets	A	Policy setting out support for retrofit measures to help mitigate and adapt existing buildings to minimise climate change impacts.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as concerned with delivering climate change mitigation and adaptation measures to existing buildings.
R4: Air Quality Assessments and standards	A	Policy setting out the circumstances when development proposals require an assessment of air quality to ensure that the impact of new development on air quality is minimised	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it sets the requirements when an air quality assessment is required as part of new development proposals.
R5: Land Contamination	A	Policy setting out the information required to be able to assess applications where there is the potential for impacts from contamination.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it sets out a requirement for additional information to be submitted where there is a risk of contamination as part of development proposals.
R6: Soil Quality	A	Policy setting out how the LPA expects development proposals to demonstrate	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it sets out the requirements for

		how any impact on soil quality has been mitigated.	how to address potential impacts on soil quality as part of development proposals.
R7: Amenity and environmental health impacts of development	A	Policy setting out how amenity and environmental health impacts will be considered as part of development proposals.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it seeks to mitigate a range of factors which could have an impact on amenity.
HD1: Conservation Areas	A	Policy setting out how development proposals should be considered in conservation areas in Oxford	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as concerned with development proposals and their effects on the city's conservation areas.
HD2: Listed Buildings	A	Policy setting out how development proposals on Listed Buildings should be considered in the planning process	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it is concerned with how development proposals are assessed on Listed Buildings.
DH3: Registered Parks and Gardens	A	Policy setting out how development proposals that have an impact on Registered Parks and Gardens are to be considered.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it is concerned with the impact of development proposals on Registered Parks and Gardens.
HD4: Scheduled Monuments	A	Policy setting out how development proposals that have an impact on Scheduled Monuments should be assessed.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it is concerned with the impact of development proposals on Scheduled Monuments.
HD5: Archaeology	A	Policy setting out how archaeological deposits will be considered as part of the application process.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it addresses how archaeological deposits will be considered in development proposals.

HD6: Non-designated heritage assets	A	Policy defines a non-designated heritage asset and sets out the process by which these assets are to be considered when determining planning applications	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as concerned with how non-designated heritage assets are considered during the planning process.
HD7: Principles of High-Quality Design	A	Policy seeks to ensure high-quality design in development proposals.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as concerned with ensuring development proposals are of the highest design quality
HD8: Using context to determine appropriate density	A	Policy setting out how development proposals are expected to make best and most efficient use of land in order to deliver development of an appropriate density	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it seeks to ensure that design principles are used when considering the appropriate density of a scheme.
HD9: Views and Building Heights	A	Policy seeking to protect Oxford's historic skyline.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as concerned with the heights and visual impact of development proposals.
HD10: Health Impact Assessment	A	Policy setting out when a Health Impact Assessment should be submitted as part of development proposals and what it should contain.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as concerned with when a Health Impact Assessment should be submitted to inform development proposals and what it should contain.
HD11: Privacy, Daylight and Sunlight	A	Policy setting out how the impacts of development proposals will be assessed in terms of privacy, sunlight and daylight.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it relates to how the impact of development proposals will be assessed.
HD12: Internal Space Standards	A	Policy setting out that internal space standards for residential developments will follow nationally described space standards	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as concerned with quantity of internal space standards as part of new development proposals.

HD13: Outdoor Amenity Space	A	Policy setting out requirements for outdoor amenity space to be delivered as part of development proposals	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as concerned with amount of on-site amenity space required as part of development proposals.
HD14: Accessible and Adaptable Homes	A	Policy setting out the amount of affordable and market homes to be delivered that comply with accessible standards	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it sets out the proportion of accessible and adaptable homes to be delivered as part of development proposals.
HD15: Bin and Bike Stores and External Servicing Features	A	Policy setting out how external servicing features (including bin and bike stores) will be considered as part of development proposals	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as is concerned with small scale on-site measures.
C1: Town Centre uses	A	Policy setting out the types of uses suitable for Oxford's city, district and local centres. Policy also includes requirements for sequential test for town centre uses.	Summertown is identified as a District Centre and as such it is likely that some additional residential and non-residential development would be delivered on brownfield sites in this location. Any sites allocated for development within Summertown will be captured in the site allocations and bespoke policy wording to mitigate likely impacts will be captured through this process. As such this policy is screened out from the assessment.
C2: Maintaining Vibrant Centres	A	Policy sets out how development proposals within the city and district centres can maintain active frontages to help maintain the vibrancy of centres. Includes locally specific requirements for each of the city and district centres.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as related to ensuring development proposals in the city and district centres activate street frontages and provide other localised improvements.

C3. Protection, alteration and provision of local community facilities	A	Policy setting out how local community facilities will be protected when they form part of development proposals. Also sets out support for new community facilities in appropriate locations .	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as related to protection of existing facilities and provision of new ones in suitably accessible locations.
C4: Protection, alteration and provision of learning and non-residential institutions.	A	Policy setting out how learning and non-residential institutions will be protected when they form part of development proposals. Also sets out support for new learning and non-residential institutions in appropriate locations.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as related to protection of existing facilities and provision of new ones in suitably accessible locations.
C5: Protection, alteration and provision of cultural venues and visitor attractions.	A	Policy setting out how cultural venues and visitor attractions will be protected when they form part of development proposals. Also sets out support for new cultural venues and visitor attractions in appropriate locations.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as related to protection of existing facilities and provision of new ones in suitably accessible locations.
C6: Transport Assessments, Travel Plans and Service and Delivery Plans	A	Policy setting out requirements for when Transport Assessments, Travel Plans and Service and Delivery Plans should accompany a planning application.	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows as it relates to the conditions when certain applications should be accompanied by additional transport-related evidence.
C7: Bicycle Parking Design Standards	A	Policy setting out how bicycle parking should be provided as part of development proposals	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it relates to the amount of cycle parking to be provided as part of development.
C8: Motor Vehicle Parking Standards	A	Policy setting out how parking levels should be assessed as part of development proposals including	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as provides car parking standards

		providing requirements for low-car schemes.	for development proposals including providing requirements for low-car schemes .
C9: Electric Vehicle Charging	A	Policy providing guidance for electric vehicle charging points in new developments	Policy unlikely to have an impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC as it relates to delivery of electric vehicle charging points in new developments.

Table 2.2 Key environmental considerations that are likely to give rise to significant effects as a result of development of the sites proposed for further consideration in Local Plan 2040 Proposed Submission Document.

Policy Ref:	NAME	If the policy has no effect, then reasons why	Possible impacts on SAC
Policy NEOAOF	Northern Edge of Oxford Area of Focus	Area based policy setting out broad infrastructure requirements and other non-site specific policy aspects.	
Policy SPN1	Northern Gateway	Site is less than 500m away from the SAC. The site is proposed for mixed-use employment led development with residential and other complementary uses. Previous HRA work for this site included the screening and appropriate assessment stage. The appropriate assessment concluded that there would be no likely significant effects as a result of the mitigation measures proposed. These mitigation measures were embedded within the previous policy framework (AAP).	Previous HRA work suggested mitigation measures to reduce risk of recreational impacts. Increased amount of public open space provided at the site. HRA for AAP also investigated impacts on balanced hydrological regime and concluded no significant effects. Air quality impacts of whole plan on SAC is currently being assessed using transport modelling. Results to be presented as part of HRA Screening.
Policy SPN2	Oxford UP Sports Ground	Site located more than 200m away from SAC. This site is proposed for residential development and student accommodation.	Possible impacts on SAC – balanced hydrological regime and water quality.

		Air Quality impacts of whole plan are being assessed using transport modelling. The results will be presented as part of the HRA Screening.	This site could be in an area where basement development could have an impact on groundwater flow.
Policy SPN3	Diamond Place and Ewert House	Site located more than 200m away from SAC. This site is proposed for a retail-led mixed-use scheme which could also include residential, employment and student accommodation. Air Quality impacts of whole plan are being assessed using transport modelling. The results will be presented as part of the HRA Screening.	Possible impacts on SAC – recreational impacts, balanced hydrological regime and water quality. This site could be in an area where basement development could have an impact on groundwater flow.
Policy CBLLAOF	South Infrastructure Area: Cowley Branch Line and Littlemore Area of Focus	The whole of Southern Infrastructure Area lies outside the buffer zones for residential impacts and outside of the potential groundwater recharge zone for the SAC. Transport modelling that informs air quality assessment takes account of all sites in the plan.	Site allocations and development likely to come forward within this area of focus unlikely to have a significant impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC.
SPS1: SPS2: SPS3:	ARC Business Park Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Complex	All sites listed here are outside the buffer zones for recreational impacts (1,900m) and do not lie in an area of hydrological connectivity	Sites listed here unlikely to have a significant impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC due to their location.

SPS4: SPS5: SPS6: SPS7:	Overflow Car Park at Kassam Stadium site MINI Plant Oxford Oxford Science Park Sandy Lane Recreation Ground Unipart Group	to the site. Transport modelling that informs the air quality screening assessment takes account of all sites in the plan.	Sites listed are screened out from further assessment.
SPS8: SPS9: SPS10: SPS11: SPS12: SPS13: SPS14: SPS15: SPS16: SPS17: SPS18: SPS19:	Bertie Place Recreation Ground Blackbird Leys Central Area Knights Road Cowley Marsh Depot Templars Square Land at Meadow Lane Former Iffley Mead Playing Field Grandpont Car Park Redbridge Paddock Crescent Hall Edge of Playing Fields, Oxford Academy 474 Cowley Road (Former Powell's Timber Yard)	All sites listed here are outside the buffer zones for recreational impacts (1,900m) and do not lie in an area of hydrological connectivity to the site. Transport modelling that informs the air quality screening assessment takes account of all sites in the plan.	Sites listed here unlikely to have a significant impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC due to their location. Sites listed are screened out from further assessment.
Policy MRORAOF	Marston Road and Old Road Area of Focus	All sites listed here are outside the buffer zones for recreational impacts (1,900m) and do not lie in an area of hydrological connectivity to the site. Transport modelling that informs the air quality screening assessment takes account of all sites in the plan.	Sites listed here unlikely to have a significant impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC due to their location. Sites listed are screened out from further assessment.
SPE1 SPE2	Government Buildings and Harcourt House Land Surrounding St Clements Church	All sites listed here are outside the buffer zones for recreational impacts (1,900m) and do not lie in	Sites listed here unlikely to have a significant impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC due to their location.

SPE3 SPE4 SPE5 SPE6 SPE7 SPE8	Headington Hill Hall and Clive Booth Student Village Oxford Brookes University Marston Road Campus 1 Pullens Lane Churchill Hospital Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC) Warneford Hospital	an area of hydrological connectivity to the site. Transport modelling that informs the air quality screening assessment takes account of all sites in the plan.	Sites listed are screened out from further assessment.
	Bayards Hill Primary Sch Pt Playing Flds Land West of Mill Lane Marston Paddock Manzil Way Resource Centre Slade House Thornhill Park Union Street Car Park Jesus and Lincoln College Sports Grnds Ruskin College Campus Ruskin Field John Radcliffe Hospital Rectory Centre	All sites listed here are outside the buffer zones for recreational impacts (1,900m) and do not lie in an area of hydrological connectivity to the site. Transport modelling that informs the air quality screening assessment takes account of all sites in the plan.	Sites listed here unlikely to have a significant impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC due to their location. Sites listed are screened out from further assessment.
NCCAOF	North of the City Centre Area of Focus		
SPCW1	West Wellington Square	The site is less than 1.9km away from the SAC. It is allocated for academic institutional, student accommodation and residential development. It has been screened out for: **Water Quality/ Balanced Hydrological Regime**	Potential for recreational impacts on SAC if residential development is delivered at this location. Air Quality impacts of whole plan are being assessed using transport modelling. The results will be presented as part of the HRA Screening.

SPCW2	Canalside Land, Jericho	This site is proposed for a mixed-use development including residential and a replacement boatyard. It has been screened out for: **Water Quality/ Balanced Hydrological Regime**	Potential for recreational impacts on SAC if residential development is delivered at this location. Air Quality impacts of whole plan are being assessed using transport modelling. The results will be presented as part of the HRA Screening.
SPCW3	Manor Place	Site is more than 1.9km from the SAC. This site is proposed for student accommodation or residential. It has been screened out for: **Water Quality/ Balanced Hydrological Regime** **Recreational Impacts**	Air Quality impacts of whole plan are being assessed using transport modelling. The results will be presented as part of the HRA Screening.
SPCW4	Land at Winchester Road, Banbury Road and Bevington Road	Site is more than 200m from the SAC. This site is proposed for academic institutional uses, student accommodation and/ or residential development. It has been screened out for: **Water Quality/ Balanced Hydrological Regime**	Potential for recreational impacts on SAC if residential development is delivered at this location. Air Quality impacts of whole plan are being assessed using transport modelling. The results will be presented as part of the HRA Screening.
WEAOF	West End and Botley Road Area of Focus	This is an area based policy which includes a number of criteria including how to assess heritage	Previous HRA work considered that the West End of Oxford is served by a number of recreational

		impacts and infrastructure requirements for the area. The policy itself is not expected to have a significant impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC.	opportunities that are more or equally accessible than the SAC. These sites include Botley Park, Oatlands Road Recreation Ground, Oxpens Field, Grandpont Recreation Ground and Grandpont Nature Park, Hogacre Common Eco Park Christchurch Meadow and University Parks. As such, recreational impacts are screened out from the West End sites.
SPCW5	Oxpens	Site is more than 200m from the SAC. This site is proposed for a mix of uses including employment, residential and student accommodation. Site is downstream from the SAC so unlikely to be hydrologically connected. It has been screened to for: **Water Quality/ Balanced Hydrological Regime** **Recreational Impacts**	Air Quality impacts of whole plan are being assessed using transport modelling. The results will be presented as part of the HRA Screening.
SPCW6	Nuffield Sites	Site is more than 200m from the SAC. This site is proposed for a mix of uses including employment, residential and student accommodation. Site is downstream from the SAC so unlikely to be hydrologically	Air Quality impacts of whole plan are being assessed using transport modelling. The results will be presented as part of the HRA Screening.

		connected. It has been screened to for: **Water Quality/ Balanced Hydrological Regime Recreational Impacts**	
SPCW7	Osney Mead	This site is in existing employment use and is identified for mixed-use development that may include residential. It has been screened out of the assessment for: **Water quality/ Balanced Hydrological Regime Recreational Impacts**	Possible Impacts on SAC – recreational Air Quality impacts of whole plan are being assessed using transport modelling. The results will be presented as part of the HRA Screening.
SPCW8	Botley Road Retail Park	This site is in existing retail use. The site is proposed for employment-related uses. The site is not allocated for residential development given the potential flood-risk issue at the site. The site is downstream from the SAC so is unlikely to be hydrologically connected. It has been screened out for: **Water Quality/ Balanced Hydrological Regime Recreational Impacts**	Air Quality impacts of whole plan are being assessed using transport modelling. The results will be presented as part of the HRA Screening.
Employment sites			
Cat.1	Radcliffe Observatory Quarter		
Cat.1	Oxford University Press, Walton Street		

Cat.2	69-71 Banbury Road	These sites are all located on the North Oxford Gravel Terrace and as such there is potential for basement development to have an impact on groundwater movement and groundwater recharge. All employment sites more than 1,900m from the Oxford Meadows were screened out from the assessment.	Air quality impacts of the whole plan are being assessed using transport modelling. The results of this modelling will be presented as part of the HRA screening. Further investigation is needed for those employment sites less than 1,900m from the Oxford Meadows SAC as the plan's employment strategy now promotes an element of housing on all employment sites. As such the Stage 2 assessment will look at these sites in more detail.
Cat.2	228-240 Banbury Road		
Cat.2	Barclay House, 242 Banbury Road		
Cat.2	Mayfield House, 256 Banbury Road		
Cat.2	264 Banbury Road		
Cat.2	265 Banbury Road (BBC Radio Oxford)		
Cat.2	267-269 Banbury Road (Prama House)		
Cat.2	Oxfam House, 274 Banbury Road		
Cat.2	285 Banbury Road		
Cat.2	Cranbrook House, 297 Banbury Road		
Cat.2	Lambourne House, 311-321 Banbury Road		
Cat.2	Summertown Pavillion, Middle Way		

Table 2.3 Possible Impacts of the Local Plan 2040 Proposed Submission Document on the Oxford Meadows SAC

Nature	Policies or site allocations likely to have an impact on the SAC	Magnitude	Duration	Location	Conclusions
Air Pollution Impacts	<u>Policy Options</u> S1: Spatial Strategy H1: Housing Requirement <u>Sites</u> Transport modelling to look at how development proposed as part of the plan is likely to impact air quality at the Oxford Meadows SAC.	Natural England Guidance on Air Quality suggests that increases in trips under 1,000 AADT or under 200 AADT (HGV) can be screened out from further assessment.	It is anticipated that all sites will be developed within the Local Plan period. Any impacts would therefore occur within this period (up to 2040).	Sites allocated all across the city but have potential to increase traffic on A34 and A40 which are adjacent to the Oxford Meadows SAC.	Traffic Modelling has been commissioned to look at the potential air quality impacts of development proposed in Oxford city on the Oxford Meadows SAC. The results are discussed at section XXX of the HRA screening Report.
Balanced Hydrological Regime (Groundwater)	<u>Policy Options</u> S1: Spatial Strategy H1: Housing Requirement				The following sites are taken forward to the "Stage 2 – Appropriate Assessment".

	<u>Sites</u> SPN1: Northern Gateway SPN2 - Oxford University Press Sports Ground SPN3 - Diamond Place and Ewert House SPCW4 - Land at Winchester Road, Banbury Road and Bevington Road <u>Employment sites</u> <u>Category 1:</u> Radcliffe Observatory Quarter (ROQ) Oxford University Press (OUP) <u>Category 2:</u>	Where sites are located on the Gravel Terrace, it is important that the same amount of surface water is able to recharge the groundwater after development is completed.	It is anticipated that all sites will be developed within the Local Plan period. Any impacts would therefore occur within this period (up to 2040).	Sites are all on or near the North Oxford Gravel Terrace.	These sites are all on, or near the North Oxford Gravel Terrace. Policy provision exists in the Local Plan 2036 to ensure groundwater quality, flow and recharge is not impeded by development in this location. A policy approach has been developed to address this issue in the Oxford Local Plan 2040. The Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment will make recommendations as to the precise wording of these policies to ensure

	69-71 Banbury Road 228-240 Banbury Road 242 Banbury Road 256 Banbury Road 264 Banbury Road 265 Banbury Road 267-269 Banbury Road 274 Banbury Road 285 Banbury Road 297 Banbury Road 311-321 Banbury Road Summertown Pavillion, Middle Way				that there are no significant impacts on the conservation objectives for the Oxford Meadows SAC.
Water Quality	<u>Sites</u> SPN1: Northern Gateway	Where sites are located on the	It is anticipated that all sites will be	Sites are all on or near the North	See comments above for balanced

	SPN2 - Oxford University Press Sports Ground SPN3 - Diamond Place and Ewert House SPCW4 - Land at Winchester Road, Banbury Road and Bevington Road Employment Sites <u>Category 1:</u> Radcliffe Observatory Quarter (ROQ) Oxford University Press (OUP) <u>Category 2:</u> 69-71 Banbury Road	Gravel Terrace, it is important that the quality of surface water that is recharged to groundwater is maintained after development is completed.	developed within the Local Plan period. Any impacts would therefore occur within this period (up to 2036).	Oxford Gravel Terrace.	hydrological regime.

	228-240 Banbury Road 242 Banbury Road 256 Banbury Road 264 Banbury Road 265 Banbury Road 267-269 Banbury Road 274 Banbury Road 285 Banbury Road 297 Banbury Road 311-321 Banbury Road Summertown Pavillion, Middle Way				
Recreational Impact	<u>Policy Options</u> E1: Employment Strategy (Cat. 3 sites) H1: Housing Requirement				

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	<u>Sites</u> SPN1: Northern Gateway SPN2: Oxford University Press Sports Ground SPN3: Diamond Place and Ewert House SPCW1: Wellington Square West SPCW2: Canalside Land, Jericho SPCW4: Land at Winchester Road, Banbury Road and Bevington Road	Allocation includes residential. Possible impact on SAC Allocation includes residential. Possible impact on SAC Allocation includes residential. Possible impact on SAC Allocation includes residential. Possible impact on SAC Allocation includes residential. Possible impact on SAC Allocation includes residential. Possible impact on SAC	It is anticipated that all sites will be developed within the Local Plan period. Any impacts would therefore occur within this period (up to 2040).	All sites within 1900m of the SAC	Sites were screened out of this part of the assessment where there were no residential uses proposed. There is likely to be a limited amount of recreational pressure from this development for instance, from people having their lunch on Port Meadow in the summer months. However, dog-fouling is considered to be more of an issue. This is discussed further in the Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment section of the HRA.

	<u>Employment sites:</u>	All employment sites now offer the opportunity to deliver an element of housing. Therefore all Category 1 and Category 2 employment sites within 1,900m of the Oxford Meadows are taken forward for further consideration as part of the Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment.			Sites for student accommodation were also screened out of the assessment. It was agreed with Natural England that dog fouling was more of a threat to the Oxford Meadows SAC than trampling. Consultation with the Oxford Rare Plants Group confirmed that *A. repens* (creeping marshwort) is not particularly sensitive to tramping but is more sensitive to dog fouling. Since there are no pets allowed in purpose-built student

					accommodation it was considered that this would not be likely to be an issue.

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Other Plans and Programmes (in-combination impacts)

2.43 In line with the precautionary principle, Oxford City Council has considered impacts that could be caused 'in-combination' with other plan areas. The plans and programmes shown at Table 2.4 have been considered in relation to the HRA of the Oxford Local Plan Proposed Submission Document Policies.

Table 2.4 Other Plans and programmes with potential 'in-combination' impacts

Policy, Plan, Strategy/ Initiative	Proposals	Potential 'in combination' impacts?
Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report August 2015. In 2022, a timetable for the production of a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan was agreed. A call for sites was undertaken in 2023 and an initial consultation was scheduled to take place in 2023 as well.	It provides a policy framework for identifying sites for new minerals and waste development and for making decisions on planning applications.	The HRA concluded that the Core Strategy would not have a likely significant effect on air quality, water resources, recreation, hazardous and radioactive materials.
Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (adopted 2022) including Core Schemes (e.g., Traffic Filters)	LTP4 sets out proposed transport solutions for the county up to 2031.	Stage 2 HRA for Traffic Filters found that the only screening threshold that was exceeded was for NOx concentrations. The largest change at any receptor point was found to be 0.8µg/m3. Reductions in the background NOx levels were found to be significantly larger than the largest changes found to be associated with the scheme itself (smallest background change was 4.4µg/m3). The Stage 2 HRA therefore concluded no likely significant effects as a result of the Traffic Filters.
Cherwell Local Plan 2040	The Plan will set out policies for the development of land for housing, employment and other uses.	Plan production at an early stage. Reg. 18 consultation not yet undertaken. HRA Screening Assessment not publicly available at time of writing. Impacts of

		Local Plan 2031 and Partial Review Plan both considered as part of previous HRA work.
South and Vale Joint Local Plan 2041	This plan will set out policies for the development of land for housing, employment and other uses.	Plan production at an early stage. Reg. 18 consultation not yet undertaken. HRA Screening Assessment not publicly available at time of writing. Impacts of previous Local Plans for South and Vale considered as part of previous HRA work.
West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan 2041	This plan will set out policies for the development of land for housing, employment and other uses.	Plan production at an early stage. Reg. 18 consultation not yet undertaken. HRA Screening Assessment not publicly available at time of writing. Impacts of previous Local Plan considered as part of previous HRA work.
East West Rail	Rail project	East West Rail is a nationally significant railway project which aims to deliver much-needed transport connections for communities between Oxford and Cambridge by: - Upgrading an existing section of railway between Oxford and Bicester; - Bringing back a section of railway between Bicester and Bletchley; - Refurbishing existing railway between Bletchley and Bedford; and - Building brand new railway infrastructure between Bedford and Cambridge. Air emissions may affect habitats including those with the Oxford Meadows. An approach involving the monitoring of vegetation has been agreed with Natural England, to identify any habitat changes, and to ensure that

		timely measures can be taken, if necessary to prevent adverse effects on the integrity of the Oxford Meadows SAC[12]
Thames Water Utilities Ltd Drought Plan (2022)	Water Management Plan	The HRA Screening concluded that the Drought Plan 2022 will not in any way result in any significant effect on the Oxford Meadows SAC and therefore there is no potential for in-combination effects.
Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS)	Flood Defence Scheme to reduce impact of flooding in certain areas of Oxford at the highest risk from flooding.	Natural England responded to the planning application consultation for the proposed scheme. In their public response dated 09 May 2022, Natural England stated that: *"As set out in our letter of 22nd January 2019, based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have likely significant effects on the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation and has no objection to the proposed development. We do not consider the amendments subject to this current consultation to alter this."*
Oxford Cambridge Pan-Regional Partnership	The Pan-Regional Partnership area covers the Oxford-Cambridge Region. Government backing for the partnership unlocks access to up to £2.5m of government funding to support its priorities in delivering sustainable growth and environmental enhancements for the region.	The Pan-Regional Partership area includes Oxford City and a number of local authorities across the UK including Cambridge City Council. While there is significant growth anticipated in this region, it is also being backed by rail infrastructure connections such as East West Rail. Last mile interventions in Oxford City include Cowley Branch Line, which is anticipated will come forward in the plan period and is likely to help with a modal shift away from private car use. It is not anticipated that the growth across the region will significantly

[12] Chiltern Railways (Bicester to Oxford Improvements) Order Environmental Statement NTS January 2010

		impact the conservation objectives for the Oxford Meadows SAC.

Screening Conclusions

2.44 Table 2.3 suggests that two of the policies in the plan have possible impacts on the Oxford Meadows SAC.

- H1: Housing Requirement: Sets the number of homes to be delivered in the plan period; and
- E1: Employment Strategy, which allows an element of housing on employment sites subject to certain criteria.

2.45 Table 2.3 also suggests that a number of sites should be included for further consideration in the Local Plan 2040 Proposed Submission Document because it has not been possible to rule out the possibility of significant effects at the Oxford Meadows SAC as a result of their development at this stage. Both the sites and the policies have the potential to have an impact on the following:

- Water Quality;
- Balanced Hydrological Regime; and
- Increased Recreational pressure

2.46 These will be discussed further at Section 3 (Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment).

2.47 It has been possible to screen out some of the impacts on the Oxford Meadows SAC:

- Maintenance of traditional hay cut and light aftermath grazing; and
- Absence of direct fertilisation.

2.48 These have been screened out as they are not related to activities directly at the site, which the Oxford Local Plan 2040 will not affect.

2.49 Air Quality modelling has been commissioned and although it has not reported back yet fully, early indications are that development proposed as part of the Oxford Local Plan is unlikely to have any significant effects on air quality at the Oxford Meadows SAC.

Oxford City Council

Oxford Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Final | September 2023

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1. Introduction

1.1 The role of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Infrastructure delivery and funding is complex. Establishing a reliable, concise and flexible IDP is therefore important in ensuring that investment decisions are based on a sound understanding of infrastructure needs, maximising the return to the public. Having an up-to date the IDP in place offers greater certainty to service providers, funders and developers about how infrastructure will be delivered, enabling growth and encouraging investment.

The Local Plan covers the period from 2020 to 2040. It is clear in recognising the importance of identifying infrastructure needs and providing methods for funding and delivery. The preparation of the Local Plan is supported by this IDP, which identifies a number of infrastructure needs and schemes to help meet those needs.

IDPs should be treated as 'live documents' which provide a snapshot at a point in time, and will need to be updated as development proposals and other circumstances in the city change. This document could therefore form the basis for further updates as the new Local Plan emerges.

2. Policy Context

2.1 National context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

The NPPF (2021) states that local planning authorities must prepare a robust and evidence-based Local Plan which seeks to deliver sustainable development. In fact, the NPPF integrates infrastructure provision into the over-arching economic objective for achieving sustainable development. As part of the statutory requirement to produce a Local Plan, national policy places particular emphasis on local planning authorities to plan for the delivery of infrastructure to support future growth.

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is therefore an important part of the evidence base required to support local plans. One of the purposes of the IDP is to demonstrate that the infrastructure requirements necessary to support the level of housing and employment growth proposed can be delivered. IDPs also provide detail of the level of funding required, highlight potential funding sources, and outline foreseeable funding challenges. IDPs are a key tool for local authorities when negotiating developer contributions through S106 agreements, or to help evidence the need for charging under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Paragraph 16 of the NPPF states that plans should be prepared positively, in a way which is aspirational but deliverable, while contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Specifically, the NPPF states that both strategic (paragraph 20) and non-strategic (paragraph 28) policies should set out the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for infrastructure, including transport and community facilities (such as health and education infrastructure).

The NPPF considers that planning policies should seek to address the lack of infrastructure as a potential barrier to growth and investment and highlights the importance of working with neighbouring authorities to develop cross-boundary infrastructure.

Paragraph 34 states:

> *Plans should set out the contributions expected from development. This should include setting out the levels and types of affordable housing provision required, along with other infrastructure (such as that needed for education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure). Such policies should not undermine the deliverability of the plan.*

Paragraph 58 of the NPPF places the emphasis on demonstrating development viability at the plan-making stage – a recent change which seeks to avoid the extent to which viability is challenged by developers on individual planning applications. This means that an early understanding of infrastructure requirements (and their impact on viability) has become an increasingly important part of the plan-making process:

> *Where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be*

viable. It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on Plan-Making (paragraph 059, reference 61-059-20190315) explains the role and function of a Local Plan in delivering infrastructure, stating that the Local Plan should identify what infrastructure is required and how it can be funded and brought forward.

At an early stage in the plan making process, discussion with infrastructure and service providers should be undertaken to collaboratively identify infrastructure deficits and requirements, and opportunities for addressing them. In doing so, local planning authorities should:

- Assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure, and its ability to meet forecast demands. Policies should set out how identified deficiencies will be addressed; and
- Take account of strategic infrastructure, including nationally significant infrastructure, within these areas.

The PPG also states that local authorities should ensure that the combined total impact of requests for developer contributions towards infrastructure, and development plan policies more generally, should not threaten the deliverability of the plan. With regards to CIL, the PPG3 (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 25-001-20190901) states that:

> *The Community Infrastructure Levy (the 'levy') is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. It is an important tool for local authorities to use to help them deliver the infrastructure needed to support development in their area.*

Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS)

The Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) is a factual report which summarises the amount of developer contributions obtained, allocated and spent in the previous financial year.

This annual reporting requirement was introduced as part of the CIL regulations in 2019, with the objective of increasing transparency around how developer contributions are spent on Infrastructure. As required by the regulations, the contents of this report are divided into three key sections for the previous financial year:

1. Information on CIL contributions;
2. Information on Section 106 Contributions;
3. Items of infrastructure that CIL is to be spent on in the next five years (According to the Council's Capital Programme at the end of the previous financial year).

The Oxford IFS is a live document, and should be considered alongside the IDP and used for the Local Plan to inform future funding priorities. As an indication of key areas of

expenditure, the 2021/22 IFS noted that projects funded through a CIL contribution included the Bullingdon Community Centre, the Seacourt Park and Ride scheme and CPZ parking scheme. In addition to this, 15% of CIL receipts can be passed directly to Parish Councils, or 25% in areas covered by a Neighbourhood Plan, to fund locally identified infrastructure. CIL contributions were passed to Blackbird Leys Parish Council, Littlemore Parish Council, Old Marston Parish Council and Risinghurst & Sandhills Parish Council.

Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill Planning Reforms Consultation (2023)

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill Planning Reforms Consultation set out that it is proposed that the introduction of Infrastructure Delivery Strategies in Part 4 of the Bill will strengthen infrastructure delivery, enabling a more strategic and unified approach to infrastructure planning and delivery and allowing planning authorities to plan for infrastructure that is required to support growth and demonstrate the deliverability of their plan. The Bill proposes the introduction of an Infrastructure Levy, alongside the Infrastructure Delivery Strategies, to replace the current system of developer contributions, however the precise mechanism for this new funding system has not been introduced at the time of writing.

2.2 Local and Regional Context

Oxford-Cambridge Arc (OxCam) and Spatial Framework

The OxCam Arc is a globally significant area between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge formed of the five ceremonial counties of Oxfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire. The Arc supports over two million jobs, adding over £110bn to the economy every year. Central government ambitions include developing a Spatial Framework for the OxCam Arc, which will aim to set out a long-term strategic plan to coordinate the infrastructure, environment, and new developments in the area.

Oxford-Cambridge Pan Regional Partnership

The Oxford-Cambridge pan-regional partnership received backing from government in January 2023. The role of the partnership is to champion the region as a world leader of innovation and business, acting to achieve environmentally sustainable and inclusive growth. It will strengthen cross-boundary collaboration among its partners to focus on tackling the issues that matter to the people who live and work in the region. Government backing for the partnership unlocks access to up to £2.5million government funding for the partnership to support its priorities in delivering sustainable growth and environmental enhancements to the region.

Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are private sector led partnerships between businesses and local public sector bodies responsible for establishing priorities for public funding in the

local area they cover. The Oxfordshire LEP is one of 39 LEPs across the country, and has a vision for Oxfordshire to have a:

> *… vibrant and sustainable, inclusive, world-leading economy – driven by innovation, enterprise and research excellence.*

The OxLEP has helped to secure around £660million of central government and European funding, while creating around 48,000 new jobs between 2011/12 -2017/18, and overseeing a growth programme for Oxfordshire. It has membership of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, along with the other six local authorities and other key strategic partners, giving it a further role in shaping infrastructure investment across the county.

From an infrastructure perspective, the LEP has been successful in obtaining several rounds of Local Growth Fund money in recent years, supporting a variety of projects.

Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS)

In order to take a more strategic approach to infrastructure planning to support growth, a county-wide infrastructure strategy was produced in 2017. This had a number of objectives including:

- Prioritising the delivery of different types of strategic infrastructure;
- Maximising the use of available and planned infrastructure capacity;
- Making better informed choices about the location of future growth;

The 2017 OxIS report influenced the Government's award of the £215m Growth Deal for Oxfordshire, which included £150m infrastructure funding to unlock key housing sites, up to £60m for affordable housing and £5m to provide support and delivery of the Growth Deal.

An update of the OxIS was undertaken to support the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 which collapsed in 2022 after the local authorities were unable to reach agreement on the approach to planning for future housing need. It aimed to set out what priority infrastructure would be needed to support sustainable, clean, healthy and inclusive growth across Oxfordshire. The OxIS is still considered to be an important workstream and as such work is likely to resume to ensure that Oxfordshire's strategic infrastructure priorities are given the high-level support needed to help their delivery.

Oxfordshire County Council

Oxfordshire County Council is the upper-tier local authority covering Oxford City, Cherwell, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire districts. In this role the County Council is responsible for planning for minerals and waste, as well as the delivery of education, transport, waste disposal, and community services such as social care and libraries (the remaining infrastructure types included within the IDP are the responsibility of service providers and the City Council). The County Council produces a wide range of policy documents for each of its service areas.

Oxford Local Plan

Oxford City Council is producing a new Local Plan for 2040. The Local Plan recognises the importance of identifying and delivering appropriate infrastructure and community facilities to support the amount of development proposed. Additionally, the Local Plan acknowledges that the funding of infrastructure is crucial and must be delivered in a timely manner to support development. The Local Plan sets out that where development creates a need for new or improved infrastructure, contributions will be sought to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

The purpose of this IDP is to focus on the delivery of development allocated in the Oxford Local Plan 2040, as well as providing an update on the baseline infrastructure needs of the city and the schemes that will allow these to be met.

3. Funding and Delivery

This IDP seeks to assess what infrastructure is required to meet growth identified in the Oxford Local Plan 2040, when these infrastructure interventions are required, and how much they will cost. There are many sources of funding available for the provision of infrastructure, and this section provides an overview of these funding sources to support the delivery of the required infrastructure to support the Plan.

3.1 Developer Contributions

Developer contributions assist in mitigating the impact of development, by providing funding or other non-monetary commitments (such as providing a certain provision of affordable housing) to make impacts acceptable in planning terms.

Developers may be asked to provide contributions for infrastructure in several ways. This may be through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charges, Section 106 agreements with the local planning authority, and Section 278 agreements with the local highways authority for highway-related infrastructure works.

The previous Local Plan 2036 and its supporting IDP were prepared under the CIL (Amendment) Regulations 201416, which restricted the 'pooling' of separate Section 106 planning obligations. These restrictions meant that authorities were unable to combine more than five obligations to pay for a single piece of infrastructure. This restriction was lifted as a result of the CIL Regulations 2019, meaning that there is now more flexibility in terms of infrastructure which is able to be funded by Section 106 and CIL.

Community Infrastructure Levy

Oxford City Council is a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Authority. The Council's CIL Charging Schedule was adopted in 2013, since which time developers have been charged a fixed rate for each square metre (sqm) of new internal floor area that is created. The CIL charging schedule is based upon studies of development viability within the city, with higher charges (£158.00 per sqm as of January 2023) for uses such as residential and retail, and lower charges (£31.59 per sqm as of January 2023) for uses such as offices, general industry and leisure.

The CIL Charging Schedule is undergoing a partial review to ascertain whether a higher charge is appropriate for certain lower charging development uses classes. This partial review will take place alongside the Local Plan examination and this IDP will be used to inform that process as well.

The City Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) sets out the amount of CIL money processed by the Council during each financial year. The 2021/22 IFS sets out that:

- £ 1.83million of CIL demand notices were issued to developers;
- £ 1.51million of CIL was received from developers; and

- £ 0.69million of CIL was spent during the year, on projects including improvements to Bullingdon Community Centre and the Oxford Station feasibility study.

The IFS also sets out the schemes on which collected CIL monies will be spent – the Council currently holds just over £10million of allocated CIL funding. This covers a wide range of infrastructure types, from flood alleviation to regeneration schemes and community facilities. CIL is also proposed to be used for some preparatory studies and technical work, such as the Cowley Branchline spatial development and movement framework and the Zero Emission Zone pilot project.

The Council allocates CIL to schemes on a case-by-case basis. This is done in response to business cases provided by infrastructure providers, an understanding of need, and the relative prioritisation given to each scheme. This update to the IDP provides important evidence to inform this case-by-case decision making.

Section 106 Contributions

Section 106 (S106) agreements can be made between developers and the Council to provide funding for infrastructure, or make other legal commitments (such as to provide a certain proportion of affordable housing). Developer contributions are required to meet the following tests:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

The latest IFS sets out the amount of S106 money processed by the Council during 2021/22:

- £1.21million of contributions were agreed with developers
- £1.36million of contributions were received from developers
- £72,000 of contributions were spent during the year
- 19 non-monetary contributions were also provided by developers through S106, including the provision of 262 affordable homes.

The City Council currently holds £13.61million of allocated S106 contributions. These will fund a wide variety of infrastructure types, including community facilities, highways, green infrastructure and economic development. However the majority of the unspent allocated contributions are for the provision of affordable housing.

Section 278 Agreements

Section 278 (S278) agreements can be made between developers and Oxfordshire County Council (as local highways authority) to make permanent alterations or improvements to a public highway, in connection with a planning approval. The works covered by a S278 agreement could include changes to the highway to access a site (such as the provision of a new junction, traffic lights or other priority measures), as well as off-site works necessary to

mitigate the impact of development (such as improvements to a nearby junction which will experience increased traffic flows).

A S278 agreement typically gives developers the authority to undertake works themselves (or for a contractor to do so on their behalf), with a requirement that works are completed to the satisfaction of the local highway authority. This means that all of the costs associated with works under a S270 agreement are borne directly by the developer – money is not collected by the local authority.

3.2 Government Funding

It is typically expected that funding from developer contributions will not be enough to cover all of the infrastructure costs for an area – particularly those which are not directly linked to the impacts of development. Funding from central government is therefore important in addressing funding gaps. These are typically competitive processes, with funding bids required to demonstrate delivery against national objectives (such as increased rates of house-building, or economic growth). Government funding streams also tend to run as programmes and / or be awarded in rounds, meaning that the existence of a fund today cannot be taken that a fund will exist in the future. Oxfordshire has previously been relatively successful in obtaining government funding.

Three rounds of funding have been obtained from the Local Growth Fund, totalling £142.6m. This has had a particular emphasis on infrastructure provision to support economic development, for example, by reducing congestion and providing linkages to strategic high-tech investment locations. Schemes supported within Oxford include bus priority measures, flood alleviation and site preparation works for strategic development sites.

3.3 Provision by infrastructure providers

Some infrastructure provision is made directly by infrastructure providers, as a result of external funding packages. This is particularly the case for utilities, where infrastructure providers develop investment packages for fixed periods of time (typically five years) in response to the levels of growth and pattern of demand changes that they expect. The costs associated with these are then agreed with the relevant industry regulator, and reflected in bill payments by consumers.

Developers also pay connection charges to these providers, agreed between the two parties. They are known costs that should be factored in when considering the viability of development but are effectively third-party and the Council has no role in agreeing the charges nor seeking the money from developers.

3.4 Principles of cost apportionment

At present, the City Council relies on CIL as the main source of developer funding for infrastructure. However, it is open to the Council to supplement money collected through CIL by raising money through S106 for specific infrastructure schemes, where doing so would meet the tests set in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) - i.e., that the planning obligation is:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

In addition, the combination of CIL and S106 can now be used as a potentially more comprehensive and flexible framework for infrastructure funding. Such an approach could increase the potential for developer contributions to infrastructure and minimise potential funding gaps, in line with evidence to demonstrate that developers and still able to make an acceptable level of profit.

4 Key Drivers of Change

There are a number of key drivers of change which will influence infrastructure planning within Oxford in the future and have therefore been important to consider throughout the preparation of the IDP. These key drivers of change have helped to frame discussions with stakeholders and inform many of the schemes set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule.

4.1 Climate Change

The IDP must be considered within the context of the declaration of a climate emergency by Oxford City Council in January 2019[1], as well as the broader drive towards a zero carbon future to which Oxfordshire's local authorities, OxLEP and the city's two universities are committed[2].

The Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership has approved an action plan outlining the ways in which the 2040 targets can be achieved as well as including the immediate actions required before 2030 to remain on track, before the Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership confirms longer-term actions. Net zero ambitions must inform decision making across all disciplines, which in turn, are likely to deliver subsequent co-benefits, such as achieving more inclusive growth, levelling up, and emphasising the importance of health and wellbeing.

While net zero targets must inform decision-making across all sectors, it is fundamental to the planning sector, with IDP's playing an important role in helping to ensure that new development meets these targets.

It is acknowledged that there will be an embedded carbon cost to many of the identified schemes included within the IDP. This includes all the CO_2 emitted when producing the materials required to deliver infrastructure schemes, including emissions from construction, all the way through to the emissions produced at deconstruction and disposal at the end of the scheme's lifetime. However, many of the identified schemes included within the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule will contribute to climate mitigation, and by delivering these schemes there is likely to be a reduction in carbon emissions compared to the 'do nothing' alternative. For example, without the delivery of sustainable and active travel networks, there is likely to be an increase the amount of travel through private cars – particularly in new developments. Where possible, the relative costs of carbon from different infrastructure approaches have been considered.

There is also a need to prioritise resilience to climate change within Oxford, particularly in terms of reducing the risk of flooding to existing properties. The Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) is therefore an important scheme in contributing to climate change resilience.

[1] https://www.oxford.gov.uk/climate-emergency

[2] https://www.research.ox.ac.uk/article/2021-06-29-new-eci-report-provides-a-roadmap-towards-oxfordshire-s-zero-carbon-future

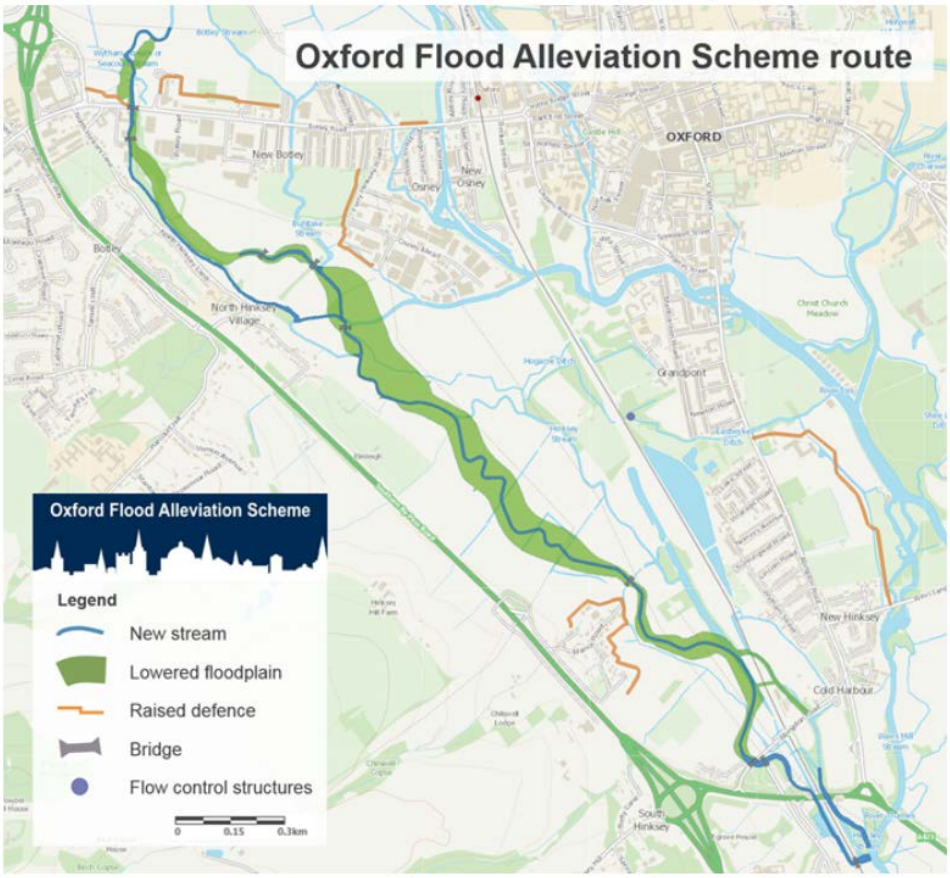


Figure 1: Map showing the extent of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme[3]

4.2 A Health and wellbeing focused response to Covid-19

The response to Covid-19 and the prioritisation of health and wellbeing is the second key driver of change that provides the context to the preparation of the IDP.

The pandemic created uncertainty about the future and how post-Covid-19 life would impact on infrastructure demands and capacity in the city. The pandemic led to increased levels of working from home, which temporarily reduced travel by private cars – and even once demand returned, it has not necessarily exhibited the same peak demand patterns.

The reduction in the need to commute has impacted public transport demand, which may have longer-term implications for the financial viability of some public transport services. This also has the potential to have an adverse impact on the business cases for some public transport schemes, although reductions in the scope of schemes (or cancellation) would not assist in resolving the climate emergency. Covid-19 has at the same time seen increased levels of active travel, which is likely to increase the already high levels of demand for active travel infrastructure within Oxford.

[3] Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/oxford-flood-scheme/oxford-flood-scheme

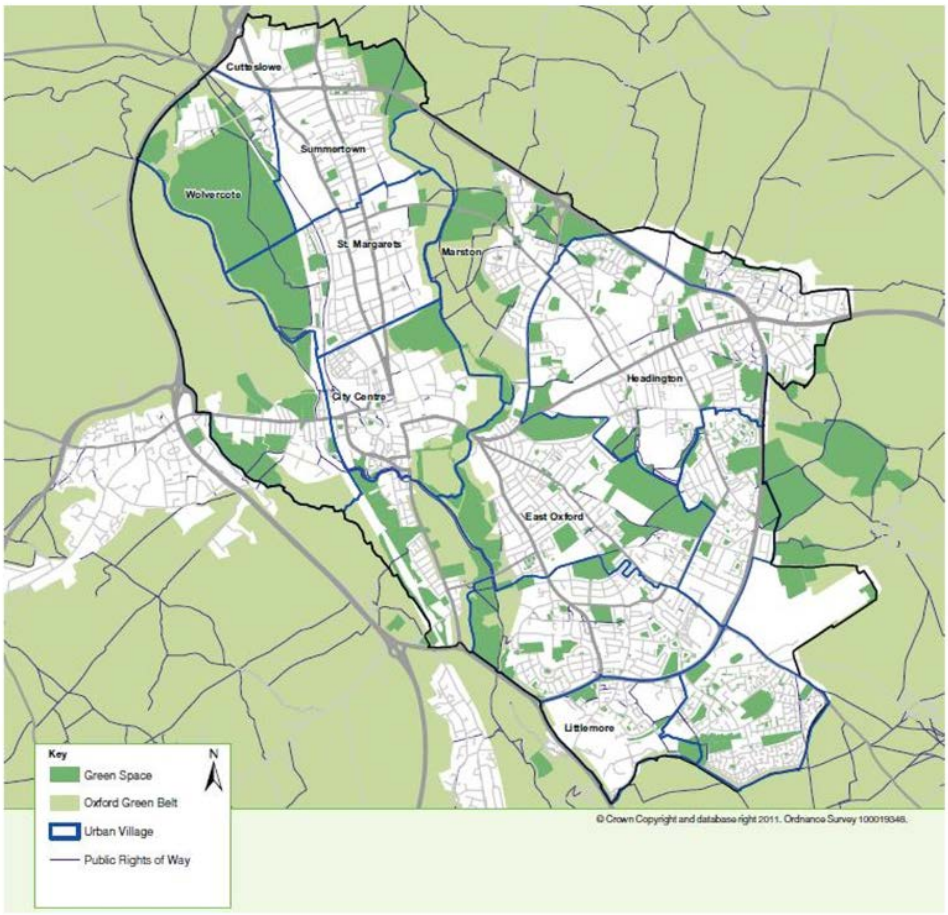


Figure 2: Distribution of green spaces in Oxford[4]

Covid-19 has also raised the profile of mental and physical health inequalities, and the role that access to green space and space for physical activity plays in addressing these inequalities. Given a future in which people are likely to spend much more of their time working from home than they did before the pandemic, the provision of accessible outdoor green space and recreational facilities to contribute towards the health and wellbeing of residents is increasingly important.

Covid-19 has also highlighted the importance of high-quality digital infrastructure provision within people's homes, as well as their 'traditional' workplaces. As well as supporting ongoing demands for home working, digital infrastructure provision has a role in reducing transport demand and enabling new digital ways of working for education, healthcare and businesses. The roll-out of 'full fibre' or 'fibre to the premises' should be therefore prioritised, as identified by the National Infrastructure Strategy[5] and Oxfordshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy[6].

[4] https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/572/green_spaces_strategy_2013-2027
[5] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-infrastructure-strategy
[6] https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/community-and-living/digital-infrastructure

5 Approach to growth within Oxford

5.1 Oxford's spatial strategy

Growth in Oxford is constrained by a number of factors. Its historical and natural environment, in combination with issues such as flood risk, mean that many areas cannot be developed. The Local Plan 2040 recognises that growth should be focussed on previously developed land where possible. The strategy for growth focuses development towards the city centre, district centres and transport hubs as the city's most sustainable locations, however it is acknowledged that the city itself is an inherently sustainable location with most locations having good access to a range of sustainable transport modes (i.e., good accessibility for walking, cycling and public transport).

Even with the use of previously developed land, the development need identified for Oxford at the time of preparing the Local Plan 2040 cannot all be accommodated within the city's administrative boundary. Following on from the previous 'unmet need sites' allocated through the previous Local Plan 2036, discussions are ongoing with the districts to see whether additional sites can be found to meet the unmet need resulting from the 2040 Local Plan.

The Local Plan 2040 sets out a number of key themes under which the wider spatial strategy and individual policies are set out:

- A healthy and inclusive city to live in;
- A prosperous city with a globally important role in knowledge, learning and innovation;
- A green biodiverse city that is resilient to climate change;
- A city that utilises its resources with care, protects the air, water and soi and aims for net zero carbon;
- A city of culture that respects its heritage and fosters design of the highest quality; and
- A more equal and inclusive city with strong communities and opportunities for all.

The Local Plan sets out that in order to deliver each of these key elements, infrastructure needs to be funded and delivered in a timely manner to support development. This includes ensuring that roads, local services and facilities can cope with the increased demand resulting from the proposed growth. The Local Plan 2040 also sets out that where new development creates a need for new or improved infrastructure, contributions from developers will be sought to make the development acceptable in planning terms, as well as using CIL to ensure those who benefit financially from a planning permission will pay towards the cost of funding the infrastructure needed to support that development.

5.2 Development sites within Oxford

The Local Plan 2040 allocates some 50 development sites, in addition to five areas of focus where development opportunities are likely to be focussed. As an urban authority reliant on previously developed land, most of the development sites are allocated as such. In fact, there are fifteen development sites allocated on greenfield land in the Local Plan 2040.

The distribution of growth across small sites presents a challenge for infrastructure planning, funding and delivery. It means that there is often limited scope to provide infrastructure onsite, meaning that offsite solutions on third party land may be required for higher order infrastructure types which serve larger catchments (such as schools). It also means that, although smaller sites in isolation may generate much smaller infrastructure demands individually, the cumulative impact can be significant. However, one advantage of the spatial strategy in infrastructure terms is that there is

generally existing infrastructure provision in close proximity to development sites. This means that the emphasis is often the expansion of existing infrastructure, rather than entirely new provision.

For the purpose of the IDP, the city has been divided into four areas as shown in Figure 3. It is acknowledged that due to the nature of development and its associated infrastructure need and delivery it is difficult to draw hard boundaries.

- Central and West Oxford: the city centre, Jericho, Osney Mead and Botley Road;
- North Oxford: Wolvercote and Cutteslowe;
- East Oxford: Headington, Marston, Barton and Slade Park;
- South Oxford: Hinksey, Iffley, Cowley and Blackbird Leys

The Local Plan sets out a requirement for just over 9,500 new homes and a policy approach to protect, modernise and intensify important employment sites which meet Oxford's key strengths over the plan period from 2020 to 2040.

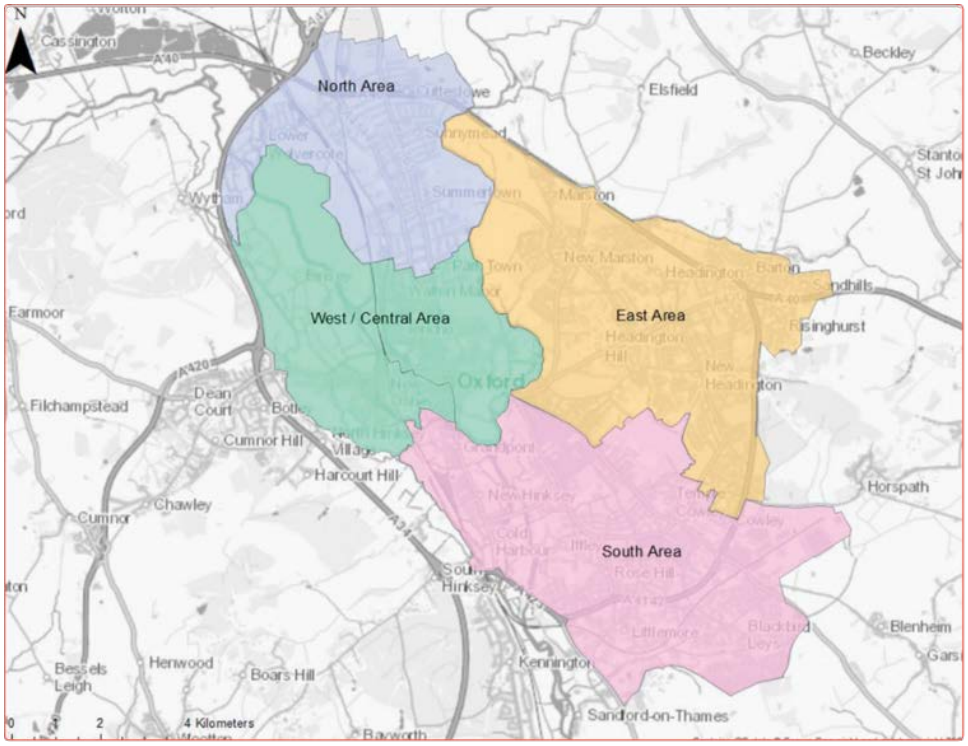


Figure 3: The four infrastructure quadrants for Oxford.

The Local Plan 2040 does not allocate any new sites for employment-related uses, relying instead on a strategy of intensification and modernisation at existing employment sites and in the city and district centres. The Employment Land Needs Assessment demonstrates that this approach will lead to sufficient employment land coming forward within the plan to meet the city's employment needs to 2040.

5.3 Unmet need sites beyond the city boundary

The evidence base for the 2040 Local Plan demonstrates that it is not possible to meet Oxford's identified housing need within the city's administrative boundary. As a result, discussions have been taking place with Oxford's neighbouring district authorities to see whether it would be possible to accommodate any of the unmet housing need, as was done with the previous round of Local Plans. The Duty to Co-operate Statement sets out the formal agreed position.

6 Approach and Methodology

This IDP builds on the work undertaken by Arup (published in 2022), which involved an extensive and comprehensive research and engagement process with stakeholders. This IDP provides an update to that document and refreshes the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule following another round of discussions with key stakeholders. It also updates the review of existing strategy documents found at Appendix A to ensure that the most recent documents have been given consideration in this version.

6.1 Research and engagement

Arup did extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation in 2021 with key infrastructure stakeholders, which was followed up by further engagement in 2023 with certain stakeholders. Table X below shows the broad range of stakeholders contacted throughout the process and their related infrastructure functions.

Stakeholder	Infrastructure types discussed
Oxfordshire County Council	Active Travel Bus Services Rail Services Highways Primary education Secondary education Special educational needs provision Social care provision Libraries Fire and rescue Digital infrastructure
Oxford City Council	Green Spaces Playing pitches Community centres Leisure centres Cemeteries
Highways England	Highways
Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB)	Primary Healthcare
Thames Valley Police	Policing
Scottish Southern Electricity (SSE)	Electricity Supply
Scotia Gas Networks (SGN)	Gas Supply
Thames Water	Water supply Sewerage

Table 1: Infrastructure providers engaged with during the production of the IDP and Local Plan 2040

There were two infrastructure types where it was attempted to engage with stakeholders throughout the production of the IDP but was ultimately unsuccessful – secondary healthcare and allotments. The IDP has relied on information already in the public domain for the consideration of these infrastructure types.

Engagement with other Oxfordshire authorities

Infrastructure needs and infrastructure networks do not align with administrative boundaries, making it important to discuss potential cross-boundary infrastructure implications with neighbouring authorities. This is particularly the case for this IDP, given the proximity of the large unmet need sites to Oxford on all sides. In January and February 2021 online meetings were held with officers from Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council. Email correspondence also took place with officers from West Oxfordshire District Council.

These meetings covered:

- The pattern of existing cross-boundary infrastructure demand, both from those districts into Oxford and from Oxford out into those districts;
- Specific infrastructure provision associated with development on the unmet need sites close to Oxford's boundary, including the potential for this to serve growth within nearby parts of Oxford.

6.2 Producing the infrastructure delivery schedule

Stage 1 generated a significant volume of information, and suggestions for a wide array of infrastructure schemes. Some of these were at an advanced stage and eminently worth of inclusion in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (IDS). Others required further discussions or information from stakeholders in order to understand whether a specific scheme existed, or whether the development of a scheme would need to follow at a later stage.

Regular ongoing discussions have been undertaken with Council officers to assist in this process of refinement – for example, to understand whether identified schemes would in practice be likely to be capable of being funded through developer contributions. Using this as a basis, the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule was progressively compiled. The introduction to Annex A sets out details of the information included in the Schedule, the definitions used and basis upon which these were established.

Establishing demand

For most infrastructure types, infrastructure providers have indicated what infrastructure will be required to support development. However, there are a small number of infrastructure types for which this has not been possible, either due to unique circumstances within Oxford or the need for further evidence-gathering to take place in the context of the new Local Plan. Because of these circumstances the IDP does not prescribe a modelled approach to establishing demand.

- **Primary healthcare:** All residents in new development will expect to register with a GP surgery. Patient yields within Oxford are typically skewed by the city's demographics, with a significant population of young adult students who typically exhibit lower levels of need for primary healthcare. The approach to establishing patient demand is therefore more nuanced than applying a straightforward ratio. At this stage it has not been possible for BOB ICB to indicate how much new capacity might be required, although BOB ICB has nevertheless indicated that levels of growth in the current Local Plan will necessitate the provision of new surgery capacity within the city.

- **Green infrastructure:** Chapter 4 of the Local Plan 2040 establishes a network of green infrastructure across Oxford. It sets out requirements for this network to be protected from development, and for new development to contribute to its enhancement. This reflects the large expanse of the city's green infrastructure network, and means that ratio-based approaches to establishing green space requirements (i.e., a certain amount of space based upon the number of residents in an area) would be inappropriate. However, Policy G2 in the Local Plan 2040 does require 10% of new residential sites over 1.5ha to be delivered as new public open space.

Establishing Infrastructure Costs

The IDP uses the experience of infrastructure providers to establish the costs of each infrastructure item set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule – either on the basis of specific costs, or formulae. However, in a small number of cases this has not been possible. In these cases, costs have been established as follows:

- **Education:** Costs for new primary school schemes set out in the IDS have been derived from the Department of Education's 2021 Scorecard[7]. This sets out average costs for school construction (both new-build and extension) in each local education authority. For primary school extensions, the Oxfordshire cost is £4.08million - a form of entry equating to 210 pupils, i.e., 30 pupils in ach of a primary school's seven year-groups. This is derived from the scorecard's cost of £19,447 per pupil.
- **Allotments:** A cost estimate has been established for new allotment provisions identified in the IDS. This is based on Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) estimates across a period from 2017 to 2021, adjusted to reflect our experience of live projects. A South East regional variation adjustment factor of 0.98 has also been applied. This results in an estimated cost of £24,494 per hectare of provision, not including land costs.

For some schemes it is not currently possible to estimate a cost (with that being noted within the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule where relevant) – either due to a lack of detail about the scheme at this stage, or because costs have not yet been formulated by the delivery body. In all cases, the costs set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule should be treated as indicative, with more detailed re-calculation being necessary at the time development comes forward or funding applications are made.

[7] https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-school-places-scorecards-2021

Conclusions by Infrastructure Theme

This chapter sets out conclusions for each of the infrastructure types considered throughout the preparation of the IDP. Under each theme, the following are set out:

- The pattern of existing provision for that infrastructure type, including any challenges and capacity issues that have emerged through the discussions undertaken with infrastructure providers;
- A summary of the schemes set out within the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (Annex A) which have been identified to address the impacts of the growth planned within the Local Plan 2040 or are otherwise required to address wider pressures.

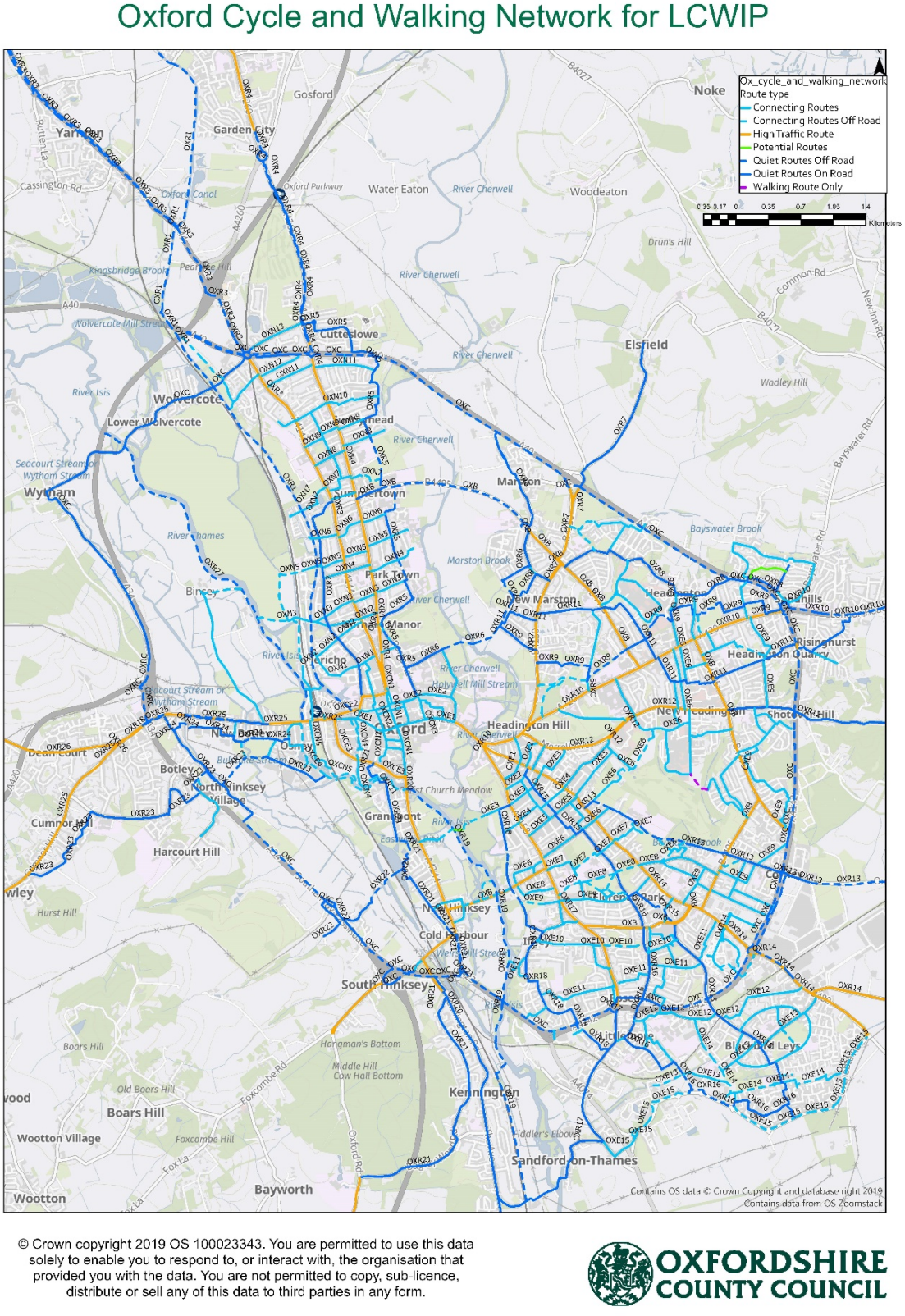
7.1 Transport

This section considers all modes of transport provision within Oxford. Transport infrastructure of one form or another is likely to be utilised by most residents on a daily basis, as well as by visitors to the city. The provision of transport infrastructure, particularly that which supports the transition to zero carbon, therefore has a crucial impact on how the city operates – on the environment, on the economy, and on quality of life. The following infrastructure types are considered:

Existing provision

Active Travel - Statistics produced by the Department for Transport show that Oxford has an extremely high rate of cycling – 41.7% of residents cycle at least once per month, compared to an average of 13.1% for England as a whole. This is despite the relatively undulating terrain in East Oxford and South Oxford, and is second only to Cambridge at a national level. Figure 4 on the following page shows the city's comprehensive active travel network around the city, with a large number of low and zero traffic 'quiet routes', for example along the River Thames corridor. However, it is notable that the majority of the active travel network is on street in mixed traffic.

Bus services – Oxford benefits from a comprehensive network of bus services. Figure 5 shows that these primarily serve radial corridors, with the majority of corridors providing multiple overlapping routes into the city centre, with high combined service frequencies which generally operate on a 'turn-up-and-go' basis without the need to first check a timetable. There are a smaller number of circumferential services between North Oxford, East Oxford and South Oxford; providing access to major destinations such as the JR Hospital without the need to pass through the city centre. Oxford is also served by a comprehensive network of park and ride sites on the edge of the city adjacent to the strategic road network, providing car drivers with viable alternatives to driving into the city centre. These can suffer from capacity constraints at peak times. Oxford's bus services are mostly provided by two operators – the Oxford Bus Company and Stagecoach. SmartZone inter-operator tickets are available, providing passengers with flexibility to catch any bus rather than having to wait for those of a specific operator.



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Figure 4: Oxford Cycle and Walking Network for Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP)[8]

[8] https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/roads-and-transport/OxfordLCWIP_202v1.1.docx



Figure 5: Bus services across all operators within Oxford and adjacent parts of Cherwell, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse[9]

Rail Services

There is one railway station within Oxford, on the western edge of the city centre. This provides five main services, with direct connections to a large part of the UK:

- GWR services to Didcot, Reading and London Paddington;
- GWR services via the Cotswold Line to Worcester;
- GWR local stopping services to Banbury;
- CrossCountry services north to Banbury, Birmingham and Manchester; and south to Southampton and Bournemouth;

[9] https://www.oxfordbus.co.uk/services

- Chiltern Railways services to Bicester, High Wycombe and London Marylebone.

Both the railway station and railway line through Oxford are significantly constrained and operate above capacity, with limited flexibility in the event of delays and disruption.

North Oxford is also served by Oxford Parkway Railway Station, located a short distance beyond the city's northern boundary in Cherwell District. This provides services on the Chiltern Railways route to London Marylebone.

Highways

Figure 6 below shows Oxford's highways network. It has a clear pattern of radial routes out from the city centre, with a relatively limited range of circumferential routes. The radial routes connect to with the ring road which is partly within and partly outside the city boundary. Despite the high levels of active travel provision within the city and range of high-quality bus services, Oxford still suffers from vehicular congestion and its associated air quality impacts. This partly reflects the historic nature of much of the city, with many streets physically incapable of handling larger amounts of traffic. This has resulted in the need to restrict through traffic from much of the city centre. The ring road also suffers from a need to accommodate long-distance vehicular flows as well as supporting local traffic, with significant congestion.

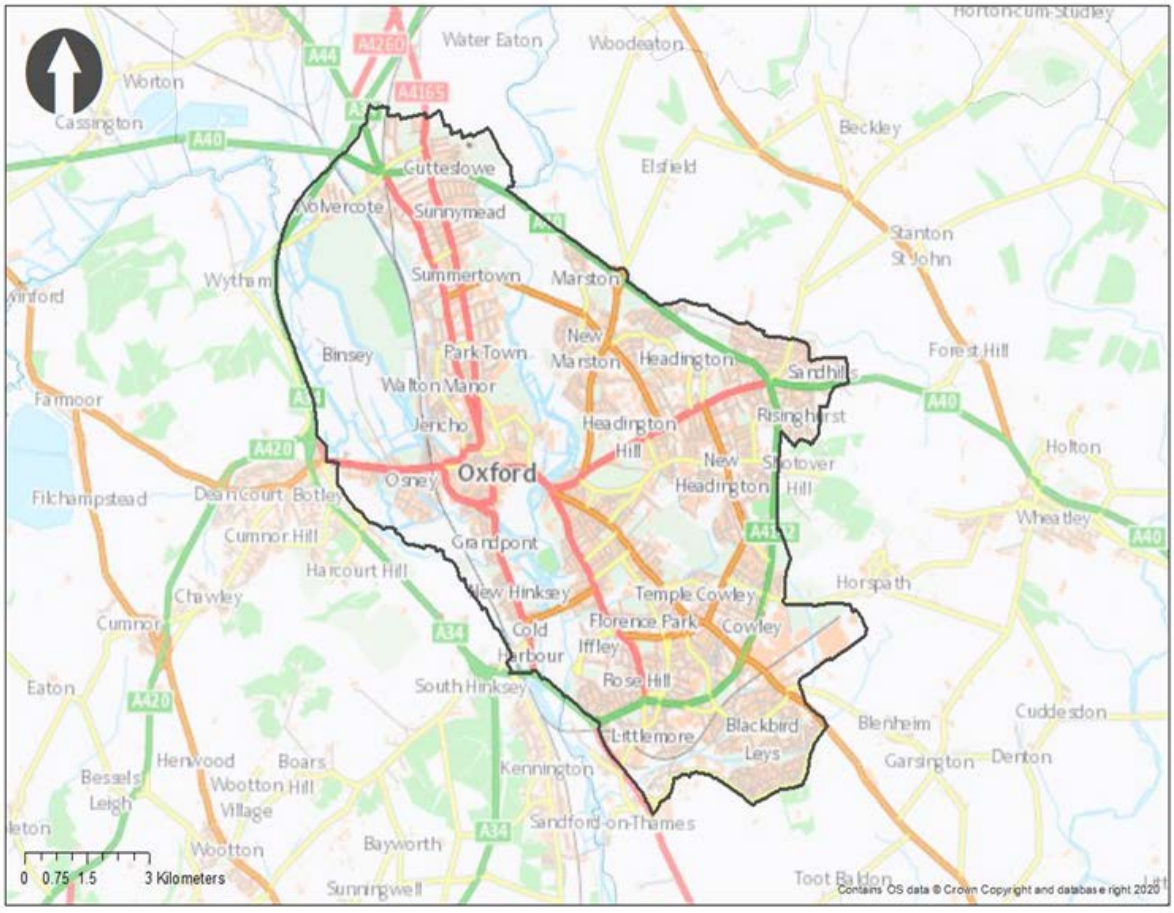


Figure 6: Map showing the highway network in and around Oxford

Schemes to address growth and other needs

The majority of schemes in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule are transport schemes, and the majority of these are active travel schemes. The Oxford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) provides a comprehensive set of schemes to improve the active travel network around the city and provide connections to new development sites, with a mixture of on-street and off-street routes. Other notable schemes include the packages to provide new bus services on circumferential corridors around the city (such as around the Eastern Bypass), and the cluster of schemes to improve rail connectivity into Oxford. This includes the Cowley Branch Line, a railway reopening scheme which would provide Oxford's first intra-city rail service – with trains from Cowley to the City Centre in just a few minutes, and easy onward connectivity to the rest of the UK. This is an important scheme to support growth in the south of the city, as well as on the unmet need sites in South Oxfordshire.

Most of the highway schemes identified are focussed on decarbonisation and otherwise reducing environmental impacts from road traffic – for example, the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and introduction of a zero emissions zone for the City Centre. Other than providing connections to new development sites, there are deliberately very few highway schemes with a focus on improving access and reducing journey times for motorists.

7.2 Education

This section considers the full spectrum of education provision within Oxford. The provision of high-quality education infrastructure has a huge role to play in the social fabric of the city, and its location has important interactions with transport given the need to ensure sustainable patterns of movement for education. The following infrastructure types are considered:

Existing Provision

Primary Schools - Figure 7 below shows the distribution of primary schools within Oxford. There are 32 primary schools across the city, generally well distributed, although with relatively few in Central and West Oxford. From discussions with Oxfordshire County as local education authority, it is understood that the provision of new schools has typically kept up with rates of development in recent decades. Given changing demographics within the city, there is now a relatively significant amount of spare capacity within a number of the city's primary schools.

Secondary schools – Figure 7 shows the distribution of secondary schools in Oxford. There are 10 secondary schools around the city in total, again broadly evenly distributed. Whilst there are no secondary schools within Central and West Oxford, pupils in West Oxford are within a relatively short commute to Matthew Arnold School in Botley (Vale of White Horse District) and pupils in the City Centre have easy access to schools in other parts of the city. As with primary schools, it is understood from discussions with Oxfordshire County Council that there is a relatively significant amount of spare capacity within the city's secondary schools.

Special educational needs provision – Oxford has five schools providing special educational needs and disability (SEND) provision. In addition, three of the city's other schools (two primary, one secondary) provide some on-site SEND provision. Each of these eight schools provides specialised provision, reflecting that SEND is generally provided on a county-wide basis. This means that the

city's SEND schools serve a wide catchment, with some pupils from Oxford travelling out of the city to schools elsewhere. Oxfordshire County Council has indicated that there are new SEND schools being provided elsewhere in the county at present, with no significant need for new SEND provision within Oxford at the current time.

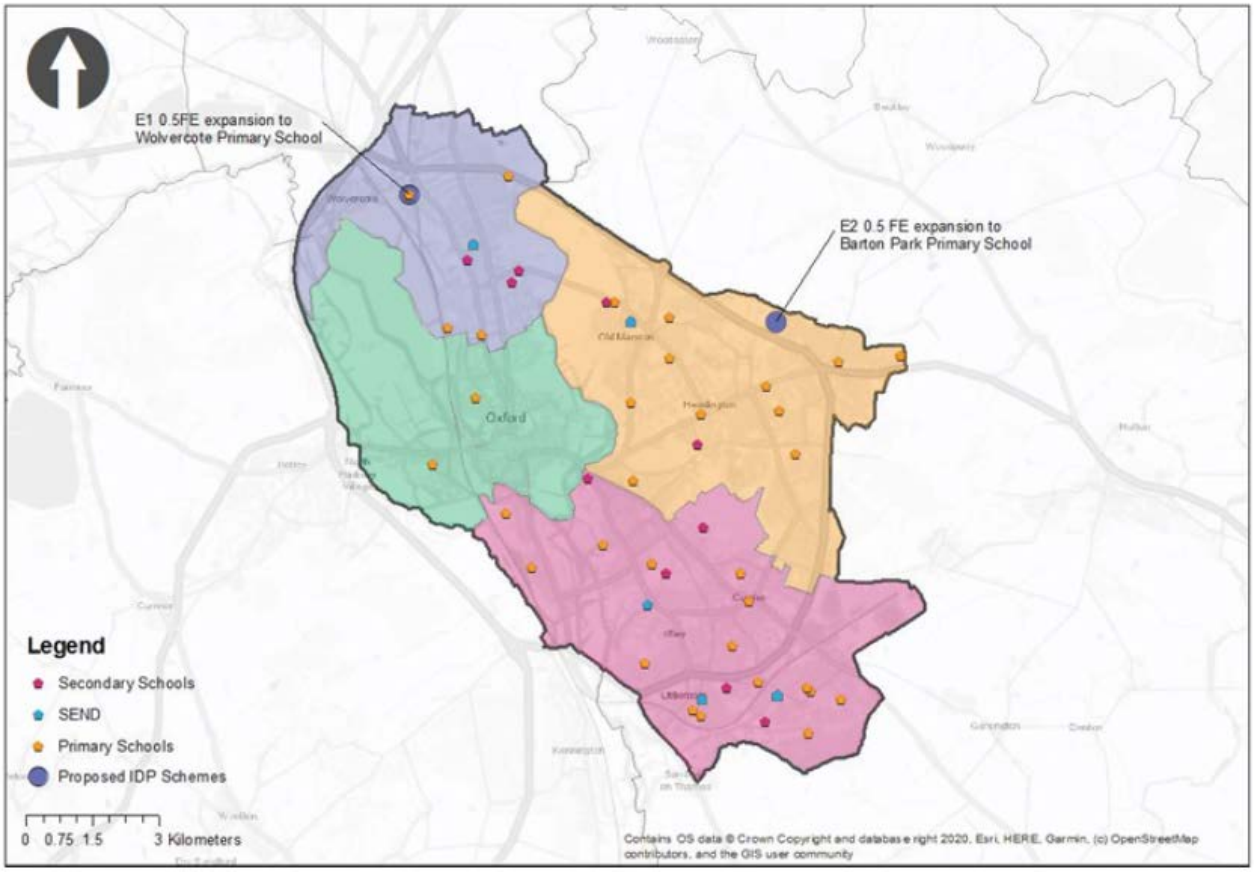


Figure 7: Primary schools, secondary schools and special educational needs provision within Oxford, alongside education schemes identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule

Schemes to address growth and other needs

The Infrastructure Delivery Schedule contains two education schemes – both relatively minor (0.5 Form of Entry, equivalent to 105 new pupils) extensions to existing primary schools. The first, at Wolvercote Primary School, would serve growth across North Oxford; with an extension to the new Barton Park Primary School (passive provision for this extension was included as part of the new school's initial construction) serving growth across East Oxford.

7.3 Healthcare

This section considers healthcare provision within Oxford. The provision of the right healthcare infrastructure is crucial to wellbeing and quality of life. The following infrastructure types are considered:

Existing Provision

Primary Healthcare - Oxford is currently served by 24 GP surgeries, distributed in all parts of the city. There is some notable clustering of surgeries, for example around Beaumont Street in the city centre where there are three adjacent surgeries, and around the JR Hospital where there are three surgeries in close proximity. From previous discussions with BOB ICB there are understood to be significant constraints within some existing surgeries, with these being close to capacity with no room to expand. This includes small existing surgeries located within former dwellings, where expansion would either be inappropriate (given the ongoing presence of adjoining residential properties) or is physically impossible.

Secondary Healthcare - Oxford has three main hospitals – the John Radcliffe Hospital providing general care, the Churchill Hospital providing cancer treatment and other specialist care, and the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre. In addition, the Warneford Hospital provides mental health care, and the Manor Hospital provides private care. All five of these hospitals are located in relatively close proximity in and around Headington – a significant secondary healthcare cluster which serves a regional catchment as well as Oxford and Oxfordshire. Like all secondary healthcare provision nationally, particularly in the context of Covid-19, the four NHS hospitals are operating under challenging circumstances. The Oxford University Hospitals Trust was rated as 'requires improvement' by the Care Quality Commission in 2019[10] – however, this related to the specific condition of operating theatres which have since been refurbished. Throughout the process of preparing the IDP, no developed plans for immediate investment in secondary healthcare in the city were identified.

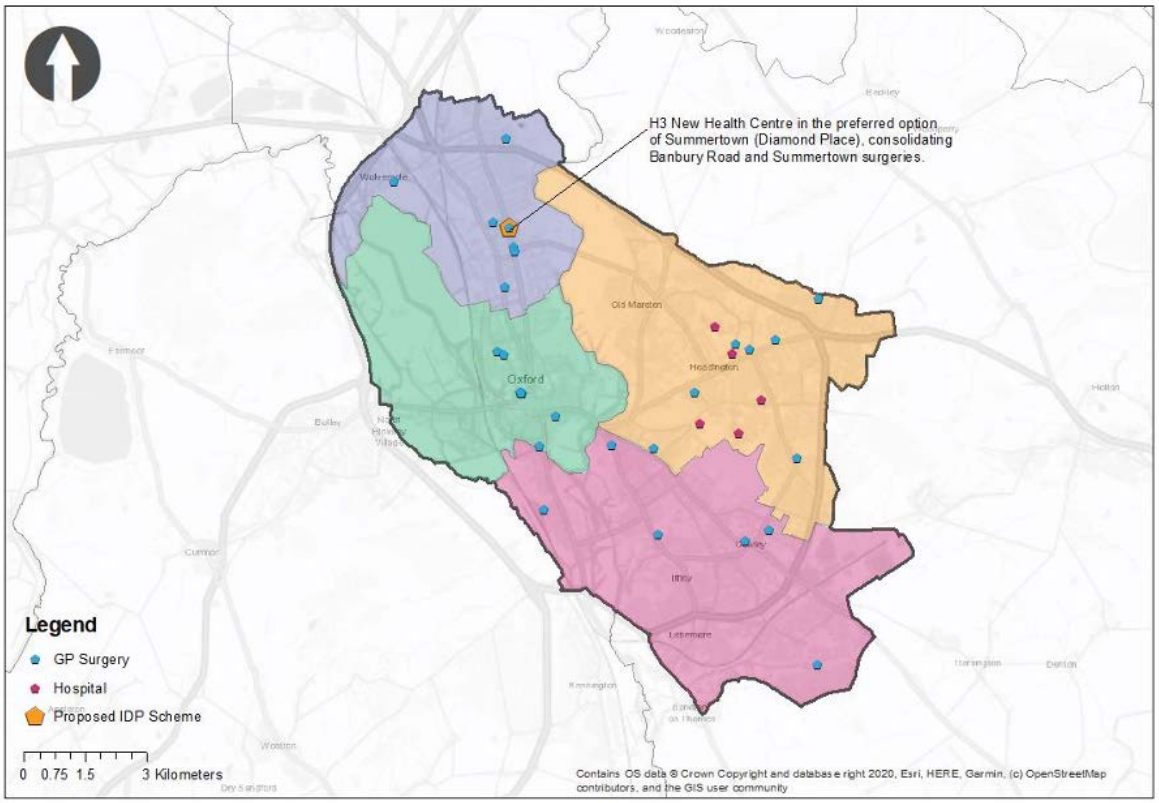


Figure 8 - GP surgeries and hospitals within Oxford, alongside healthcare schemes identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule

[10] https://www.ouh.nhs.uk/about/hospitalratings.aspx

Social care provision – In 2016 the Council undertook a review of older person's accommodation in Oxford[11]. This considered the current provision of sheltered and other housing options for older people aged 55+ in Oxford and found that there is a range of sheltered and general needs accommodation provided in Oxford. Demand and take-up is relatively low, with the waiting list for extra care schemes being relatively short. It was therefore concluded that social care provision within Oxford currently meets demand, and the Local Plan makes no specific allocations for new accommodation for older persons.

Schemes to address growth and other needs

The Infrastructure Delivery Schedule includes two healthcare schemes, which are related to one another. The first is a proposal for a new health surgery in Summertown, North Oxford (BOB ICB's preferred option being for it to be within the Diamond Place redevelopment), allowing the merger and replacement of the existing Banbury Road Surgery and Summertown Surgery. This scheme has the potential to accommodate new patients from development elsewhere in North Oxford. The BOB ICB has indicated its desire for this scheme to also allow a merger with the existing Wolvercote Surgery. Development has also been completed at Northgate[12] within the City Centre, providing a new surgery allowing the merger of surgeries currently located on Beaumont Street. However, it is understood that this will not cater for any additional new patient demand.

7.4 Green Infrastructure

This section considers all forms of green infrastructure provision within Oxford. Green infrastructure provides an important amenity and is as important to plan for as what might traditionally be thought of as 'grey' infrastructure, such as utilities. It is likely to be enjoyed on a frequent basis by most residents and visitors – if not to physically use, as a backdrop and visual amenity that frames the city's unique sense of place. Much like healthcare infrastructure, green infrastructure plays an important role in ensuring the physical and mental wellbeing of residents, while also being key in ensuring resilience to future climate change impacts. An example of this is through cooling to counter urban heat island effects, as well as acting as water storage and slowing surface run-off, reducing flood risk. The following infrastructure types are considered:

Existing Provision

Green spaces – Oxford benefits from a diverse array of green spaces – from the wide, open meadows along the river corridors which form distinctive green infrastructure wedges that define the city's character, to large formal parks such as University Parks and South Park, to smaller amenity green spaces around the city. Many of these green spaces are designated – either nationally or locally – for their biodiversity value and serve as a key component of the wider ecological network (e.g., SAC, SSSIs and local wildlife sites etc.). These are shown in Figure 9 below. The Council published a Green Spaces Strategy41 in 2013 examining existing provision and setting out a number of improvement schemes – however, the evidence behind this study is now

[11] https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/5607/hou4_-_review_of_older_persons_accommodation_in_oxford
[12] https://www.jesus.ox.ac.uk/cheng-building/

increasingly out of date, with most schemes now having been implemented. Through discussions with Council officers it is understood that Oxford's focus is on enhancing existing green space provision – this reflects the limited scope to provide new green infrastructure (except on development sites) due to the constrained nature of the City.

Playing pitches – Oxford has a wide range of playing pitch provision across all parts of the city – shown in Figure 9 below. However, not all of this is publicly accessible, including many school playing fields and the various recreation grounds belonging to University of Oxford colleges. The City Council published a Oxford's Playing Pitch Strategy in 2022, which found that there is currently some shortage of playing pitch provision. However, the strategy does not suggest that additional new pitches are not required to meet the shortfall. Instead, it suggests that once those unsecured pitches that have community use are added back in, or sites that are interested in starting to offer community use, plus planned third generation artificial pitch (3G) developments are included; there appears to be adequate provision for all sports.

Allotments – Oxford has a range of allotment sites and sizes spread throughout the city, although it is noted that there are relatively few sites within North Oxford (Figure XX below). It is understood that the Oxford & District Federation of Allotment Associations has a waiting list, suggesting that there is an undersupply of allotments at the present time, as well as many existing allotments requiring improvement.

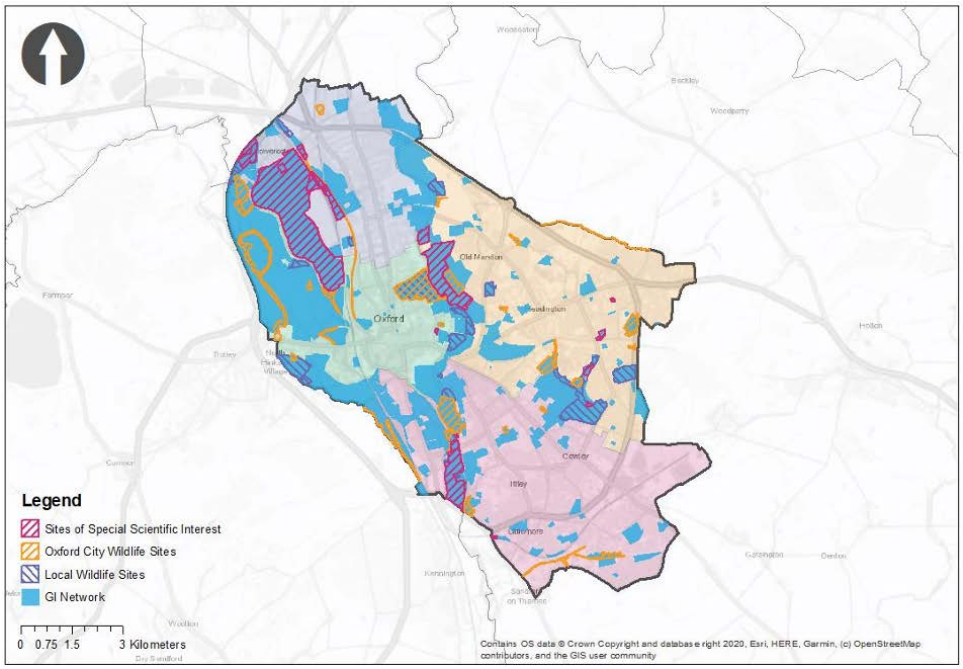


Figure 9: Oxford's network of green infrastructure assets, also showing wildlife sites, and Sites of Special Scientific Interest

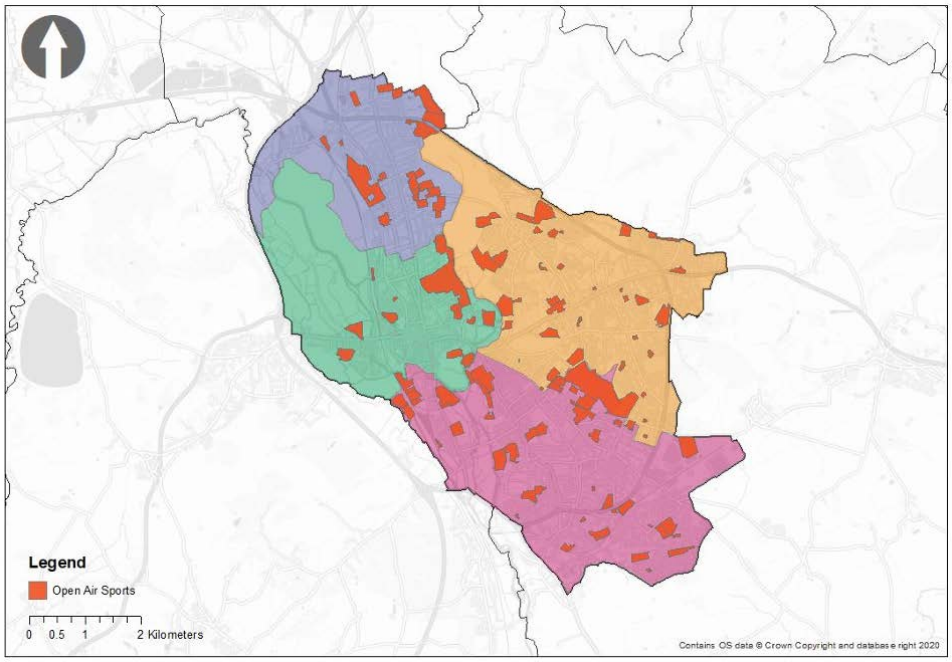


Figure 10: Locations of open-air sports and playing pitch provision within Oxford

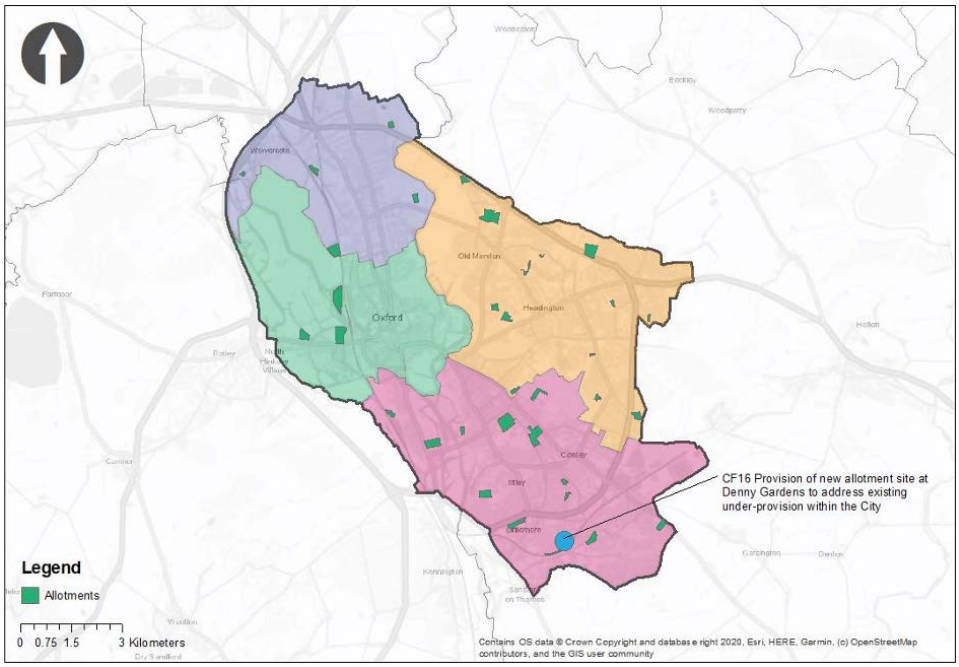


Figure 11: Locations of existing allotments within Oxford, and the location of a new allotment scheme identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule

Schemes to address other needs

The Infrastructure Delivery Schedule includes eight green infrastructure schemes. These primarily relate to specific short-term public realm and biodiversity enhancement schemes – some of these would address existing needs, whilst others would serve new development sites in the vicinity. The Oxford & District Federation of Allotment Associations has also identified a specific scheme to provide new allotments at Denny Gardens in South Oxford, partly addressing the shortfall identified above.

In the absence of an up-to-date Green Spaces Strategy, the coverage of schemes in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule is considered incomplete. This results in a risk that any emerging green infrastructure needs within the city will go unaddressed, particularly given the increased focus on green infrastructure to provide for residents' health and wellbeing following the Covid-19 pandemic (see Section 4.2).

7.5 Community Facilities

This section considers all forms of community facility provision within Oxford. Community facilities form the backdrop to some of the most important events in our lives – they are places to gather, share ideas, relax, keep fit, learn and much more. The provision of community facilities provides for many of our human needs, and contributes to quality of life, through reducing loneliness, improvements in mental health and the building of social cohesiveness. The following infrastructure types are considered:

Existing Provision

Community centres – Oxford has a large number of community centres – Figure 12 shows that these are spread across all areas of the city, although there is a greater concentration in East Oxford and South Oxford.

Leisure centres – Oxford has four indoor leisure centres providing a general range of sports and leisure facilities, in addition to two more specialist facilities – the Oxford Ice Rink in the City Centre, and Hinksey Outdoor Pool in South Oxford. These are considered to offer a relatively good coverage of provision, well located relative to growth locations. However, it was noted through discussions with the Council's leisure team that several are in need of refurbishment. Projects are already being undertaken to reduce the carbon emissions from some leisure centres, such as air source heat pump installation at Hinksey Outdoor Pool.

Libraries – Oxford has eight libraries, spread across all parts of the city (Figure 14). The services offered through these have changed in response to demand in recent years, but are not generally considered to be constrained. However, the need for improvements at some libraries have emerged though our discussions with Oxfordshire County Council.

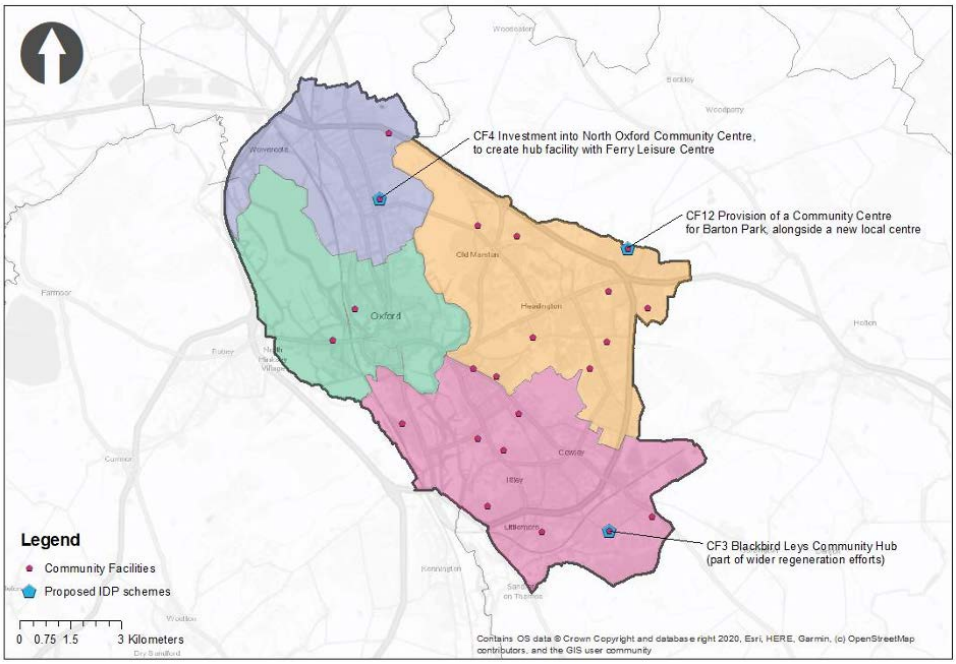


Figure 12: Locations of existing community centres within Oxford, and the location of community centre schemes identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule

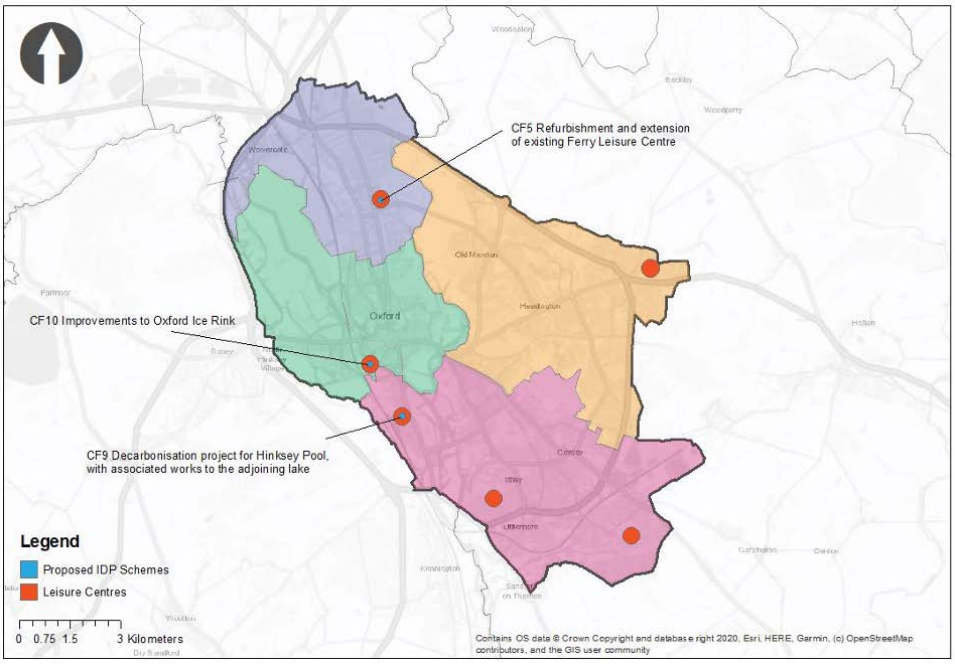


Figure 13: Locations of existing leisure centres within Oxford, and the location of leisure centre schemes identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule

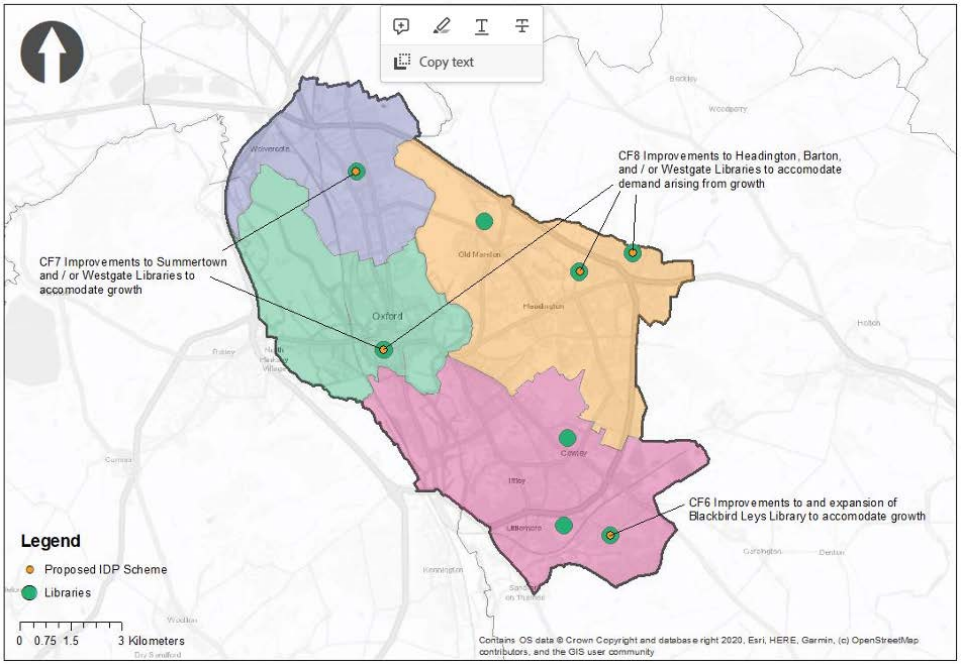


Figure 14: Locations of existing libraries within Oxford, and the location of library schemes identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule

Cemeteries - Oxford has four cemeteries – Botley Cemetery (Central and West Oxford), Headington Cemetery (East Oxford), Rose Hill Cemetery (South Oxford) and Wolvercote Cemetery (South Oxford). In addition, Oxford Crematorium is located close to Headington, within South Oxfordshire District. It is understood from our discussions with Council officers that new cemetery capacity will be required to accommodate the demand associated with planned development.

Policing – Oxford has two police stations – St Aldates Police Station in the City Centre, and Cowley Police Station in South Oxford. From discussions with Thames Valley Police, it is understood that these provide sufficient coverage for current policing requirements. Thames Valley Police has indicated that the policing estate is kept under regular review, and that new development within the city has the potential to require new or expanded police buildings and equipment.

Fire and rescue – Oxford has two fire stations – Rewley Road Fire Station in the City Centre, and Slade Park Fire Station in East Oxford. From our discussions with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and Oxfordshire County Council, it is understood that these provide sufficient coverage for current fire and rescue requirements. Oxfordshire Council has indicated that the fire and rescue estate is kept under regular review, and that new development within the city has the potential to require new capital spend on fire and rescue. However, at the current time, Oxfordshire County Council has not identified any specific requirements.

Schemes to address growth and other needs

The Infrastructure Delivery Schedule includes eight schemes for community facilities, across all community facility types except for policing and fire and rescue. Nine of these relate to the refurbishment or expansion of existing facilities, with only one being directly related to planned growth – that being the provision of a new community centre for the Barton Park development. This reflects the nature of the development planned in the city, which is generally set within and around existing communities. This provides an opportunity to fund and support the viability of valued

facilities that already exist. The need for capacity increases at existing cemeteries within Oxford is planned to be met at the Shotover Cemetery, which is a cross-boundary scheme with South Oxfordshire District Council. The City Council recently announced work is progressing to deliver a new public green space and tranquil burial meadow[13] on land it owns just outside the city's administrative boundary.

7.6 Utilities

This section considers all forms of utility provision within Oxford. Utilities infrastructure is essential to the effective day-to-day functioning of our homes, workplaces, leisure facilities and open spaces. The following infrastructure types are considered:

Existing provision

Electricity supply – From our discussions with Scottish and Southern Electricity (SSE), it is understood that the city's electricity network performs relatively well at present. However, in some areas the network operates relatively close to capacity, meaning that reinforcements are needed to support significant amounts of new development.

Gas supply – From our discussions with Scotia Gas Networks (SGN), it is understood that the city's gas supply network generally has capacity for the levels of development proposed within the Local Plan 2040. This position would need to be confirmed at the point developers make connection requests to SGN (as capacity could continue to be consumed in the meantime), but this would be a matter between SGN and developers. SGN has also indicated a likely need to undertake like-for-like replacements of some older parts of the city's gas supply network in the medium term, with a number of schemes under development. However, these are not currently in the public domain.

Fresh water supply and sewerage – Thames Water have indicated that the scale of development across the local catchment (which extends beyond the city boundary) is likely to require upgrades to water supply and sewerage networks. Thames Water have also confirmed that funding is available for the delivery of a major increase in treatment capacity at the Sandford Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW).

Flood risk mitigation – Oxford is bisected by the River Thames and River Cherwell, with large areas to either side of both rivers being at risk of flooding. The climate emergency is increasing this risk, with more frequent and severe flooding likely in the future.

Digital infrastructure – Some 99.3% of properties within Oxford have superfast broadband, with 90% capable of receiving ultrafast broadband. Whilst this is a high level of connectivity, Oxfordshire County Council aspires to increase this coverage further. There is also the likelihood of additional digital infrastructure schemes required as technology changes, to accommodate 5G, autonomous vehicles etc.

[13] https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20359/building_projects/1580/oxford_burial_meadow

Schemes to address growth and other needs

The Infrastructure Schedule includes seven utilities schemes. Three of these are critical capacity upgrades within the city's electricity supply network to meet the demand being generated by new development on a number of sites around the city. Two relate to major sewerage and flood defence works, both of which are of national significance and are fully funded but recorded for completeness (see Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, Section 4.1).

The final scheme is digital infrastructure – the progressive countywide rollout of full fibre broadband to commercial buildings. This programme is a tactical approach by Oxfordshire County Council, as it lays the ground for commercial providers to then extend fibre connectivity to nearby residential properties at their own expense.

8 Appendix A – Review of Existing Strategy Documents

At the outset of the project a detailed review of a comprehensive array of existing documents, policy and context was undertaken. This included:

National Policy Context

- National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
- Planning Practice Guidance – Plan-making (2019)
- Planning Practice Guidance – Viability (2018)
- National Infrastructure and Construction Pipeline 2022/23 (2023)
- The Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) Regulations (2019)

Oxford City Policy Context

- Oxford Local Plan 2036 (2020)
- Draft Oxford Local Plan 2040 (in preparation)
- Oxford Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2013)
- West End and Osney Mead SPD (2022)
- Barton Area Action Plan (2012)
- Northern Gateway Area Action Plan (2015)
- Jericho Canalside SPD (2013)
- Diamond Place SPD (2015)

Neighbouring Authority Policy Context

- South Oxfordshire Local Plan (2020)
- Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1 (2016)
- Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2 (2019)
- West Oxfordshire Local Plan (2018)
- Cherwell District Local Plan Part 1 (2015)
- Cherwell District Local Plan Part 1 Partial Review (2020)

Transport

- Highways England Strategic Business Plan 2020-2025 (2020)
- Highways England Delivery Plan 2020-2025 (2020)
- Oxfordshire County Council Transport and Connectivity Plan 2022-2050 (2022)
- Oxfordshire County Council Active Travel Strategy (2022)
- Oxfordshire County Council Freight and Logistics Strategy (2022)
- Oxfordshire County Council Innovation Framework (2022)
- Oxfordshire County Council Central Oxfordshire Area Travel Plan (2023)
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Oxford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2020)
- Network Rail Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study (2021)
- East West Rail Route Update (2023)

Education and Social Infrastructure

- Oxfordshire County Council – Pupil Place Plan 2021-2025 (2021)
- Oxfordshire County Council – Special Educational Needs & Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy 2018 – 2027
- Oxfordshire County Council – Improving Education Outcomes – a strategic review (2019)
- Oxfordshire County Council Secondary schools with place (2020)
- Oxfordshire County Council Primary and Infant schools with place (2020)

- OxLEP Skills Strategy
- Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Services and Activities to Improve Young People's Well-being (2012)
- Oxfordshire County Council – A strategy for partnership working in Oxfordshire (2007)
- Oxford City Council – Children and Young People's Strategy
- Oxford City Council – Children and Young People Needs Assessment
- Oxford City Council – Community Centres Strategy

Healthcare

- General Practice Forward View (2016)
- NHS Long Term Plan (2019)
- Oxfordshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy – 2018 – 2023 (2019)
- Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group – OCCG's Strategy 2014 – 2019 and Plan 2014-2016
- Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2020)
- Oxfordshire Director of Public Health report (2013)
- Oxfordshire CCG Primary Estates Strategy (2020-2025)
- Locality Place Based Primary Care Plan: Oxford City Locality (2018)

Green infrastructure

- Oxfordshire County Council Full Biodiversity and Planning in Oxfordshire guidance (2014)
- Oxfordshire County Council Environmental Sensitivity to Change (2016)
- Oxford City Council – Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy 2012 – 2026
- Oxford City Council – Green Spaces Strategy 2013 – 2027 (2013)
- Oxford City Council – Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy 2015 – 20
- Oxford City Council – Green Spaces biodiversity and open-air sports background paper
- Oxford City Council – Green Infrastructure Study (2017)
- Oxford City Council – Oxford City Green Belt Study (2017)
- Natural England's Green Infrastructure Guidance (2014)

Utilities

- Southern Gas Networks Long Term Development Statement (2020)
- Thames Water – Our Business Plan (2020-2025)
- Thames Water – Our long-term strategy (2015-2040)
- Oxfordshire County Council – Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
- Oxford City Council – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 (2011)
- The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2020)
- Oxfordshire County Council – Oxfordshire's Resources and Waste Strategy (20182023)
- Oxfordshire County Council – Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Part 1-Core Strategy (2017)
- UK Government – UK Digital Strategy (2017)
- UK Government – Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review (2018)

- Next Generation Mobile Technologies: A 5G Strategy for the UK (2017)
- Oxfordshire County Council Digital Strategy
- Oxford City Council – Telecommunications SPD (2007)
- Oxford City Council – Digital Infrastructure Strategy (2020)

9 Appendix B – Infrastructure Delivery Schedule

Schemes included in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule

The Infrastructure Schedule sets out the details of each specific infrastructure scheme currently anticipated within Oxford over the plan period to 2040. These schemes have been identified through:

- Existing schemes already identified in the previous 2022 Oxford IDP, which have not yet been provided and continue to be required;
- Engagement with infrastructure providers during the production of this updated IDP;
- The identification of desired interventions and corporate priorities by Oxford City Council, where linked to growth or the need to address existing infrastructure deficits.

As Chapter 7 indicates, there is a need for new or improved infrastructure across most infrastructure types and themes. However, there are a number of infrastructure types where the IDP has identified a need, but stakeholder discussions have indicated that further evidence is required before specific schemes to meet that need can be identified. For example, whilst there is known to be a need for new GP surgery provision, further work needs to be undertaken by the BOB ICB to establish where and how that need can be met. The Infrastructure Delivery Schedule therefore does not include specific schemes for these infrastructure types, although they should be included in future iterations of the IDP once schemes are identified.

Further details on the basis on which schemes have been included in the IDP is set out in the methodology in Chapter 6.

In total, the Infrastructure Schedule includes 106 separate schemes. Around three-quarters of these are transport schemes, with the remainder covering the other infrastructure themes considered in the IDP. The total combined value of schemes for which it is possible to estimate a cost is some £892 million. This is a significant amount, many times more than the levels of funding currently collected through developer contributions by the Council (see Chapter 3). This means that an infrastructure funding gap exists and highlights the importance of partnership working and external funding sources in infrastructure delivery.

Structure of the Infrastructure Schedule

The Infrastructure Delivery Schedule is set out in the same order as the headings for each infrastructure theme within Chapter 7. It provides consistent information for each infrastructure scheme, across the following columns:

- **Reference** – For ease of reference, each scheme has been given a unique reference number.
- **Infrastructure type –** The infrastructure type under which the scheme sits. Some are cross-cutting across several different infrastructure types.
- **Scheme –** Summary details of the specific scheme; setting out its name, location and what it would achieve.
- **Prioritisation –** To support future investment and funding decisions, schemes have been assigned a recommended priority level based on our assessment of their relative significance. It should be noted that these may not necessarily reflect political and infrastructure provider views but are intended to be a practical and pragmatic basis upon which the Council can make decisions when faced with the need to balance competing priorities. The prioritisation should not be interpreted as indicating that lower priority schemes are not necessary to make development acceptable in planning terms, and developers will still be expected to deliver all identified infrastructure needs as far as is viable (see Chapter 3).

The three categories traditionally associated with an IDP are:

- **Critical –** Infrastructure that must be provided for development to proceed. This generally includes connections to infrastructure networks and will often be triggered by the commencement of development.
- **Essential –** Infrastructure that will mitigate impacts arising from development. It will often address demand generated by the occupiers of new development (whether residential or commercial) and be triggered upon first occupation. Alternatively, essential schemes may be needed to address wider societal pressures, such as the climate emergency.
- **Important** - Infrastructure that is required to achieve sustainable growth and deliver high-quality places. It will generally improve operational infrastructure capacity, and/or deliver wider benefits to society.

A fourth category of infrastructure category has been considered for this IDP – that of transformational infrastructure. Transformational infrastructure is infrastructure which brings significant additional social, environmental or economic benefits in addition to the mitigation or wider benefits delivered by the traditional infrastructure categories.

For cross-boundary schemes, the prioritisation scoring set out in the schedule is Oxford-centric. Schemes such as T25 (provision of bus services into and through the Bayswater Brook site in South Oxfordshire District) would likely be considered critical in a South Oxfordshire IDP but are only considered as important to Oxford.

- **Cost –** The current best estimate of cost for each scheme, based upon the most recent published costs provided by infrastructure providers. These are generally subject to indexation (to adjust for inflation and other influences) over time. Actual costs should therefore be treated as indicative, with more detailed re-calculation being necessary at the time development comes forward. For some schemes it is not currently possible to estimate a cost (with that being noted where relevant) – either due to a lack of detail about the scheme at this stage or because costs have not yet been formulated by the delivery body.
- **Confirmed Funding -** The amount and source of funding which is already confirmed to be in place for schemes, where relevant. For schemes where this column is blank, the scheme would need to be funded in accordance with the principles set out in Chapter 3.
- **Delivery Body -** The infrastructure provider and/or public body with responsibility for the delivery of the scheme. Responsibility may be shared between several delivery bodies, with this indicated where appropriate.
- **Delivery phasing –** The broad timescales within the plan period where it is expected that the scheme will be delivered, based upon the time needed to fund and develop the scheme. Where relevant, this also reflects the pace of development in the vicinity which results in the need for the scheme.

- **District area –** The area of the city where the scheme will be located. This is either:
  - One or several of the four “infrastructure areas” of the city considered throughout the IDP;
  - City-wide, for schemes which apply across the city or have no fixed location at the current time;
  - Locations outside the city in cases where the scheme straddles the city boundary, for example for schemes which include the unmet need sites in surrounding districts.

- **Source –** The means by which the scheme and the need for it have been identified.

Schemes no longer included from the 2022 IDP

The Infrastructure Schedule in the 2022 IDP includes a number of infrastructure schemes which have now been completed or are otherwise no longer required or considered appropriate to include in the IDP. These are set out within Table XX below.

Reference	Infrastructure Category/ Type	Project Title	Reason no longer included in IDP
T2	Transport/ Highways	Zero Emission Zone (Phase I) Pilot	Scheme implemented.
T7	Transport/ Rail	Potential for new railway station at Begbroke, to connect with the Science Park, and perhaps North Cotswold Line	Scheme entirely within Cherwell District Council administrative area.
T15	Transport/ Highways	Kidlington Roundabout, linked to LCWIP Route 4 proposal	Scheme entirely within Cherwell District Council administrative area.
T22	Transport/ Highways	Eastern Bypass corridor improvements (incl. Littlemore Roundabout & Heyford Hill), between and exclusive of Kennington Roundabout and Cowley Interchange, including Orbital bus route 1 connecting the Eastern Arc, hospital and Cowley	Duplicate Entry
T33	Transport/ Active Travel	Emergency Active Travel Fund - suite of measures to support people returning to work as lockdown restrictions eased.	Scheme implemented.
T39	Transport/ Highways	Headington Roundabout Improvements Phase II	Legacy Scheme.
T40	Transport/ Active Travel	Cycle Lane through the residential area parallel with Abingdon Road, linking with Osney Mead. Linked to active travel improvements in Route 21 of the LCWIP	Duplicate Entry. Already covered by T70 LCWIP Route 21
T41	Transport/ Highways	Redbridge Park and Ride Electric Vehicle supercharging point	Scheme implemented.
T46	Transport/ Highways	Go Ultra Low Oxford Project Phase I (Tral) - electric vehicle charging solutions for residents to do not have off-street parking	Scheme implemented.
T48	Transport/ Active Travel	Pedestrian and cycle access across the whole allocated site at Old Road Campus as identified in the Oxford Local Plan 2036	Site no longer allocated.
T52	Transport/ Bus	Extension of Thornhill Park and Ride	Scheme implemented.
T53	Transport/ Rail	Oxford North Rail Junction – provision of an additional track to bypass the junction on the up side	Duplicate Entry. Already covered by T5 – Oxford Rail Corridor Phase 2

		providing additional capacity and resilience	
T55	Transport/ Highways	A40 link road through Bayswater brook from the A40 at Marsh Lane interchange to the east of Sandhills	Legacy Scheme.
T72	Transport/ Active Travel	Improvement of footpath from River Thames through Bulstake, linked to Ferry Hinksey Road and Botley Road, linked with route 23 of the LCWIP	Scheme implemented.
T74	Transport/ Active Travel	LCWIP Route 26: B4044 Community Path from Eynsham - Botley.	Scheme entirely outside city boundary.
H1	Healthcare/ Primary Healthcare	Relocation of Wolvercote surgery to new development at Wolvercote Mill.	Scheme not implemented.
G5	Green Infrastructure/ Green Spaces	Port Meadow biodiversity enhancement schemes	Schemes implemented.
G9	Green Infrastructure/	Provision of a new allotment site at Denny Gardens to address existing under-provision within the city, as identified by the Oxford & District Federation of Allotment Associations	Scheme implemented.
CF5	Community Facilities/ Libraries	Improvements to Summertown and/ or Westgate Libraries, to accommodate demand arising from growth in North Oxford	Schemes implemented at both libraries.
CF7	Community Facilites/ Leisure Centres	Decarbonisation project for Hinksey Pool, with associated works to the adjoining lake, through the use of a local heat network consisting of water source heat pumps and battery/ thermal storage, powered by renewable energy.	Scheme implemented.

10 Appendix C – Infrastructure Delivery Schedule 2040

Reference	Scheme	Infrastructure Category	Infrastructure Type	Priortisation	Cost	Confirmed Funding	Delivery Body	Delivery Phasing	District Area	Source
Transport										
T1	Various minor works to the A34, including lay-by improvements, increased signage, improvements to the cycle track along the Western bypass and various other safety improvements	**Transport**	Highways	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Highways England	2020-2030	Central and West Oxford	Stakeholder engagement with Highways England
T3	Zero Emission Zone (Phase II) - part of Oxfordshire County Counci's Oxford Transport "Core Schemes"	**Transport**	Highways	**Essential**	TBC		Oxford City and Oxfordshire County Councils	2020-2030	Central and West Oxford	OxIS (2017)/ OTS
T4	Traffic Filters and Supporting Measures - part of Oxfordshire County Counci's Oxford Transport "Core Schemes".	**Transport**	Highways	**Essential**	£6,500,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2030	City-Wide	COTS and Stakeholder Engagement with Oxfordshire County Council
T5	Oxford Rail Corridor Phase 2, including additional platform at Oxford Station (west side), secondary station	**Transport**	Rail	**Essential**	£169,000,000	£169,000,000	Network Rail	2020-2025	Central and West Oxford	Oxfordshire Connect, ORCS and Stakeholder engagement with Oxfordshire County Council
T6	Cowley Branch Line passenger reopening, including improvements to mainline track capacity south of Oxford Station, likely additional track around Hinksey and two new passenger stations.	**Transport**	Rail	**Transformational**	£131,000,000	£4,560,000	Network Rail	2025-2030	Central and West Oxford South Oxford	Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study
T6a	Cowley Branch Line: Pedestrian bridge	**Transport**	Rail	**Transformational**	TBC		Network Rail	2025-2030	South Oxford	Stakeholder engagement with Oxford City Council
T8	Orbital bus route between Cowley and Hinksey to introduce bus lanes (in both directions) around the ring road between Cowley Interchange and Hinksey Hill.	**Transport**	Bus	**Essential**	£158,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2035	South Oxford	Stakeholder engagement with Oxfordshire County Council

T9	Workplace Parking Levy (WPL) to encourage sustainable transport use - part of Oxfordshire County Counci's Oxford Transport "Core Schemes".	**Transport**	Active Travel/ Bus	**Essential**	£600,000	Borrowing against future income from scheme	Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	City-Wide	Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP)
T10	City Centre Corridor Improvements: (West - Hythe Bridge St/ Oxpens Rd/ George St/ New Road), including active travel improvements, linked to LCWIP route CE2 proposal	**Transport**	Active Travel/ Bus	**Essential**	£20,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2035	Central and West Oxford	OxIS (2017)/ Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework / LCWIP
T11	City Centre Corridor Improvements: (North - St Giles/ Magdalen St/ Broad St), including active travel improvements linked to LCWIP route CN1	**Transport**	Active Travel/ Bus	**Essential**	£8,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2035	Central and West Oxford	OxIS (2017)/ Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework / LCWIP
T12	City Centre Corridor Improvements (South & East - High St/ St Aldates), including active travel improvements linked to LCWIP Route CE1	**Transport**	Active Travel/ Bus	**Essential**	£8,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2035	Central and West Oxford	OxIS (2017)/ Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework / LCWIP
T13	Banbury Road Corridor Improvements between Cutteslowe and St Giles, including active travel improvements linked to LCWIP Route 4 proposal	**Transport**	Active Travel Bus Highway	**Essential**	£18,000,000	£875,000	Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2035	North Oxford	OxIS (2017)/ Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework / LCWIP
T14	A4165 Corridor Improvements between Cutteslowe and Kidlington roundabout, linked to LCWIP Route 4 proposal	**Transport**	Active Travel Bus Highway	**Essential**	£10,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2035	North Oxford	OxIS (2017)/ Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework / LCWIP
T16	Woodstock Road Corridor Improvements, including active travel improvements linked to LCWIP route 3 proposal.	**Transport**	Active Travel Bus Highway	**Essential**	£18,000,000	£3,200,000	Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2035	North Oxford	OxIS (2017)/ COTP/ LCWIP
T17	Northern Bypass corridor improvements (Cuttleslowe Roundabout to Marsh Lane)	**Transport**	Active Travel Bus Highway	**Essential**	£25,800,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2035	North Oxford	OxIS (2017)
T18	Abingdon Road Corridor Improvements, from Folly Bridge to Kennington Roundabout	**Transport**	Active Travel Bus Highway	**Essential**	£17,606,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2035	South Oxford	OxIS (2017)/ Oxford City Council identified scheme

T19	Cowley Road/ Garsington Road/ Watlington Road Corridor Improvements, from MagdalenRoad to Grenoble Road, including improvements to Cowley interchange and active travel improvements linked with Route 14 of the LCWIP	**Transport**	Active Travel Bus Highways	**Essential**	£31,187,000		Oxfordshire County Council/ Developer Contributions	2025-2035	South Oxford	OxIS (2017)/ LCWIP
T20	Iffley Road Corridor Improvements from The Plain to Littlemore roundabout, including active travel improvements linked with LCWIP route 17	**Transport**	Active Travel Bus Highways	**Essential**	£18,048,000		Oxfordshire County Council/ Developer Contributions	2025-2036	South Oxford	OxIS (2017)/ LCWIP
T21	B4495 Corridor Improvements (Hollow Way/ Between Towns Road/ Donnington Bridge).	**Transport**	Active Travel Bus Highways	**Essential**	£3,046,000		Oxfordshire County Council/ Developer Contributions	2025-2030	South Oxford	OxIS (2017)
T23	London Road Corridor Improvements, between St Clements and Green Road roundabout	**Transport**	Active Travel Bus Highways	**Essential**	£17,155,900		Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2035	East Oxford	OxIS (2017)/ COTP/ LCWIP
T24	Introduction of Park & Ride Service serving Salt Cross Garden Village, linking to Oxford via a near or continuous bus lane on the A40	**Transport**	Bus	**Important**	£2,970,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2035	Central and West; North Oxford; West Oxfordshire District Council	Stakeholder engagement with Oxfordshire County Council
T25	Extension of existing bus routes (funding for additional vehicles) into Bayswater Brook site in SODC, linking to city centre and eastern arc	**Transport**	Bus	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2035	Central and West; East Oxford; South Oxfordshire District Council	Stakeholder engagement with Oxfordshire County Council
T26	Extension of existing bus routes (funding for additional vehicles) into Northfield site in SODC, linking to city centre and Science Vale	**Transport**	Bus	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxfordshire County Council		Central and West; East Oxford; South Oxfordshire District Council	Stakeholder engagement with Oxfordshire County Council

T27	Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs)	**Transport**	Active Travel Highways	**Essential**	£8,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council		City-Wide	LCWIP and stakeholder engagement with Oxfordshire County Council
T28	Controlled Parking Zones (city-wide)	**Transport**	Highways	**Essential**	£1,334,760	£600,000		2020-2030	City-Wide	OxIS (2017)
T29	Provision of additional coach parking within the city	**Transport**	Bus, Highways	**Essential**	£5,000,000		Oxford City and Oxfordshire County Councils	2025-2030	City-Wide	OxIS (2017)
T30	Last mile freight pilot scheme	**Transport**	Bus, Highways	**Essential**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	City-Wide	Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership (ZCOP)
T31	Provision of a network of cycle hire stations	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£2,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2035	City-Wide	OxIS (2017)
T32	District Centre Improvements (All Centres)	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Important**	£6,900,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2035	City-Wide	OxIS (2017)
T34	Provision of a pedestrian and cycle bridge from Oxpens to Osney Mead across the river, connecting development sites in these locations	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Critical**	£8,000,000		Oxford City Council	2020-2030	Central and West Oxford	Oxford City Council identified scheme/ LCWIP
T35	Northern Gateway/ Oxford North on-site link road	**Transport**	Highways	**Critical**	fully funded by LGF2	fully funded by LGF2	"Oxford North"	2020-2025	North Oxford	OxIS (2017)
T36	Horspath Road Junction Improvements	**Transport**	Highways	**Essential**	£4,100,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2040	South Oxford	OxIS (2017)
T37	JR Hospital on-site bus interchange and priority measures	**Transport**	Bus	**Essential**	£3,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	East Oxford	OxIS (2017)
T38	Churchill Hospital additional bus and cycle access	**Transport**	Active Travel Bus	**Essential**	£2,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	East Oxford	OxIS (2017)
T42	Active travel network improvements in Blackbird Leys, including the linkages across the CBL	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	South Oxford	Oxford City Council identified scheme
T43	Improvements to cycling provision along Botley Road, including active travel improvements linked to route 25 of the LCWIP.	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£19,590,000	£9,100,000	Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2035	Central and West Oxford	Oxford City Council identified scheme/ LCWIP

T44	A40 cycle bridge schemes helping to link Bayswater and Barton Park developments to existing cycle network, as well as providing pedestrian access for residents	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Critical**	Dependent on scope and scale		Delivered through Bayswater Brook developers/ landowners	2020-2030	East Oxford/ South Oxfordshire District Council	Oxford City Council identified scheme
T45	Connections to Oxford Parkway Railway Station with a route reserved through Peartree Farm	**Transport**	Active Travel Highways	**Critical**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2035	North Oxford	Oxford City Council identified scheme
T46	Go Ultra Low Oxford Project Phase II (city-wide) - electric vehicle charging solutions for residents who do not have off-street parking	**Transport**	Highways	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxford City Council/ Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2035	City-Wide	Oxford City Council identified scheme
T47	Improve pedestrianisation and cycle links to wider strategic routes into and out from Summertown district centre, as identified in the Local Plan 2040, including the delivery of cycle stands for public cycle parking within Diamond Place and Ewert House	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	Dependent on scope and scale		Delivered through development at Summertown district centre	2025-2035	North Oxford	Policy SPN3- Diamond Place and Ewert House
T49	Average Speed Cameras and 20mph extensions to ensure better speed control on the main road radials to manage traffic and create more attractive cycle routes	**Transport**	Active Travel Highways	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2035	City-Wide	LCWIP
T50	Potential bridge across the River Thames to link East Oxford via Jackdaw Lane, including widening and resurfacing of the cycle path and addition of solar lighting	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Important**	£5,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2035	South Oxford	LCWIP
T51	A40 crossing at Collinwood Road	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2030	East Oxford	LCWIP
T54	Oxford Canal Rail Junction - provision of crossover between Up and Down Bletchley Lines providing additional capacity and resilience	**Transport**	Railway	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Network Rail	2030-2035	North Oxford	OxIS Stage I Consultation Report (2021)

T56	Improvements to North Oxford Cycle Route, to address pinchpoints and provide surfacing improvements. The majority of this route is along the highway network, but some sections are on third party land, including active travel improvements linking with LCWIP route 5	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£3,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	North Oxford	LCWIP
T57	LCWIP Route 1: Canal Path, including the Canal Towpath Extension and Cycle bridge over the canal linking Nelson Street to the station.	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£2,500,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	Central and West Oxford	LCWIP
T58	LCWIP Route 2: Walton Street calming and filtering interventions, and Walton Street Shopping QPC	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£1,210,000	£150,000	Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	Central and West Oxford	LCWIP
T59	LCWIP Route 3: Wolvercote Roundabout Crossing	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£1,825,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2025	North Oxford	LCWIP
T60	LCWIP Route 6: Marston, including improvements to the lighting and upgrades to the bridge, as well as the Marston QPC	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£850,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2025	East Oxford	LCWIP
T61	LCWIP Route 7: Marston Road, including the crossing from Copse Lane to Marston Road	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£200,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2025	East Oxford	LCWIP
T62	LCWIP Route 8: Northway & Barton, including the widening of the subway to Barton and a new link path	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Important**	£1,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2025	East Oxford	LCWIP
T63	LCWIP Route 9: Headington Path, improvements to the street lighting and paths	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Important**	£600,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2025	East Oxford	LCWIP
T64	LCWIP Route 11: Quarry and Risinghurst Route Improvements	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£200,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2025	East Oxford	LCWIP

T65	LCWIP Route 12: Old Road, including the extension of the A2H scheme at Old Road, and improvements to Wheatley - Oxford via Shotover, and Morrell Avenue, / Warneford LAne (St Clements - Old Road) and the Old Road QPC	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£7,035,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2030	East Oxford/ South Oxfordshire District Council	LCWIP
T66	LCWIP Route 13: Barracks Lane and Horspath including surface improvements, widening and removal of barriers at Barracks Lane, a cycle link at Pony Road, and average speed cameras, as well as the Horspath QPC	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£3,085,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2030	South Oxford	LCWIP
T67	LCWIP Route 15: BBL, including a link road from Maidstone Road to Barns Road and various improvements to Barns Road as well as BBL shopping street re-design and the Barns Road QPC	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£9,389,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2040	South Oxford	LCWIP
T68	LCWIP Route 16: Littlemore, including route improvements and a cycle zebra crossing at Long Lane and the Iffley Road QPC	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£1,525,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2040	South Oxford	LCWIP
T69	LCWIP Route 18: Rose Hill, including route imporvements and improvements to Cottesmore Bridge - Ringroad	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£2,200,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2030	South Oxford	LCWIP
T70	LCWIP Route 21: South Oxford Path, including surfacing improvements to the South Oxford cycle route	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£6,800,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2030	South Oxford	LCWIP
T71	LCWIP Route 22: South Hinksey Path. Full detail subject to final build-out of the OFAS	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2035	South Oxford	LCWIP
T73	LCWIP Route 24: West Oxford Path, including surfacing and widening	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£120,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	Central and West Oxford	LCWIP

	improvements at Oatlands Park									
T75	LCWIP Route C: Oxford Ring Road, including the widening and resurfacing of Oxford Ring Road, and traffic calming measures in Wolvercote Village, as well as the Upper and Lower Wolvercote QPC	**Transport**	Active Travel	**Essential**	£13,160,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	North Oxford	LCWIP
T76	LCWIP Route CC: City Centre Parking, through delivering the park that bike proposals	**Transport**	Transport	**Essential**	£75,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2020-2025	Central and West Oxford	LCWIP
T77	City Centre Cycle Hubs Parking	**Transport**	Transport	**Essential**	£2,000,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2030-2040	Central and West Oxford	LCWIP
T79	Improvements to various routes within West End as identified in WE Spatial Framework/ SPD - see table of interventions in SPD for more detail.	**Transport**	Active Travel/ Transport	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxfordshire City Council/ Oxfordshire County Council/ site landowners	2025-2040	Central and West Oxford	West End Spatial Framework/ SPD
T81	Oxford Station Masterplan: Oxford Station East Site + Becket St improvements, includes public realm and transport infrastructure.	**Transport**	Rail/ Active Travel/ Highways/ Bus	**Transformational**	£350,000,000		Network Rail/ Oxford City Council/ Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	Central and West Oxford	Local Plan 2040, West End SPD, Local Industrial Strategy, Economic Strategy, City Centre Action Plan, Transport strategies including Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), Central Oxfordshire Transport Plan, Oxfordshire Connect, ORCS
Education										
E1	0.5FE expansion to Wolvercote Primary School (1.5-2.0FE), to cater for growth in North Oxford	**Education**	Education	**Essential**	£2,916,904		Oxfordshire County Council/ Academy Trust	2025-2030	North Oxford	Stakeholder Engagement with Oxfordshire County Council

E2	0.5FE expansion to Barton Park Primary School (1.5-2.0FE), to cater for growth in East Oxford	**Education**	Education	**Essential**	£1,970,000		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2036	East Oxford	Stakeholder Engagement with Oxfordshire County Council
Healthcare										
H2	New health centre in the preferred option of Summertown (Diamond Place), consolidating Banbury Road and Summertown surgeries. Potential to also include consolidation of Wolvercote surgery - primarily serving existing demand	**Healthcare**	Primary Healthcare	**Essential**	Dependent on scope and scale		BOB ICB	2025-2035	North Oxford	Stakeholder engagement with BOB ICB
Green Infrastructure										
G1	Oxford CIty Biodiversity Enhancements Programme	**Green Infrastructure**	Green Spaces	**Essential**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxford City Council	2025-2040	City-wide	Oxford City Council identified scheme
G2	Public realm schemes in Central and West Oxford	**Green Infrastructure**	Green Spaces	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxford City Council	2025-2030	Central and West Oxford	LCWIP and Oxford City Council identified scheme
G3	Improvements in accessibility and path network within Oxpens Meadow	**Green Infrastructure**	Green Spaces	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxford City Council	2025-2030	Central and West Oxford	Oxford City Council identified scheme
G4	Enhancements in the public realm, including greening, along Oxpens Road to be delivered in tandem with the phases of development that address Oxpens Road to ensure a high quality environment and setting	**Green Infrastructure**	Green Spaces	**Essential**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxford City Council	2025-2030	Central and West Oxford	Oxford City Council identified scheme
G6	Improvements and enhancements to Cuttleslowe Park through the Oxford North development. Potential to relocate football pitches and manage former area for biodiversity - depends on the outcome of the extension to Cutteslowe Park.	**Green Infrastructure**	Green Spaces	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxford City Council	2025-2030	North Oxford	Oxford City Council identified scheme

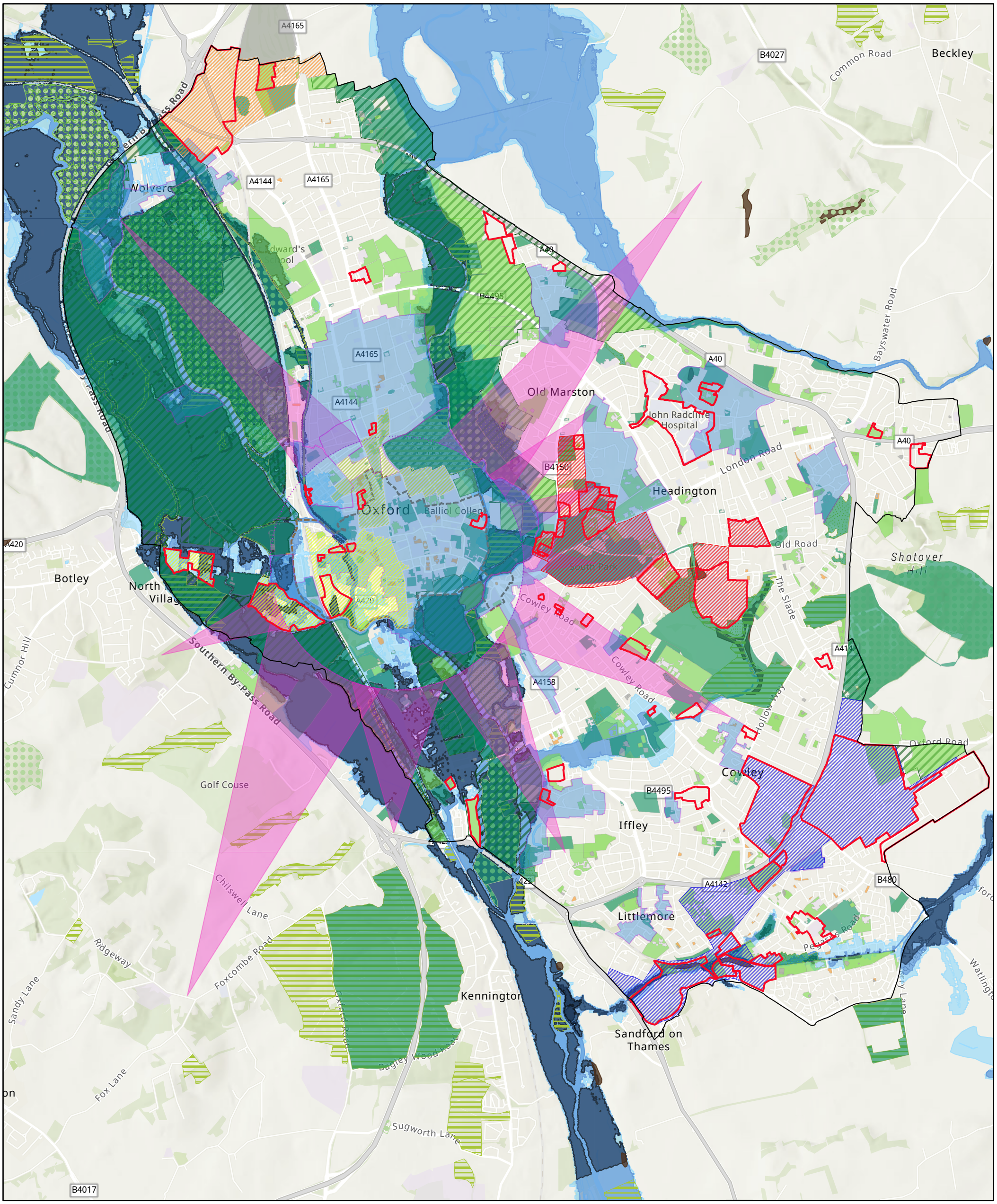
G7	Integrated GI network required for the north of the city (linked to Cherwell Sites)	**Green Infrastructure**	Green Spaces	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxford City Council	2025-2035	North Oxford Cherwell DC	Oxford City Council identified scheme
G8	New high-quality public open space to be provided on-site at Osney Mead, as identified in the Local Plan 2040 and the West End SPD	**Green Infrastructure**	Green Spaces	**Essential**	Dependent on scope and scale		Delivered through development at Osney Mead	2025-2040	Central and West Oxford	Local Plan 2040 Policy SPCW7 Osney Mead, and Policy WEAOF West End and Botley Road Area of Focus, West End SPD
G9	Provision of a new allotment site at Denny Gardens to address existing under-provision within the city, as identified by the Oxford & District Federation of Allotment Associations	**Green Infrastructure**	Allotments	**Essential**	£24,500		Oxford City Council	2020-2025	South Oxford	Oxford City Council / Oxford & District Federation of Allotment Associations
Community Facilities										
CF1	Provision of BBL Community Hub as part of wider regeneration efforts within the estate.	**Community Faciliites**	Community Centres	**Important**	£550,000		Oxford City Council	2025-2030	South Oxford	Stakeholder engagement with Oxford City Council/ Oxford CIty Community Centres Strategy
CF2	Investment into North Oxford Community Centre, to create hub with Ferry Leisure Centre	**Community Faciliites**	Leisure Centres	**Important**	£800,000		Oxford City Council	2025-2030	North Oxford	Stakeholder Engagement with Oxford City Council
CF3	Refurbishment and extension of existing Ferry Leisure Centre	**Community Faciliites**	Leisure Centres	**Essential**	£14,000,000		Oxford City Council	2025-2030	North Oxford	Stakeholder Engagement with Oxford City Council
CF4	Improvements to and extension of BBL Library to accommodate demand arising from growth in South Oxford Area and SODC - potentially to be amalgamated with BBL community centre project	**Community Faciliites**	Libraries	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	South Oxford	Stakeholder engagement with Oxfordshire County Council
CF6	Improvements to Headington and Barton to accommodate demand arising from growth in East Oxford	**Community Faciliites**	Libraries	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxfordshire County Council	2025-2030	East Oxford	Stakeholder engagement with Oxfordshire County Council

CF8	Improvements to Oxford Ice Rink, which through an options assessment will either be delivered through enhancement works or a full-scale redevelopment	**Community Faciliites**	Leisure Centres	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxford City Council	2025-2035	Central and West Oxford	Oxford City Council identified scheme
CF9	Provision of a community centre for Barton Park, alongside a new local centre	**Community Faciliites**	Community Centres	**Essential**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxford City Council/ Barton Park developers	2020-2030	East Oxford	Oxford City Council identified scheme
CF10	Capacity increases at existing cemeteries within Oxford, including Shotover Cemetery (cross-boundary with South Oxfordshire District Council)	**Community Faciliites**	Cemeteries	**Essential**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxford City Council	2025-2030	City-wide	Oxford City Council identified scheme
Public Realm										
PR1	Public Realm improvements around Botley Retail Park	Public Realm	Public Realm	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Various	2030-2040	Central and West Oxford	Oxford Local Plan Policy SPCW8 Botley Retail Park, Policy WEAOF West End and Botley Road Area of Focus
PR2	Exceptional public spaces interventions within West End as set out in WE Spatial Framework/ SPD.	Public Realm	Public Realm	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Various	2025-2040	Central and West Oxford	West End Spatial Framework/ SPD
Utilities										
U1	Reinforcements to Yarnton Bulk Supply Point to support identified development quantums within the Oxford North development	**Utilities**	Electricity Supply	**Critical**	Estimated between £1-5m		SSE	2025-2035	Cherwell DC	Stakeholder engagement with SSE
U2	Uprating of a section of the 132kV cable at Osney Lane Bulk Supply Point (BSP) to accommodate demand from development within the city	**Utilities**	Electricity Supply	**Critical**	Dependent on scope and scale		SSE	2020-2030	Central and West Oxford	OxIS (2017)
U3	Delivery of a substation required to support the Diamond Place regeneration scheme	**Utilities**	Electricity Supply	**Critical**	Dependent on scope and scale		SSE	2025-2035	North Oxford	Oxford City Council identified scheme
U4	Oxford Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) upgrade	**Utilities**	Sewerage	**Critical**	£132,000,000	fully funded	Thames Water	2025-2035	South Oxford	Stakeholder engagement with Thames Water

U5	Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme	**Utilities**	Flood Risk Defence	**Essential**	£150,000,000	fully funded	Environment Agency	2025-2035	City-wide	OxIS (2017)
U6	Countywide roll out of fibre broadband in commercial buildings, extended where appropriate to surrounding residential buildings.	**Utilities**	Digital Infrastructure	**Important**	Dependent on scope and scale		Oxfordshire County Council/ Openreach	2025-2035	City-wide	Stakeholder engagement with Oxfordshire County Council
U7	Undergrounding of Pylons at Osney Mead	**Utilities**	Electricity Supply	**Transformational**	Dependent on scope and scale		Various	2025-2040	Central and West Oxford	West End Spatial Framework/ SPD

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DRAFT Oxford Local Plan Policies Map - 2



21/09/2023

- Oxford City Boundary
- Site Allocations OLP2040

OLP 2040 Areas of Focus

- Cowley Branch Line and Littlemore Area of Focus
- Marston Road and Old Road Area of Focus
- North of the City Centre AOF
- Northern Edge of Oxford Area of Focus
- West End and Botley Area of Focus
- HD1 Conservation Areas
- HD5 City Centre Archaeological Area
- HD9 Historic Core Area
- HD9 View Cones

G1 Green Infrastructure

- Core
- Supporting
- N/A
- Other Spaces
- G6 Local Wildlife Sites
- Oxford Green Belt
- G6 Special Areas of Conservation
- G6 Oxford City Wildlife Sites
- G6 Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- R6 Peat Reserves
- Flood Zone 3b

1:55,238

0 0.4 0.8 1.6 mi

0 0.5 1 2 km

Esri, Intermap, NASA, NGA, USGS, Esri UK, Esri, HERE, Garmin, Foursquare, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS

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Appendix 2 : Risk Register for the Oxford Local Plan 2040

Title	Risk description	Opp/ threat	Cause	Consequence	Date Raised	Owner	Gross		Current		Residual		Comments	Controls				
							I	P	I	P	I	P		Control description	Due date	Status	Progress %	Action Owner
Project Delays: The Regulations 19 Proposed Submission Document does not recive approval from Council to proceed to consultation	The timetable for the Local Plan production is very tight- any delay may result in the council not having an upto date development plan	Threat	Delays could result from lack of agreement at Council	Lack of agreement would result in delay to consultation and submission of the Plan	28/08/23	Head of Planning Services	3	3	3	2	3	2	Reduce risk by ensuring portfolio holder and lead cabinet members making all parties aware of timetable and key dates well in advance and monitor progress, meeting with portfolio holders and	Reduce				Head of Planning Services
External delays: delays to process	There is potential for unanticipated delays in document production owing to evidence base gathering not being completed.	Threat	Delays may be a result of a number, or combination, of factors (for example, external agencies or consultants maybe unable to fit in with timescales, issues may be more complex to understand/resolve than anticipated, or there may be a lack of resources available to complete the programme).	Lack of agreement would result in delay to consultation and submission of the Plan	28/08/23	Head of Planning Services	3	3	3	2	1	1	Reduce risk by ensuring all parties are aware of the timetalbe and key dates for Plan's submission in advance and deal with issues in a timely manner.	Reduce				Head of Planning Services
Opposition and Plan being found unsound by the Inspector	If the Plan is found to be unsound it will need to be withdrawn and amended prior to resubmission. This would result in considerable delays to adoption and the council would have to determine applications in the absence of an up to date develpment plan resulting in reliance on the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development.	Threat	The legal process may not have been fully followed or the Plan failing against one of the tests of soundness.	Plan production would need to be restarte which would be costly and delay implementation of the Plan's strategy	28/08/23	Head of Planning Services	3	3	3	2	3	1	Follow procedures as with Plans found sound and seek legal adive through the Plan preparation process, look to apply best practice principles and advice on soundness issues and only submit when confident that all the proper plan preparation process has been followed and the correct evidence gathered to inform the plan strategy.	Reduce				Head of Planning Services

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Form to be used for the Full Equalities Impact Assessment

Service Area: **Planning Services**		**Section:** **Planning Policy**	**Date of Initial assessment:**	**Key Person responsible for assessment:** Joseph Sorrell	**Date assessment commenced:**	
Name of Policy to be assessed:			Oxford Local Plan 2040			
1. In what area are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact			***Race***	***Disability***	***Age***	
			Gender reassignment	***Religion or Belief***	***Sexual Orientation***	
			Sex	***Pregnancy and Maternity***	***Marriage & Civil Partnership***	
Other strategic/ equalities considerations			***Safeguarding/ Welfare of Children and vulnerable adults***	***Mental Wellbeing/ Community Resilience***		
2. Background: Give the background information to the policy and the perceived problems with the policy which are the reason for the Impact Assessment.			The Oxford Local Plan 2040 will be the fundamental development framework for the city of Oxford. The Local Plan will have a material effect on the amount and type of housing (including affordable housing); the number and type of jobs; the location and nature of future development; and the protection of open space; across the city, among other aspects. The scope of the Local Plan and the 20-year time span mean that this document will have a significant impact on the lives of those who live and work in or visit the city. Important			

	choices will be made between competing demands and limited resources will be allocated. The Local Plan will seek to address inequalities but the policies will need to be assessed for unintended consequences for equality issues. To allow for the best use of resources and ensure that Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) effectively influences policy development, it was proposed to take a two-phase approach to assessing the Local Plan. The first phase comprised the initial assessment of the policy areas within the Preferred Options Document. Views on this assessment were sought as part of the Regulation 18 Part 1 Consultation, which took place in October/November 2022. The second phase of the Assessment is to look at the policies as they are drafted in the Proposed Submission Document (draft Local Plan). Consultation on this phase of the EqIA will be combined with the next round of public engagement in November 2023. After this stage, changes to the policies should only be minor and not materially alter the policies. If significant changes are needed a further phase of the EqIA may be required.
3. Methodology and Sources of Data: The methods used to collect data and what sources of data used.	The policies of the draft Local Plan are based on an evidence base comprised of studies on topics such as housing and employment (e.g. the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment and Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment), transport (e.g. the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan and advice from the County Council as the Highway Authority), site analysis (e.g. the Green Infrastructure Assessment and the Green Belt Study update) and others including conversations with, and the strategic plans of, infrastructure and service providers. In addition, the most up-to-date available demographic information was taken from sources such as the Census data 2011 and 2021 releases, population estimates (Office for National Statistics), 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (DCLG), Experian data, Oxford City Council Housing Information System Database and other national, regional, and local sources of data. The process for producing a Local Plan places great weight on the quality of the evidence supporting policy decisions. The evidence base will be tested through public examination by

	a Planning Inspector before the Local Plan can be adopted.
4. Consultation This section should outline all the consultation that has taken place on the EIA. It should include the following: • Why you carried out the consultation. • Details about how you went about it. • A summary of the replies you received from people you consulted. • An assessment of your proposed policy (or policy options) in the light of the responses you received. • A statement of what you plan to do next.	Oxford City Council intends that all sectors of the community have the opportunity to have their say in how their community is planned and developed, irrespective of race; disability; age; religion or belief; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; sex and sexual orientation. Efforts have been made to ensure that the consultation process should be an inclusive one that involves a wide range of community groups. The Local Plan preparation process has consisted of two consultation exercises thus far. First, a non-statutory early consultation exercise (the Issues consultation) took place during the summer of 2021. This process was carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning that was approved by Cabinet in June 2021. As Covid-19 restrictions were still in place at this time, opportunities to hold events in public were limited, which meant that methods of communication such as social media were particularly important. A leaflet was delivered door-to-door to residents with an attached questionnaire that could be returned using Freepost, though responses could also be submitted via email or an online version of the questionnaire. The consultation was open to anyone to make comments; at the close of the consultation, 1,143 responses had been received. The outcomes from this Issues consultation (as summarised in the Consultation Statement) helped the City Council to prepare the Preferred Options Document. Upon publication of the Preferred Options document, a second consultation exercise was undertaken in the autumn of 2022. This consultation exercise involved a similar practice of outreach and engagement to that of the Issues consultation, with a short leaflet questionnaire delivered door-to-door across the city (approximately 46,000 properties). An online version of this short questionnaire was also made available for those who preferred to use this method. Due to some delays in receiving completed questionnaires caused by postal distribution problems, the deadline for responses was extended until the first week of January 2023. A variety of methods of public engagement were undertaken and aimed to reach residents, workers, employers, students and visitors to Oxford, as well as stakeholders and service providers. This included publicising information through various traditional and social media channels and meeting with the local communities at a number of ‘drop-in’

	sessions at various locations across the city, attended by members of the Planning Policy team. At that stage in the Local Plan project the material that was published was focused on introducing the project (the scope and timetable) and on providing background information and asking questions on the policy proposals developed following the previous consultation. In order to make this information accessible and to engage with a wide range of parties/people and levels of interest, a range of materials were produced with different audiences in mind, including leaflets, booklets, topic papers, reports and evidence base documents. At the close of comments, 1,427 responses had been received to this questionnaire. In addition to the short questionnaire, stakeholders and members of the public were also invited to complete a more in-depth structured online questionnaire if they preferred. Organisations that represent equalities groups were contacted and invited to comment at both consultation stages, along with residents' organisations and statutory consultees. Both consultation stages highlighted matters that are important for the future development of Oxford. These included concerns about high housing costs, the need to build well-designed homes that enable us to achieve net zero, ensuring our city and district centres remain vibrant and ensuring that people have access to employment opportunities, public open space and community, cultural and social facilities. The consultations also brought into focus the importance of ensuring Oxford's resilience to threats such as climate change, through the maintenance of biodiversity and green space. The draft Local Plan aims to address these issues through its vision and policies which seek to make Oxford a healthier, more inclusive, and more resilient place for those living and working here. A further technical consultation focusing on the issue of Local Plan housing need was organised in the spring of 2023. This was considered a necessary approach in the light of the decision taken not to progress with the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Those who responded to the first Preferred Options consultation (and consented to be contacted with further updates) were notified, while the consultation was also advertised through social media channels. **A report summarising the responses to this consultation is currently being prepared.**

	The proposed policies will be consulted upon as part of a final consultation exercise commencing in November 2023. This EqIA will be subject to that consultation exercise as well, in addition to being submitted as part of the Oxford Local Plan 2040 for further review by a Planning Inspector.

5. Assessment of Impact: Provide details of the assessment of the policy on the six primary equality strands. There may have been other groups or individuals that you considered. Please also consider whether the policy, strategy or spending decisions could have an impact on safeguarding and / or the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.	

Race	**Disability**	**Age**
Neutral	Positive	Positive
Gender reassignment	**Religion or Belief**	**Sexual Orientation**
Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Sex	**Pregnancy and Maternity**	**Marriage & Civil Partnership**
Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Race: No equalities impact identified.

Disability: The thrust and ambition of the draft Local Plan strives to focus development in locations which are accessible by public transport & non-car modes to make the city more accessible to people of all abilities. This ambition forms one of the overarching threads within the document, which seeks to foster a liveable city in which residents have access to the basis of their daily needs within an easy walking distance of their homes. In doing so, the document works to protect provision of to community and recreational facilities.

In the preparation of the draft Local Plan, the Council has considered the need for accessible and adaptable dwellings, and the need to ensure that services and facilities are accessible to all. Chapter 6 on design includes Policy HD14 - Accessible and Adaptable Homes - which adopts optional Building Regulations requirement M4(2) to provide enhanced accessibility and adaptability for all new affordable dwellings and for a minimum of 15% of new general market dwellings. This policy also adopts Building Regulations requirement M4(3) for dwellings for wheelchair users, for a minimum of 5% of all dwellings for which the City Council is responsible for allocations or nominations on sites of more than 20 dwellings. It is considered that this policy will result in some positive effects for housing quality for people

	with disabilities. Furthermore, the policies contained in Chapter 7 focus on movement and work to support a range of sustainable transport modes, which will provide residents and users of Oxford with a greater range of movement options and make the city more accessible to people of all abilities. Overall, the effect of the draft Local Plan on the disability equality strand is considered to be positive. **Age:** Several of the policies throughout Chapter 2 (which specifically deals with housing) of the draft Local Plan explicitly address the diverse needs of the different age groups in Oxford. In the preparation of the draft Local Plan, the Council has considered the housing requirements of many different age groups (students, young people, families, adults, elderly people, etc.). Chapter 2 includes specific policies relating to student accommodation (H9 and H10), boarding school accommodation (H16), shared housing/Houses in Multiple Occupation (H8), family-sized housing (H6) and older persons and other specialist accommodation (H13), as they relate specifically to different age groups. These policies are considered to have positive impacts upon the cohorts for which they are relevant, without costing others or negatively affecting other demographic groups, as they all strive to contribute towards establishing a mixed and balanced community which facilitates a healthy environment for the success of all people at all stages of their lives. Whilst policies H6, H8 and H9 include restrictions upon the free-market proliferation of specific housing types, it is not considered that these restrictions negatively impact the relevant target groups (particularly young adults/students through policies H8 and H9), as the aim and function of the restrictions is to ensure mixed and balanced communities in which all cohorts of age groups benefit from a healthier social mix. The potential self-segregation/selection of communities by age group through the unfettered forces of market demand is considered to be more likely to have a negative effect on specific age groups than ensuring their healthy mix throughout the city as a whole. Chapter 7 focuses on movement and specifically works to facilitate sustainable transport modes as alternatives to private car use; which will make the city more accessible to people of all ages.

	Further policies in Chapter 7 of the draft Local Plan relating to communities, facilities, and the vibrancy of Oxford's city and district centres, are specifically targeted at protecting, retaining, and encouraging facilities needed for the general health and wellbeing of all age demographics (policies C2, C3, C4 and C5). Overall, the effect of the draft Local Plan on the age equality strand is considered to be positive. **Gender reassignment:** No equalities impact identified. **Religion or Belief:** It is considered that the draft Local Plan will have a neutral effect on people due to their religious beliefs. The main issue is considered to be the likely implications of the draft Local Plan for the completion and provision of religious buildings in Oxford, as well as the protection of existing community facilities that may be used as places of worship. Chapter 7 in the draft Local Plan chapter relates to communities, facilities, and the vibrancy of Oxford. The chapter includes Policy C4, which specifically refers to non-residential institutions, including places of worship. The policy sets out to protect and retain non-residential institutions, including places of worship, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that they are no longer required to meet the community's needs. In addition, this policy supports the expansion and improvement of such facilities. The Local Plan more broadly supports social infrastructure to meet the needs of the population, including that for religious and other broader community activities. Beyond that, the draft Local Plan does not provide any greater benefit for any specific religion or for any beliefs system compared to none, so in this sense it is considered to be neutral. **Sexual orientation:** No equalities impacts identified.

	Sex: No equalities impacts identified. **Pregnancy and Maternity:** No equalities impacts identified. **Marriage & Civil Partnership:** No equalities impacts identified.
6. Consideration of Measures:	The draft Local Plan has been informed by the separate Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal considers the social, economic, and environmental effects

This section should explain in detail all the consideration of alternative approaches/mitigation of adverse impact of the policy.	of the Local Plan, and ensures that, as far as possible, it accords with the principles of 'sustainable development'. A number of the sustainability objectives relate to relevant social issues, such as meeting local housing needs by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, affordable home; improving health and well-being and reducing inequalities in health; reducing poverty and social exclusion; reducing disparities in education, developing opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work; reducing crime and the fear of crime; and creating and sustaining vibrant communities. The final policies included in the Proposed Submission Local Plan are present after having due regard, as required by section 149 of the 2010 Equality Act, to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic[1] and persons who do not share it.
6a. Monitoring Arrangements: Outline systems which will be put in place to monitor for adverse impact in the future and this should include all relevant timetables. In addition, it could include a summary and assessment of your monitoring, making clear whether you found any evidence of discrimination.	A general monitoring framework to check the implementation of the Local Plan is set out in the Proposed Submission Document. The Council will monitor the implementation and impact of the Local Plan through the Annual Monitoring Report. In addition, on-going community engagement through the implementation of the Local Plan (e.g. through developer engagement at pre-application/application stages) will help to provide a greater understanding of the potential impacts on equalities groups, to inform the final design options and details.
7. Date reported and signed off by City Executive Board:	
8. Conclusions: What are your conclusions drawn	The Local Plan will seek to deliver specific types of development and at specific locations. As such, there is the potential for the policies to have differential impacts on different equalities groups. Development at any site could have equality implications both for new residents and

[1] The relevant protected characteristics are race; age; disability; religion or belief; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; sex; sexual orientation

from the results in terms of the policy impact.		users/workers within the site, and for communities in adjacent areas. The extent to which control over these potentially different impacts can be exercised varies. Overall, draft Local Plan policies have been designed to attempt to improve the relevant equality strands where possible, and to otherwise have a neutral impact. More specifically, it is not anticipated that there will be a direct impact on equality issues related to gender reassignment, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, or religion and beliefs as a result of the policies and development proposed in the Local Plan; whilst it is considered that the policies and resulting development patterns of the Local Plan are likely to have some positive effect on the age and disability equality strands.				
9. Are there implications for the Service Plans?	YES/NO	**10. Date the Service Plans will be updated**		**11. Date copy sent to Equalities Lead Officer**	
.**13. Date reported to Scrutiny and Executive Board:**		**14. Date reported to City Executive Board:**		**12. The date the report on EqIA will be published**	

Signed (completing officer) Signed (Lead Officer)

Please list the team members and service areas that were involved in this process:

Assistant Planner
Planning Policy
Joseph Sorrell

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To:	**Cabinet**
Date:	**18th October 2023**
Report of:	**Head of Planning Services**
Title of Report:	**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – CIL Charging Schedule Partial Review for Consultation**

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To seek approval for the Draft CIL Charging Schedule to be published for public consultation
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Louise Upton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Healthier Communities
Corporate Priority:	A Vibrant and Sustainable Economy; Meeting Housing Needs; Strong and Active Communities; A Clean and Green Oxford.
Policy Framework:	The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge on new developments which helps to fund infrastructure, as is set out in CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).[1] A revised CIL charging schedule has been drafted to support the policy requirements of the Local Plan 2040.

Recommendations: That Cabinet resolves to:

1 **Approve** the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule to be published for public consultation (Appendix 1)

2 **Authorise** the Head of Planning after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Healthier Communities, to make any minor typographical changes to the Draft Charging Schedule before publication

3 **Authorise** the Head of Planning to formally publish the Draft Charging Schedule and associated evidence base for public consultation

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Draft Charging Schedule for Partial Review
Appendix 2	Statement of Representations Procedure
Appendix 3	Risk Assessment

[1] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2010/9780111492390/contents

Introduction

1. The CIL Charging Schedule sets out a tariff in the form of a standard charge on new development to help the funding of infrastructure in Oxford. The City Council has been charging CIL on qualifying developments since 2013. The rates charged have risen with inflation but have not been reviewed since the first Charging Schedule was published.
2. The purpose of this report is to request approval for the publication of a partial review of the CIL Charging Schedule to go to public consultation alongside the Local Plan 2040.
3. CIL regulation 16 sets out that for a CIL charging schedule to go to examination, the Council must provide a Draft Charging Schedule (Appendix 1) and publish the appropriate evidence regarding infrastructure costs, funding sources and viability for public consultation.
4. New viability evidence has been produced to support a review of the Charging Schedule and provide evidence for the Local Plan 2040. In line with this evidence, partial amendments to the existing CIL Charging Schedule are proposed to be published for consultation.
5. Following analysis and consideration of the responses to the consultation, a Draft Charging Schedule will be submitted for full examination alongside the Local Plan 2040.

Changes proposed in the Partial CIL Review

6. The main conclusions from the viability report regarding CIL rates are that to accommodate the policies of the local plan, most use classes would not be able to absorb an additional increase in the CIL rate beyond annual indexation.
7. Hence, most rates in the proposed charging schedule remain fixed and are to be indexed as usual on an annual basis, to account for inflation since the original CIL charging schedule was adopted in October 2013.
8. The use classes E(g) business and B2/B8 industrial, however, can demonstrate viability at higher rates of CIL and the recommendation of the report is that rates can be increased for these uses to the same rates as C3 residential.
9. The rates for these use classes were previously set at a much lower rate than most residential and employment uses in the original Charging Schedule and have remained this way for the past decade. However, over time the capital values of business and industrial developments have significantly appreciated, and higher rates of CIL can now be accommodated.

10. The amended CIL rates will be as follows (full schedule in Appendix 1):

Development Type*	Jan 2023 Rates per m^2	Proposed rates per m^2 following Partial Review

E Business (Office, R&D, Light Industrial)	**£31.59**	**£158.00**
B2 General industrial	**£31.59**	**£158.00**
B8 Storage or distribution	**£31.59**	**£158.00**

Consultation

11. If Cabinet approves the proposed changes for a partial review of the CIL Charging Schedule, the Council will take the charging schedule to consultation from Friday the 10th of November 2023 to Wednesday the 3rd of January 2024.
12. A statement of representations procedure (Appendix 2) has also been drafted, which informs consultees how they can respond to the proposed changes in the Draft Charging Schedule.
13. Full copies of the economic viability evidence will be published alongside the charging schedule for consultation.

Steps following consultation:

14. Following consultation, all feedback will be gathered, and any main issues would be summarised in a summary of representations report.
15. If any modifications are to be made to the Draft Charging Schedule following the consultation, a statement of modifications will be written to state any changes made.
16. The summary of representations and statement of modifications would be brought to Cabinet to approve the charging schedule to be submitted for examination.
17. The Draft Charging Schedule would then be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination alongside the supporting evidence base documents and the summary of representations and modifications (Regulation 19).[2] These documents would be made available on the Council website and made accessible to the public. Any persons who requested during the consultation process that they be informed of the submission will be notified.

Financial implications

18. The City's Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) report demonstrates an estimated infrastructure funding gap of £892m and maintains that the use of CIL will help to fund infrastructure and support development in the area.[3]
19. The rate at which the CIL tariff is set will determine the amount of income received by the Council from new development to be spent on infrastructure projects. The Council works in partnership with the County Council and other infrastructure providers to help fund and prioritise infrastructure projects within the IDP.

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[2] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/948/regulation/19/made
[3] https://www.oxford.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8129/oxford_idp_report_-_final_feb_2022.pdf

20. Over current and previous years, the Council has been receiving relatively low amounts of B2/B8 applications but is seeing an increase in E(g) class applications, particularly for R&D use. We anticipate that increasing the rates for these development uses will help to ensure that more funding can be generated for infrastructure, without affecting the viability of development.

21. If and where issues of viability or economic impact may arise, the exceptional circumstances relief policy introduced in 2019 can be considered to mitigate risk of delivery of sites on a case-by-case basis.[4]

Legal issues

22. The Council is required to comply with the consultation and publicity requirements set out in the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended) to amend the Charging Schedule and this report sets out the steps to be taken to meet those requirements. There are no other legal implications that arise from this report.

Equalities impact

23. There are no equalities impacts arising from this report.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

24. There are no direct carbon or environmental considerations arising from this report, although increasing CIL rates for industrial and office/R&D developments could help to better generate funds to be spent on infrastructure which mitigates the environmental impacts of development in the city.

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[4] https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/6330/discretionary_exceptional_circumstances_relief_policy

Appendix 1 – Draft Charging Schedule for Partial Review, November 2023

Amendments proposed highlighted

Development Type*	Jan 2023	Proposed rates following Partial Review
E Shops	£158.00	£158.00
E Financial and professional services	£158.00	£158.00
E Restaurants and cafés	£158.00	£158.00
Sui Generis Drinking establishments	£158.00	£158.00
Sui Generis Hot food takeaways	£158.00	£158.00
E Business (Office, R&D, Light Industrial)	**£31.59**	**£158.00**
B2 General industrial	**£31.59**	**£158.00**
B8 Storage or distribution	**£31.59**	**£158.00**
C1 Hotels	£31.59	£31.59
C2 and C2A Residential institutions and secure residential institutions	£31.59	£31.59
C3 Dwelling houses**	£158.00	£158.00
C4 Houses in multiple occupation (HMO)	£158.00	£158.00
Student accommodation	£158.00	£158.00
F1 Non-residential institutions	£31.59	£31.59
Sui Generis Assembly and leisure	£31.59	£31.59
All development types unless stated otherwise in this table	£31.59	£31.59

*Changes to the Use Class Order came into effect 1 September 2020

**C3 includes self-contained sheltered accommodation and self-contained graduate accommodation

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Appendix 2 – Statement of Representations Procedure

Community Infrastructure Levy
Draft Charging Schedule
Statement of Representations Procedure

Oxford City Council intends to submit a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule for examination, under Section 212 of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011).

In accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended), Oxford City Council has published the following documents for consultation:

- The CIL Draft Charging Schedule
- Evidence to support the CIL Draft Charging Schedule
- This Statement of Representations Procedure

The consultation period runs from: Friday the 10th of November 2023 to Wednesday the 3rd of January 2024.

All comments must be received by 4.00 pm on the 3rd of January 2024.

Comments can be submitted electronically at: www.oxford.gov.uk/consultation. Alternatively, copies of comments forms can be obtained at the Town Hall or by emailing the Council at the address below, and can be filled out and sent by post to:

CIL Team	Email: cilteam@oxford.gov.uk
Planning Policy,	Telephone: 01865 252509
Oxford City Council,	
Town Hall, St. Aldates	
Oxford, OX1 1BX	

The documents are available to view on the City Council's website: www.oxford.gov.uk/CIL and are also available for inspection, free of charge, during the consultation period at:

Oxford City Council Offices, Town Hall, St. Aldates, Oxford, OX1 1BX

(Mon-Thur 9.00am-5.00pm, Fri 9.00am-4.30pm)

Oxford Central Library: Information services 2nd Floor of the Central Library in the Westgate Centre

(*Mon-Thur 9am-8pm, Fri 9am-5.30pm, Sat 9am-5.30pm)*

Headington Library: Bury Knowle Park, North Place, Headington, Oxford

(*Mon 9.15am- 1pm, Tue 9.15am-7pm, Wed 9.15am-1pm, Thur 9.15am-7pm, Fri 9.15am-5pm, Sat 9am-4.30pm)*

Old Marston Library: Mortimer Hall, Oxford Road, Old Marston, Oxford

(*Tue 2pm-5pm, 5.30pm-7pm, Thur 2pm-5pm, 5.30pm-7pm, Fri 10am-12pm, 2pm-5pm, Sat 9.30am-12.30pm)*

Blackbird Leys Library: Blackbird Leys Road, Blackbird Leys, Oxford

(*Mon 9am-12pm & 1.30pm-5pm, Tue 9am-12pm, Wed 9am-12pm, & 1.30pm-5pm, Thur 9am-12pm & 1.30pm-5pm, Sat 9.30am-12.30pm)*

Littlemore Library: Oxford Academy Campus, Sandy Lane West, Littlemore, Oxford

(Mon 2pm-6pm, Tue 2pm-4.30pm, Thur 9.30am-12.30pm & 2pm-4.30pm, Fri 9.30am-12.30pm, Sat 9.30am-1.00pm)

Summertown Library: South Parade, Oxford

(*Mon 9.30am-5.00pm, Tue 9.30am-6.30pm, Thur 9.30am-6.30pm, Fri 9.30am-5.00pm, Sat 9am-4.00pm)*

Cowley Library: Temple Road, Oxford

(*Mon 9.15am-5.30pm, Tue 9.15am-7pm, Wed 9.15am-7pm, Fri 9.15am-5.30pm, Sat 9am-4.30pm)*

Organisations and individuals making representations may request the right to be heard at the examination. Such a request must be made in writing and received within the specified period for making representations.

If you would like to be notified of the submission of the CIL Draft Charging Schedule, receipt of the examiner's report or the approval of the Charging Schedule please indicate this on your comment form.

Risk Register

Community Infrastructure Levy Partial Review Consultation

As at: 18/10/2023

									Gross		Current			Target							
Ref	Title	Risk Description	Opp / Threat	Cause	Consequence	Risk Treatment	Date Raised	Owner	P	I	P	I	Score	P	I	Comments	Control / Mitigation Description	Date Due	Action Status	% Progress	Action Owner
	Modifications to DCS following consultation	Representations raised could result in changes to the draft charging schedule	Threat	Representations seeking modifications to charging schedule	Could have an impact on funds received from the levy and infrastructure that can be delivered. Could result in further comments to be raised at examination stage, delaying adoption of charging schedule.	Reduce	18/10/23	LN	3	2	3	2	6	2	1		1) To have prepared and cross-checked evidence base thoroughly before consultation. 2) To communicate with stakeholders and interested parties where appropriate beforehand. 3) To consider and respond to comments and changes following consultation to minimise potential loss of income, consider viability of development and minimise additional risks to adoption at examination stage	03/01/24	In Progress	60%	LN
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THE RISK REGISTER IS FORMATTED AS A TABLE. PRESS TAB ON THE LAST TABLE CELL TO INSERT A NEW ROW.

Risk Identification

Risks should be identified that may affect the Council's ability to achieve its business objectives, execute its strategies successfully or limit its ability to exploit opportunities.

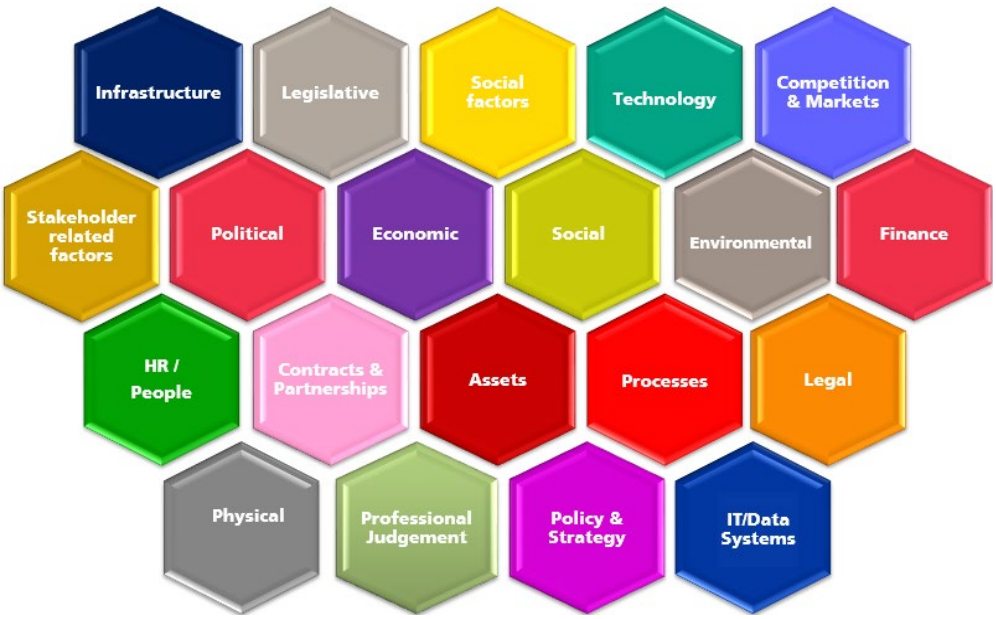
Risks can be identified through a number of methods, including:
• A 'brainstorming' session or workshop with the whole management team and relevant stakeholders
• Interviews or questionnaires with key stakeholders
• Meetings with smaller groups of people

There are a wide range of methods available that can be used to identify and understand risks. The method that you select will depend upon the type of risk(s) that you are dealing with but typically a management team workshop is the method most commonly used.

Additionally, existing sources of information could help inform this stage. Some examples are listed below:
• Service / corporate plans, strategies and objectives
• Existing risk registers
• Risks or issues raised by internal audit or other scrutiny body
• Risks identified through budget setting processes
• Health & safety risk assessments
• Business continuity risk assessments
• Partnership, programme or project documentation (e.g. business case or project risk register)
• Experience of those participating in the risk identification process

It is the responsibility of those identifying risks to decide which sources of information they should consult. This may be one or more of the sources listed above or it could be something else you think is appropriate.

As well as direct risks to the achievement of our objectives it is important to think broadly about uncertainties that may have an impact on the organisation. The diagram shown below illustrates a variety of different risk themes, expanding on PESTLE prompts, which the organisation could face. Think also in terms of these themes when identifying risks.



Once identified, the risks need to be described in sufficient detail and recorded in a consistent format to support effective decision making on the way that the risk is managed. It is crucial for risks to be defined properly at this stage. Failure to do so can result in confusion about the exact nature of the risk, ineffective risk controls being implemented, or the risk analysis being over or underestimated.

The description of the risk should include the following elements:
• Risk Title – a short and concise header for the risk
• Description – expanding on the risk title outlining the situation or event that exposes us to a risk.
• Risk Cause – also known as the trigger event. Situations or factors which result in the risk becoming a reality.
• Risk Effect – the likely consequences if the risk materialises (The negative impact - consider worst likely scenario)

When describing a risk try not to describe the impact of the risk as the risk itself or define risks with statements which are the converse of objectives. Focus upon the uncertain event that would result in those impacts.

Types of Risk to consider	
Strategic / Commercial	
1	Under performance to specification
2	Management will under perform against expectations
3	Collapse of contractors
4	Insolvency of promoter
5	Failure of suppliers to meet contractual commitments (quality, cost, time)
6	Insufficient capital
7	Market fluctuations
8	Trade/Banking crises
9	Fraud/theft
10	Partnership failing to deliver desired outcomes
11	Situation is not insurable (cost of insurance outweighs the benefit)
Economic / Financial / Market	
1	Exchange rate fluctuation
2	Interest rate instability
3	Inflation
4	Shortage of working capital
5	Failure to meet projected revenue targets
6	Market developments will adversely affect plans
Legal and Regulatory	
1	New or changed legislation may invalidate assumptions upon which the activity is based
2	Failure to obtain appropriate approval e.g. planning consent
3	Unforseen inclusion of contingent liabilities
4	Loss of intellectual property rights
5	Failure to achieve satisfactory contractual arrangements
6	Unexpected regulatory controls or licencing requirements
7	Changes in tax or tariff structure
Organisational / Management / Human factors	
1	Management incompetence
2	Inadequate corporate policies
3	Inadequate adoption of management practices
4	Poor leadership
5	Key personnel have inadequate authority to fulfil their roles
6	Poor staff selection procedures
7	Lack of clarity over roles and responsibilities
8	Vested interests creating conflict and compromising overall aims
9	Individual or group interests given unwarrented priority
10	Personality clashes
11	Indecision or inappropriate decision making
12	Lack of operational support
13	Inadequate or inaccurate information
14	Health and Safety constraints
Political	
1	Change of government policy
2	Change of government
3	War and disorder
4	Adverse public opinion/media intervention
Environmental	
1	Natural disasters
2	Storms, flooding, tempests
3	Pollution incidents

4	Transport problems (including aircraft/vehicle collisions)
Technical / Operational / Infrastructure	
1	Inadequate design
2	Professional negligence
3	Human error/incompetence
4	Infrastructure failure
5	Operation lifetime lower than expected
6	Increased dismantling/decommisioning costs
7	Safety being compromised
8	Performance failure
9	Residual maintenance problems
10	Scope creep
11	Unclear expectations
12	Breaches in security/information security
13	Lack or inadequacy of business continuity

Risk Evaluation and Prioritisation

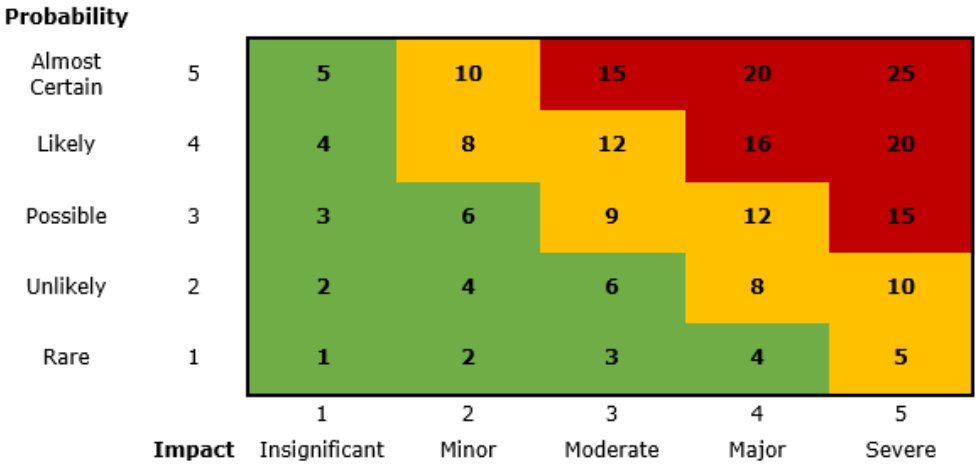
Once risks have been identified the risk matrix is the main tool for prioritising risks so we can establish which risks are most significant and therefore are in need of greater attention and resources. It also allows us to compare different types of risk with each other across the council.

Each risk should be analysed using a five by five matrix for (1) the likelihood it will happen and (2) the impact if it did occur. This assessment should be made on three different basis:
• Gross risk – risk level if existing key controls and mitigations were not in place or not effective.
• Current risk – risk level after existing controls and mitigations are taken into consideration.
• Target risk – anticipated risk level following the introduction of planned controls and mitigations.

Assessing the gross risk allows consideration of the dependency the organisation has upon the existing key controls and informs decisions around risk treatment, and selection of an appropriate target risk level, considered in the next section of this toolkit. It is often helpful to consider the Current Risk first, and then ask yourself what the impact and likelihood of the risk might be if the key controls were not in place.

It is the risk owner's responsibility to ensure the controls they believe are reducing the risk are effective and are working in practice. Controls that are not yet in place should not be considered within the current risk.

Each identified risk should then be plotted onto the risk matrix.



When considering the likelihood of a risk happening you should select the number from 1 to 5 from the risk matrix that you think it will be over the next 12 months (it can be longer or shorter; some risks in the Strategic Risk Register are better considered over 3 to 5 years, some operational risks will be considered over 3 to 6 months). This score will require an element of judgement when considering how likely an event is to occur and you should consider the following:
• Has this event happened before in the Council? (How frequently?) Has this event happened elsewhere? (How frequently?)
• How likely is it that one or more of the causes/ triggers of the event will occur?
• Has anything happened recently that makes the event more or less likely to occur?

The following tables provide some support in quantifying the risk in terms of likelihood and impact.

Risk Probability Assessment Criteria

Scale	Description	Likelihood of Occurrence	Probability of Occurrence
1	Rare	1 in 10 years	The event may occur in certain circumstances
2	Unlikely	1 in 3 years	The event could occur
3	Possible	1 in 2 years	The event should occur
4	Likely	Annually	The event will probably occur
5	Almost certain	Monthly	The event is expected to occur or occurs regularly

When you select the impact you should give consideration to the factors outlined in the risk matrix. For example, if the risk you are scoring has a low financial impact but a high impact on our reputation then you would select the most appropriate number between 1 and 5 that relates to the level of reputational impact. Once again, this score will have an element of judgement.

Risk Impact Assessment Criteria

	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
Financial	<£50k per annum	£50k - £250k per annum	£250k - £500k per annum	£500k - £750k per annum	>£750K per annum
Service Delivery	No impact to service quality, limited disruption to operations	Minor impact to service quality, minor service standards are not met, short term disruption to operations, minor impact on a partnerships	Significant fall in service quality, major partnership relationships strained, serious disruption in service standards	Major impact to service quality, multiple service standards are not met, long term disruption to operations, multiple partnerships affected	Catastrophic fall in service quality and key service standards are not met, long term catastrophic interruption to operations, several major partnerships are affected
Reputation	Public concern restricted to local complaints which do not attract local media attention.	Minor adverse local / public / media attention and complaints	Adverse national media public attention	Serious negative national or regional criticism	Prolonged, regional & national condemnation
Compliance & Regulation	Minor breach of internal regulations, not reportable	Minor breach of external regulations, not reportable	Breach of internal regulations leading to disciplinary action Breach of external regulations, reportable	Significant breach of external regulations leading to intervention or sanctions	Major breach leading to suspension or discontinuation of business and services
Strategic	Little impact on the organisational strategy	May have an impact on achieving organisational strategy	Would impact on the organisational objectives	Would require a significant shift from current strategy and objectives	Would require a fundamental change in strategy and objectives

Risk Treatment

Once risks have been identified and scored based on current controls the next step is to decide what action needs to be taken to manage them. Generally speaking, there are four approaches to treating risk: Treat, Tolerate, Terminate or Transfer:

Action	Description	Options
Treat / Reduce	Controlling the likelihood of the risk occurring, or controlling the impact of the consequences if the risk does occur	Reducing the likelihood of the risk occurring AND / OR Mitigating the impact if the risk does occur
Tolerate / Accept	Acknowledging that the ability to take effective action against some risks may be limited or that the cost of taking action may be disproportionate to the potential benefits gained.	The ability to take effective action against some risks may be limited or the cost of taking action may be disproportionate to the potential benefits gained in which case the risk is accepted on an "informed" basis.
Terminate / Avoid	Not undertaking the activity that is likely to trigger the risk	Changing the direction or strategy and revisiting objectives or improving channels of communication Obtaining further information from external sources or acquiring expertise Reducing the scope of the activity or adopting a familiar, proven approach Deciding not to undertake the activity likely to trigger the risk
Transfer	Handing the risk on elsewhere, either totally or in part – e.g. through insurance.	Financial instruments such as insurance, performance bonds, warranties or guarantee. Renegotiation of contract conditions for the risk to be retained by the other party. Seeking agreement on sharing the risk with the other party. Sub-contracting risk to a consultant or external suppliers. NB. It may not be possible to transfer all aspects of a risk. For example, where there is or reputational damage to the organisation.

When considering further action required to manage the risk, and indeed the appropriateness of existing controls, an assessment of treatment options should be made alongside a consideration of the Council's risk appetite and tolerance for the current level of risk.

A further consideration is the efficiency of risk treatment in relation to the cost effectiveness of the proposed actions to be taken. Firstly the cost of implementation has to be considered (time, manpower, budget, etc.). The impact expected if no action is taken, should be weighed against the cost of action and the reduction of the impact. There should be a direct benefit from the cost implementation in terms of the reduction of the level of the risk.

Plans should then be put into place to manage the risk with key milestones identified and clear owners – ensuring that they are 'SMART' – Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time bound.

Oxford City Council has focused on the Red, Amber, Green status of risks in determining the risk appetite of the organization. Red risks are considered unacceptable and every effort must be made to reduce the risk to the organization.

The risk appetite is reviewed periodically or when there are significant changes to the organisation. Changes to the risk appetite level would require a change to strategy and would therefore require approval of the Cabinet.

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