

OXPENS

OXFORD WEST END

APPENDICES

CONSULTATION DRAFT

Master Plan
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
May 2013

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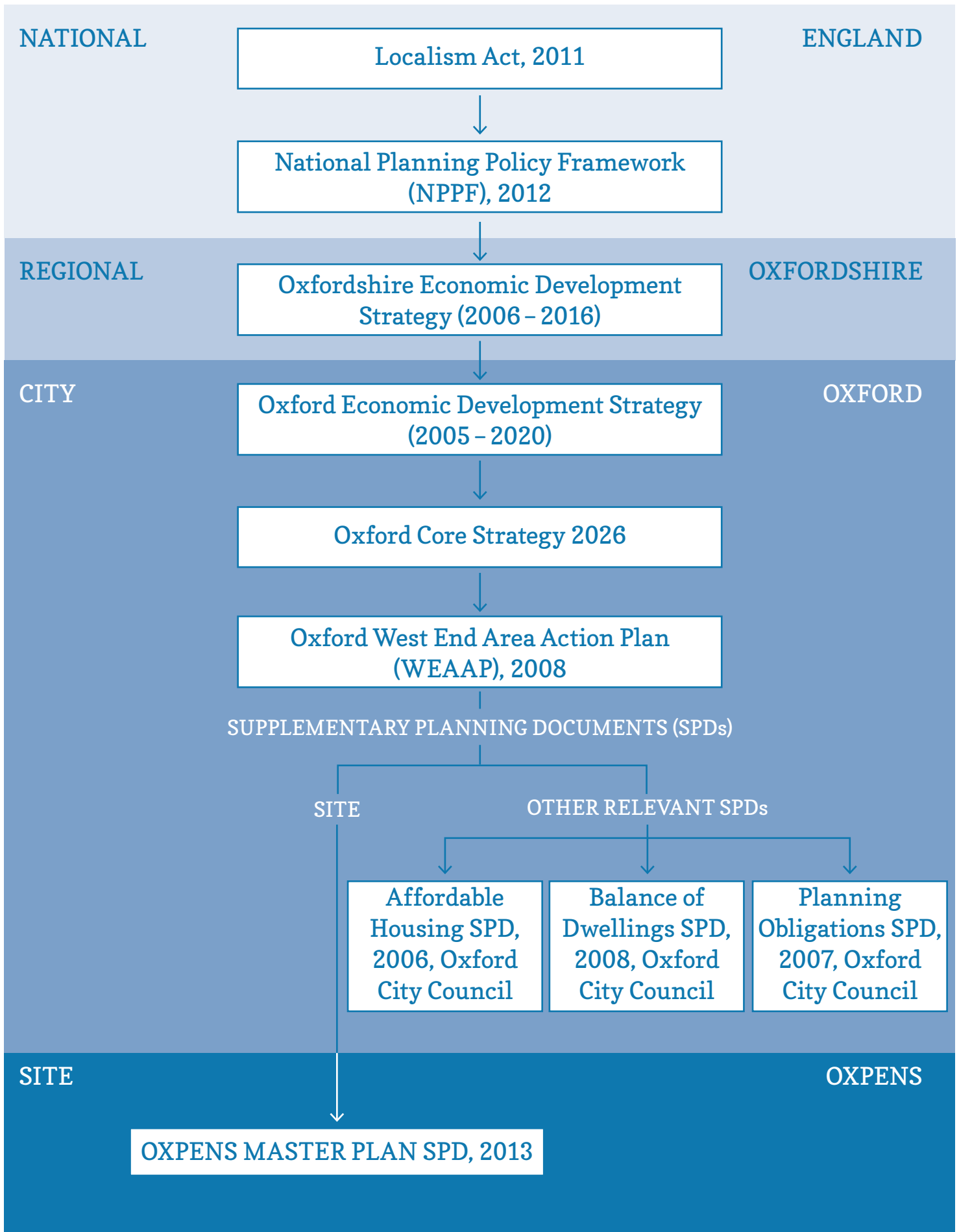
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NATIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

1.1 The *Localism Act 2011* introduced a number of changes to the planning system, not least the intention to revoke Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS). With the subsequent publication of the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)* in March 2012, the Government's approach to land use planning has been confirmed.

The Localism Act 2011

1.2 The *Localism Act 2011* has resulted in significant amendments to legislation relevant to the Application Site, including (but not limited to) the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*, the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*, the *Planning Act 2008* and the *Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009*. The Act has the power to:

- provide greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods, providing local communities with more control over housing and planning decisions;
- provide for the abolition of the regional planning tier and Regional Spatial Strategies;
- revoke 'saved policies' from County Structure Plans under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004;
- introduce a duty on Local Planning Authorities, county councils and other statutory bodies to co-operate with each other;
- place a statutory requirement on developers to consult local communities before submitting certain planning applications; and
- provide a mechanism through which part of the revenue raised by Local Planning Authorities through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be made available for use by the local community.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), March 2012

- 1.3 The NPPF (March 2012) sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England and articulates a vision of sustainable growth, which should be interpreted and applied locally to meet local aspirations and to assist in determining planning applications.
- 1.4 The NPPF supersedes Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs), Planning Policy Statements (PPSs), Minerals Planning Statements (MPSs) and Minerals Planning Guidance notes (MPGs) (the full list of replaced documents is provided in Annex 3 of the NPPF). The Government has indicated that it will review the guidance underlying these superseded documents to see which elements continue to be useful and should be retained. Retained documents will be used in determining planning applications for Oxpens.
- 1.5 The NPPF sets out a "presumption in favour of sustainable development" (page 3) and requires Local Authorities "to set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth" (para. 21). The NPPF encourages Local Planning Authorities to approve development proposals in accordance "with the development plan without delay" (para. 14) and to "support economic growth through the planning system" (para. 19).
- 1.6 The NPPF sets out Core Planning Principles (paragraph 17). The most relevant principles to this SPD are listed below (with additional emphasis given to key points relevant to Oxpens in bold). The NPPF Core Planning Principles state that planning should:
- "not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to **enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives**";
 - "proactively drive and support **sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places** that the country needs";
 - "always seek to secure **high quality design and a good standard of amenity** for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;"

- “take account of the different roles and character of different areas, **promoting the vitality of our main urban areas**, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;”
- “support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, **taking full account of flood risk** and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy);”
- “contribute to conserving and **enhancing the natural environment** and reducing pollution.”;
- “encourage the effective **use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land)**, provided that it is not of high environmental value”;
- “**promote mixed use developments**, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, **recognising that some open land can perform many functions** (such as for wildlife, **recreation, flood risk mitigation**, carbon storage, or food production)”;
- “actively manage patterns of growth to **make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable**; and”
- “take account of and support local strategies to **improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all**, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs” (NPPF, para. 17).

WIDER SUB-REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

1.7 At the level of wider sub-regional planning context considerations for Oxpens include the Oxfordshire LEP and the Oxfordshire Economic Development Strategy, headlines summarised as follows:

Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

1.8 The Oxfordshire LEP aims to increase inward investment in Oxfordshire, develop the business support services for Oxfordshire’s businesses and improve infrastructure for growth and jobs. The LEP recognises the economic and innovation strengths of the county and city and seeks to support these. The LEP identifies strengths to build upon:

- *At the centre of Oxfordshire sits one of Europe’s best universities and the UK’s best new university. The academic excellence of Oxford feeds through to the wider economy in terms of research and development, high-tech and knowledge-intensive economies.*
- *A total of 57.3% of Oxfordshire’s employees are recognised as highly skilled (April 2010 – March 2011), with 30.3% of employment being in the Knowledge Economy and High and Medium Tech Manufacturing (2010). [Review of Local Enterprise area economies in 2012].*
- *As a result Oxfordshire has a rich history as a base for start-ups operating in competitive and high-risk, knowledge-based sectors.*

1.9 The LEP states that “*Oxfordshire has one of the highest rates of economic growth over the past decade and the greatest degree of resilience during the recession; as such it is regarded as a prime candidate for major expansion to support further economic and employment growth*”.

1.10 In addition to the economic and innovation strengths the LEP notes that “*Oxford’s rich historical heritage means that the city is also a key world tourism destination*”.

- 1.11 The Oxpens site can help to meet the LEP's objectives for economic growth and boost inward investment. The identification within the SPD for land to accommodate business space, research and development uses and a hotel are essential in furthering the status and development of Oxford as a centre for knowledge-intensive economies and will support further economic and employment growth.
- 1.12 The direct contribution of new homes on the City's economy must also be recognised as significant. Housing, and housing affordability, are part of the essential infrastructure required to attract and support economic investment.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

- 1.13 Oxfordshire County and Oxford City Council both have Economic Development Strategies that provide important policy context for development proposals:

Oxfordshire Economic Development Strategy (2006-2016)

- 1.14 The wider vision of the Strategy is to realise Oxfordshire's potential as a pioneering, productive, world-class economic sub-region, with small businesses forming the "backbone" of the economy.
- 1.15 The Strategy aims to:
- Encourage a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship.
 - Exploit the commercial potential of the science and technology base.
 - Reduce barriers and improve support for businesses.
 - Maintain business clusters and support networks.
 - Maximise opportunities created by technology innovation and utilisation.
 - Improve the environmental performance of all employers.
 - Promote enterprise development within disadvantaged areas.
 - Increase participation in the labour market.
 - Support traditional retail and service sectors.
- 1.16 The Strategy identifies the key issue of affordable housing needed in Oxfordshire to retain and maximise the sub-region's competitive position. A key step to take in continuing the success of Oxfordshire's economy is to ensure sufficient and affordable housing is available to meet the needs of Oxfordshire's labour force. These points support the development of residential housing on the Oxpens site.
- 1.17 The Strategy states that "*the efficient use of previously-developed sites must be maintained, particularly in town centres*". This principal supports the efficient redevelopment of the opportunity sites identified in the WEAAP, including the Oxpens site.
- 1.18 The Strategy states that "*Land assembly initiatives using surplus public land and smaller sites in urban areas must continue to be progressed.*" This is a key consideration for the Oxpens site, given the multiple landownership of the site— see **Figure 3.3, Land Ownership Plan**. For further information with regard to development phasing and delivery see the final section of this report.

Oxford Economic Development Strategy (2005-2020)

- 1.19 The Strategy's Vision:
- "The vision for Oxford's economic development is to enable the city to realise the economic potential of its world class universities, its knowledge based industries and its unique character in order to promote a stronger economic role within the local, regional, national, and international context. This will be achieved by sustaining local business diversity and by managed economic growth supported by improvements in integrated transport to assist social inclusion, conserve local heritage and secure environmental enhancement."*
- 1.20 One of the Strategy's key objectives is to seek a supply of sites to accommodate new investment, and to support small business development: Oxpens is an excellent example of such as site.

- 1.21 In relation to affordable housing, the Strategy seeks to support the provision of affordable housing in order to improve access to housing for a wider group of residents. The Strategy confirms that in certain instances employment sites should be considered should they become available and not have clear potential for continuing to provide employment. The SPD directly supports the Strategy by supporting new employment and housing opportunities on previously-developed land in the city of Oxford.
- 1.22 Key recommendations in Oxford Economic Development Strategy (2005-2020) that are of particular relevance to Oxpens include:
- Expanding knowledge economy;
 - Supporting business growth;
 - Ensuring sufficient supply of employment land;
 - Promoting tourism;
 - Increasing housing supply; *and*
 - Investing in physical and transport infrastructure to support economic growth.

OXFORD CORE STRATEGY 2026

- 1.23 The Oxford Core Strategy 2026 (adopted 2011) sets the over arching strategy for the development in Oxford over the next 15 years. The Spatial Strategy for Oxford sets out the long term planning framework for the city and focuses on particular areas that are of strategic importance to the future growth and development for Oxford.
- 1.24 The West End of Oxford and in particular Oxpens is recognised as a strategic area and Policy CS 5 applies.
- 1.25 **Vision for the West End**
- Raising it to the standard that befits Oxford's reputation.
 - Significant opportunities for a mixed-use modern, economically and socially sustainable range of developments.
 - Potential to re-establish high-quality urban living, with much-needed housing in a very sustainable location.
 - Provide new leisure, retail and cultural attractions.
 - Some employment development will take place through the modernisation and redevelopment of existing previously developed land.
 - Create an attractive environment, with good public spaces and high-quality design.
 - With careful design the many historic features in the West End will become well integrated into new developments, and the rich heritage of the area will be brought to life.
- 1.26 **Area Appraisal**
- The West End is in a key location
 - The gateway to Oxford for those who arrive by train or reach the city centre from the west.
 - Includes key city landmarks and facilities such as the railway station, the Westgate Shopping Centre, the Castle site, George Street, Gloucester Green and Oxford Town Hall.
 - Does not currently match Oxford's worldwide reputation or live up to its potential as a city centre area of the highest quality.
 - Several busy and important routes through the West End are not attractive spaces for pedestrians
 - Oxpens Road is the only through-road available to connect the main northern and western routes into the city to the main southern route.
 - Oxpens Road bisects the heart of the West End, acting as a barrier to pedestrian movement. The ambience of Oxpens Road needs to be transformed as part of the West End renaissance.
 - The West End benefits from the highly sustainable nature of its location. It is ideally situated in terms of the PPS6 sequential test and in terms of transport, as it includes a mainline railway station and is serviced by local buses, park and- ride buses and scheduled coaches.
 - Of benefit is the proximity of a wide range of city centre services and amenities.

Relationship to the Spatial Strategy

- 1.27 The West End's regeneration is expected to be fundamental to the overall long-term success of Oxford. Clearly the uses in this area and the functions they perform are of great value to the city as a whole and to the wider area. The renaissance of the West End will be important to those who live or work in the area and also to those who visit.
- 1.28 The West End renaissance should deliver important elements of the spatial strategy for Oxford. As well as providing new homes towards the city's overall target, it offers the only significant opportunity for city-centre employment and retail provision. The improvements to Oxford Rail Station and the city-centre movement network are important for development in the city as a whole. The West End also provides the focus for cultural and tourism development and additional short-stay accommodation.
- 1.29 New development in Oxford will be expected to be of a high design quality that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area in which it is located.
- 1.30 Policy CS 5: West End**
"The West End is allocated as a strategic location which will deliver a mixed-use development. Planning permission will be granted for development that includes:
- significant housing provision (approximately 700-800 dwellings);
 - retail floorspace (at least 37,000m²);
 - office space (15,000m² for the private sector and 20,000m² for the public sector);
 - new leisure and cultural attractions;
 - a high-quality network of streets and public spaces; and
 - a new 1-form entry Primary School to serve the area."
- 1.31 Content of particular note for the Oxpens site is summarised from the Core Strategy under topic theme headings, along side key content from the Core Strategy.

OXFORD WEST END AREA ACTION PLAN (2007-2016)

- 1.32 The Oxford West End Area Action Plan (WEAAP) sits beneath the Core Strategy in the Development Plan Document hierarchy and forms part of the Local Development Framework.
- 1.33 The Area Action Plan cements and drives the vision and objectives for the West End, in essence:
- Economic stability and a strong community
 - Significant potential to re-establish high quality urban living
 - Provide much need housing
 - Provide new leisure, retail, community and tourist attractions as well as some office space
- 1.34 To achieve this vision the WEAAP is centred around four key themes:
- **an attractive network of street and spaces;**
 - **a high quality built environment;**
 - **a strong and balanced community; and**
 - **a vibrant and successful West End**
- 1.35 The WEAAP makes specific reference to Oxpens, including the following key considerations for future development proposals:
- The Area Action Plan (June 2008) also recognises the need for **new and improved pedestrian links** along Oxpens Road and through the Oxpens site. A greater sense of human scale will be achieved along the

Oxpens Road with the creation of a new public space (Oxpens Square), as well as tree planting and the dispersal of vehicular traffic through the creation of a bus priority route.

- **New office accommodation** should be located on the frontages along Oxpens Road to provide an active edge to the Oxpens site, with an appropriate provision of on-street parking in the Oxpens area to accommodate new users on the site.
- The **civic square** will be surrounded by new buildings with an urban and civic quality.
- Land uses for the Oxpens are likely to include a **new 4 or 5 star hotel, with a flexible conference centre facility**.
- The **relocation of coach parking** from the Oxpens site is essential to the master planning of the site. Flood compensation measures will be implemented on Oxpens field to create a larger area suitable for development.
- **Flood measures** should establish an area on the south of the park which can be used as **an area of open space for leisure**. The public space should be a high quality, attractive and accessible space offering areas for formal and informal play, planted gardens and a wetland nature area.
- **Improved access to the River Thames (Isis)** should be established for pedestrians and cyclists, with Oxpens Field designed as a linking space between Grandpont Nature Park and the City centre.
- A focus on **family housing** (50% of units should be houses) is necessary to provide a mix of appropriate housing types on this central site in Oxford's West End.

OXFORD WEST END DESIGN CODE - AREA ACTION PLAN (2007-2016), VOLUME 2, APPENDICES

- 1.36 The West End Design Code was prepared as part of the AAP for Oxford City Council to set specific rules to guide future development principals in the Oxford West End. The document is presented as an appendix within Volume 2 of the West End Area Action Plan.
- 1.37 The West End Design Code is a key point of reference for all development sites within the Oxford West End and as such guidance is relevant for the Oxpens site.
- 1.38 The West End Design Code sets out to provide *"instructions for assembly" that explain how aspirations for the area can be translated into the new built form of the West End over an extended development period. The Code is therefore one of the tools which help to ensure the aspirations of the City Council and their partners are actually realised in final schemes.*
- 1.39 The Code states that its main purpose is: *"to assure the **quality of the public realm and the experience of users within it**".* It therefore follows that the content of the Design Code focuses on design guidance for streets and spaces, with four of the five sections (as listed below) focusing on street design. The sections of the Design Code are all important points of reference for future development proposals, including future detailed proposals for the Oxpens site. The content of the Design Code:
- Section A: Street Mesh and Regulating Plan
 - Section B: Street and Route Types
 - Section C: Coding for Variety: The Street Segment Plans
 - Section D: Street Design
 - Section E: Building and Architectural Design
- 1.40 Key plans from the Design Code (WEEAP Appendices) including the Regulating Plan and Street Mesh Plan are reproduced in this SPD for ease of reference and relevance for the Oxpens site is listed as follows. Other content regarding the design of streets and spaces (sections A-D) are referred to in relation to streetscape design in section 6 of this SPD. Section E: Building and Architectural Design is relevant in relation to the building design proposals at Oxpens.

Design Code Regulating Plan (WEAAP Appendices)

- 1.41 The Design Code states that the “(the Regulating Plan) sets out the new urban structure for the area – the arrangement of streets, routes and other public spaces”. The plan includes the Oxpens site and illustrates and a proposed arrangement of streets for the site, as part of a wider network extending throughout the Oxford West End.
- 1.42 The WEAAP Design Code Regulating Plan is presented in **Figure 2.2**.
- 1.43 The Design Code explains the Regulating Plan as follows:
- *“The Regulating Plan identifies a new network of routes for the West End. This is the ‘street mesh’ which gives access to the area and to development parcels and plots defined by the new streets.*
 - *Each route identified on the Regulating Plan is classified and references to one of four street and route types, with a fifth type reserved for special public spaces,*
 - *It identifies a notional Plot Frontage Line to mark the legal boundaries between public and private space.*
- 1.44 The area of the Regulating Plan that covers the Oxpens site has been tested as part of the Oxpens SPD. In the process of testing master plan options for the site the alignment of routes and types of routes has been discussed with Officers at both Oxford City Council and Oxford County Council. As the design proposals have advanced in detail the Oxpens master plan proposals have led to natural evolution of the Regulatory Plan network of streets.
- 1.45 The proposed movement network for Oxpens continues to propose a choice of routes to maximise permeability of movement, for all modes, promoting access for pedestrians and cyclists. The key principles of creating an accessible, connected network of streets for Oxpens, comprising of a range of street types as appropriate to location and proposed development remain. Within this context the alignment of some routes has been adjusted in line with the more detailed master plan proposals set out in this SPD. Further details of the proposed movement network are provided in Chapter 6 of this report, under the master plan proposals.
- 1.46 An example of such design evolution is that the Regulatory Plan illustrates a ‘Type 1 – Mixed Use Main Street’ crossing through the Oxpens site. This SPD Master Plan includes provision for such a route, but the alignment is slightly different to the Regulatory Plan to create the most efficient layout of development blocks. Although the path of the street differs slightly from the route shown in the Regulatory Plan the main street can perform the same function and as such this has been agreed after discussion with Officers at both Oxford City Council and Oxford County Council (Highways).



OVERVIEW OF KEY PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE WEAAP, CORE STRATEGY AND OCC SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

This document is intended as supplementary note, providing supporting information for the Oxpens Master Plan SPD.

The purpose of this document is to provide summary notes of important planning policy considerations of particular relevance to the Oxpens site. The **Planning Policy Framework Briefing Note** highlights key planning policy content from:

- **Oxford West End Area Action Plan** (2007-2016), Oxford City Council, 2008;
- **Oxford Core Strategy 2026**, (adopted 2011);
- **Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**, Oxford City Council, 2006;
- **Balance of Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**, Oxford City Council, 2008;

For ease of reference the **Planning Policy Framework Briefing Note** lists policy headlines under the following topic groups of relevance for Oxpens:

- **Economic Development, including:**
 - Offices;
 - Research & Development;
 - Hotels, and
 - Mixed Use development
- **Flooding;**
- **Transport & Movement;**
- **Housing, including:**
 - Affordable Housing,
 - Balance of Dwellings;
 - Housing Mix; and
 - Student Accommodation.
- **Public Open space & Leisure / Public Realm;**
- **Building Height;**
- **Building Design; and**
- **Sustainability & Renewable Energy.**

1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1.47 Planning policy for economic development as stated in the Core Strategy and AAP:

Core Strategy – Economic Development

- 1.48 Historically the number of jobs in Oxford has significantly exceeded the resident workforce. Problems have come as a result of a housing/job imbalance, with considerable levels of in commuting.
- 1.49 In terms of employment growth, the Core Strategy provides for in the range of 11,000-14,000 jobs over the plan period; this would be consistent with the SEP guidance figure of 7,111 jobs for Oxford to 2016.
- 1.50 This target is due to be met through a combination of modernising and/or extending existing sites, implementing existing Local Plan allocations, and developing the strategic sites at the West End and Northern Gateway.
- 1.51 In Oxford, good-quality modern office space is in demand (Oxford Employment Land Study, March 2006). Apart from the Oxford Business Park (on Garsington Road, Cowley), there are relatively few modern office developments in Oxford.
- 1.52 While the City Centre has a reasonable amount of office accommodation, it is mainly older, second-hand space in only a fair condition.
- 1.53 The West End offers a rare opportunity to provide some new office accommodation, in modern and flexible spaces. New office accommodation would be most appropriate on the frontages of main routes including along Oxpens Road. It is not intended that office development should dominate these streets, simply that offices are one of several uses that would be suitable here.
- 1.54 The Employment Land Study investigated the demand for new B1 uses across the City, including the West End. The Study suggested a need for about 15,000-20,000m² of new B1 floorspace in the West End until 2021. This demand is likely to be mainly for smaller office units, providing good-quality, modern space, with few units over 900m².

CS27: Sustainable Economy

The City Council will support Oxford's key employment sectors and clusters, whilst maintaining the necessary infrastructure and local services to ensure a sustainable economy. Planning permission will be granted for development that seeks to achieve 'managed economic growth'. Proposals need to show how they maintain, strengthen, modernise or diversify Oxford's economy.

'Managed growth' will be delivered through the allocation of land at the Northern Gateway and the West End, and the protection and modernisation of key employment sites.

CS28: Employment Sites

Planning permission will not be granted for development that results in the loss of key protected employment sites.

Planning permission will only be granted for the modernisation and regeneration of any employment site if it can be demonstrated that new development:

- secures or creates employment important to Oxford's local*
- workforce; and*
- allows for higher-density development that seeks to make the best and most efficient use of land; and*
- does not cause unacceptable environmental intrusion or nuisance.*

Planning permission will only be granted for the change of use or loss of other employment sites (i.e. those not key protected employment sites), subject to the following criteria:

- *overriding evidence is produced to show the premises are presently causing and have consistently caused significant nuisance or environmental problems that could not have been mitigated; or*
- *no other future occupiers can be found despite substantial evidence to show the premises or site has been marketed both for its present use and for potential modernisation or regeneration for alternative employment-generating uses; and*
- *the loss of jobs would not reduce the diversity and availability of job opportunities; and it does not result in the loss of small and start-up business premises, unless alternative provision is made in Oxford.*

The key protected employment sites are shown on the Proposals Map.

West End AAP – Economic Development

1.55 The WEAAP includes the following policy content in relation to economic development and the Oxpens site:

Removing the Coach Park to release land for development:

1.56 Oxpens has been identified as a potential development site to deliver a major change. Currently, coaches park on the Oxpens site. The Oxpens site is a key catalyst in the renaissance of the West End; the relocation of coach parking from the site is essential to the masterplanning of the site.

Office development:

- 1.57 Location of well-designed offices on the Oxpens site would act as a catalyst for other new development of high quality. It would show confidence in the area and would start to draw people and activity to the Oxpens site. It would also help to support the new bus loop along Oxpens Road.
- 1.58 In relation to office accommodation, the Area Action Plan (AAP) identifies Oxpens Road as a key frontage in providing new offices; especially on the upper floors.

Policy WE 21: Office Accommodation

Planning permission will be granted for up to 15,000m² of additional office floorspace in the West End.

Policy WE22: Public sector offices

Planning permission will be granted for new joint City and County Council offices on the Oxpens site. A limited amount of floorspace for other public sector offices will be supported within the West End.

Hotel development:

- 1.59 The Oxpens site is a good location for a large hotel. The size of the site lends itself to large development, and a 4 or 5 star hotel (with about 150 bedrooms) would also act as a catalyst to revive this corner of the West End. A possible new multi-functional conference space, providing accommodation for business tourists, as well as other visitors may be incorporated alongside the hotel.
- 1.60 The demand for conference facilities in Oxford exceeds supply by 40%. The West End offers an opportunity for the development of a top-of-the-range conference centre. The most suitable site for development is Oxpens, as the building would need to be large, and the centre would help attract people to this part of the West End.

Policy WE26: Hotel Accommodation

Planning permission will be granted for the development of new hotel accommodation in the West End which strengthens or diversifies the range on offer. Planning permission will be granted for a new 4 or 5 star hotel on the Oxpens site.

Research & Development:

- 1.61 Significant demand also exists for research and development floorspace. Oxford's two universities are the driving forces behind the research and development industries. The Employment Land Study suggests that maintaining a high level of research and development is essential to the future economic success of Oxford and also identifies a strong need for start-up units across Oxford. These are small units with shared services, on-site support and short flexible leases, and often specialist space including laboratories. This type of employment use exploits Oxford's strengths, and creates jobs that can be filled from the existing population. Locating some of these units in the West End has some advantages as it is close to many colleges and will also help to create a viable mix of uses.

Mixed Use Developments:

- 1.62 The WEAAP encourages the promotion of mixed use development, as applicable to the Oxpens site given its size.
- 1.63 AAP Policy WE 20 indicates that on sites of 0.2 hectares or greater, planning permission will only be granted for developments that incorporate more than one use. The development of the Oxpens site should be mixed use to support a wide range of uses in close proximity to housing in order to encourage sustainable modes of transport.
- 1.64 The AAP Volume 2 (Design Code) identifies an opportunity to accommodate commercial leisure development on the city centre site of Oxpens Field in Policy DS.62. Proposals for the development of a dual use building for a concert hall and conference facility as part of a mixed-use development on the Oxpens site is supported.

Policy WE20:

On sites of 0.2 hectares or greater, planning permission will only be granted for developments that incorporate more than one use.

The mix of uses must be appropriate and take advantage of the opportunities that the site presents to achieve the diversity and range of objectives that are an essential part of the vision for the West End, such as cultural attractions.

2. FLOODING

Planning policy for flooding as stated in the Core Strategy and AAP:

Core Strategy – Flooding:

Using the SHLAA the CS has concluded there are not enough suitable and available sites in Flood Zones 1 and 2 to meet the South East Plan housing target without relying on windfalls. The site allocations DPD will therefore have to consider sites in Flood Zone 3a using the exceptions test. The Sites and Housing Development Plan Document (DPD) is part of Oxford's Local Development Framework.

Policy CS11 addresses the issue of flooding. It states:

- Avoid development in areas of high flood risk
- Mitigate any increase in flood risk arising from new development.

Planning permission will not be granted for any development in the functional flood plain (Flood Zone 3b) except water-compatible uses and essential infrastructure. The suitability of developments proposed in other flood zones will be assessed according to the PPS25 sequential approach and exceptions test.

For all developments over 1 hectare and/or development in any area of flood risk from rivers (Flood Zone 2 or above) or other sources developers must carry out a full Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), which includes information to show how the proposed development will not increase flood risk. Necessary mitigation measures must be implemented.*

Unless it is shown not to be feasible, all developments will be expected to incorporate sustainable drainage systems or techniques to limit runoff from new development, and preferably reduce the existing rate of runoff. Development will not be permitted that will lead to increased flood risk elsewhere, or where the occupants will not be safe from flooding.

This is to be delivered through area action plans which have to comply with Policy CS 11.

West End AAP – Flooding

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the West End has been undertaken as part of the West End Area Action Plan which makes a starting point for working out options that balance the management of flood risk with development proposals. As part of this work, an initial investigation was also undertaken to see whether it might be possible to move the current flood storage area on the Oxpens site to create a more regularly shaped or larger area suitable for development. Four potential ways of compensating for this flood storage area were identified, and a feasibility study will be carried out to identify the best option as part of the master planning of the site.

Development in the West End is expected to incorporate SuDS where practical to limit the impact of ground surface run off.

Policy WE14: Flooding

Planning permission will not be granted for any development except water compatible uses and essential infrastructure in the areas of highest flood risk (Flood Zone 3B).

Development on sites in any area of flood risk must include a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and to implement the necessary mitigation measures. All other developments of over 1 hectare must carry out an FRA.

Developments in the West End should use sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs), where practicable. The Proposals Map shows areas of flood risk.

3. TRANSPORT & MOVEMENT

Planning policy for transport & movement as stated in the Core Strategy and AAP:

Core Strategy – Transport & Movement

Several busy and important routes through the West End are not attractive spaces for pedestrians, as they have narrow footways and a poor public realm. Particularly in the most highly trafficked streets, too little attention has been given to pedestrians.

Oxpens Road is the only through-road available to connect the main northern and western routes into the city to the main southern route. The street was engineered for a higher volume of traffic than it carries, resulting in a wide street with no sense of human scale, where traffic is intimidating. The road bisects the heart of the West End, acting as a barrier to pedestrian movement. The ambience of Oxpens Road needs to be transformed as part of the West End renaissance.

Policy CS13: Supporting Access to New Development

Planning permission will only be granted for development that prioritises access by walking, cycling and public transport. A Transport Assessment and comprehensive Travel Plan must accompany all major development proposals. Low-parking development and car clubs will be sought in locations highly accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.

The City Council will work with delivery partners to address transport and access issues in the planning of the strategic locations for development, in particular:

- *improvements to the movement network in the West End (as set out in the West End Area Action Plan);*
- *developing highways and demand management mitigation measures as an integral part of the Northern Gateway AAP, to complement Access to Oxford improvements to the northern approaches, and ensure that traffic congestion is not worsened beyond general traffic growth;*
- *integrating new development at Barton with the existing community and wider city, potentially including a new bus, cycle and pedestrian link across the A40 (which could also improve bus access to the John Radcliffe Hospital).*

Bridge Crossing

A new pedestrian and cycle bridge across the Thames to join Oxpens Field to the Thames towpath is proposed. This would link the West End to Osney Mead and the West Oxford Cycle.

Improving Connections

Improvements will also be made to the route running east from the pedestrian bridge over the railway, along Osney Lane and onto Castle Mill Stream. New links will be needed through the development sites at Oxpens, the Oxford and Cherwell Valley College, and the Westgate Centre.

A new junction will also be created on Oxpens Road with a new road that will pass through the Oxpens site. Junction changes may be implemented at other points along Oxpens Road to give buses priority.

West End AAP – Transport & Movement – Oxpens Road

Particular references is made to Oxpens Road: The Oxpens Road was originally engineered for a higher volume of traffic than it carries, resulting in a wide street with no sense of human scale, where traffic is intimidating.

In accordance with AAP Policy WE 1, the feel and ambience of Oxpens Road needs to be transformed as part of the West End renaissance. This should facilitate movements between the main northern and western routes into the City to the main southern route of Oxpens Field by pedestrians and cyclists.

The redesign of streets and junctions in the West End as part of the strategic aims of AAP Policy WE 3 would provide an extended bus priority route along Oxpens Road, enabling scheduled coaches to avoid Castle Street and Norfolk Street. A new junction will also be created on Oxpens Road with a new road passing through the Oxpens site. As part of this new movement network, junction changes may also be implemented at other points along Oxpens Road to give buses priority.

West End AAP – Transport & Movement – Pedestrian & Cycle Links

Links between Oxpens Field and the surrounding area should be improved as part of this transformation. Policy WE 2 of the AAP states that new links will be needed through the development sites at Oxpens, to link to a new pedestrian and cycle bridge across the Thames to join Oxpens Field to the Thames towpath. This would also link the West End to Osney Mead and the West Oxford Cycle Route.

As stated in AAP Policy WE 9, development on the Oxpens site must carefully consider its relationship to the Thames and allow for pedestrian and cycle access along the river frontage and improved access to the river frontage.

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4. HOUSING

The Core Strategy and WEAAP give policy guidance on housing growth, affordable housing and housing mix. Key policy considerations include:

Appropriate level of housing growth:

Policy CS22: Level of Housing Growth

Provision of land will be made for an average annual completion rate of a minimum of 400 dwellings for the period 2006-2026, to achieve a total of at least 8,000 additional dwellings.

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and future reviews will identify deliverable sites for years 1-5. Where appropriate, sites will be allocated in the Site Allocations DPD to ensure a deliverable supply without reliance on windfalls.

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and Site Allocations DPD will also (as far as compatible with the approach set out in this Core Strategy) identify developable sites within years 6-10 and 11-15 and beyond to the end of the Core Strategy period in 2026.

Where sites are cannot be identified for years 11-15 (through the Site Allocations DPD and reviews of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) to meet the overall target, a proportion of dwellings will be required from windfall sites.

A “plan, monitor, manage” approach will be adopted based upon the key tools of the Annual Monitoring Report and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, through which progress in housing delivery and the continuous maintenance of a five-year rolling land supply will be tracked.

The City Council will take action to increase the supply of deliverable housing sites, if it appears at any time that housing completions have fallen more than 15% below the trajectory rate and a review of the deliverability of planned sites indicates that the housing trajectory is unlikely to recover over the next five years.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing policy considerations for Oxpens from the Core Strategy and WEAAP are listed as follows. In addition to this further detail is provided in the Affordable Housing SPD, commentary of this is provided later in this section.

Core Strategy – Affordable Housing

Planning permission will only be granted for residential developments that provide generally a minimum of 50% of the proposed dwellings as affordable housing on all qualifying sites. Planning permission will only be granted for commercial development that provides affordable housing to meet additional demand created.

If it can be demonstrated, by open book evidence, that the affordable housing contribution from either residential or commercial development makes a site unviable developers and the City Council will work through a cascade approach until a site is made viable.

Developers will provide affordable housing as part of the proposed development unless the City Council, or the Secretary of State where appropriate, and the developer both consider that it is preferable to make a financial or other contribution towards the delivery of affordable housing on another site.

Developers may not circumvent this policy by artificially subdividing sites, and are expected to make efficient use of land. Affordable housing should be available to those in housing need in perpetuity.

West End AAP – Affordable Housing

The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Affordable Housing gives more detail on how the Local Plan and AAP policies will be implemented. The tenure mix that best meets local need, as set out in the SPD, is **80% social rented and 20% shared ownership**.

The West End is identified as a strategic site in the Regional Housing Strategy (South East Regional Housing Board). This indicates that it is a key area in the region for delivery of affordable housing so Housing Corporation investment (Social Housing Grant) is expected to be available.

Policy WE 16: Affordable Housing

*The City Council will seek the provision of **generally a minimum of 50% affordable housing** from any development that includes residential development on a site within the West End having the capacity for at least ten dwellings. This should be in the ratio of **80% social rented and 20% shared ownership**.*

If it can be demonstrated by open-book evidence that this makes a site unviable, developers and the City Council will work through the cascade approach in the following order until a scheme is made viable:

- Reducing the percentage of affordable housing provided (to a minimum of 40%) by reducing the shared ownership element only.*
- At 40% affordable housing, reintroduce an element of shared ownership incrementally up to 20% of affordable units.*
- Make affordable housing provision on another site (at the 50% level).*

AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPD

The OCC Affordable Housing SPD (November 2006) observes that the widening gap between housing costs, particularly for owner occupation, and household incomes has resulted in fewer households being able to afford housing in Oxford. In general, this means that a wide range of households need special help to live in a home that meets their needs. Therefore every opportunity must be taken to build affordable housing on suitable sites. Oxpens is such a site.

Proportion of Affordable Housing

Oxford's Housing Requirements Study (HRS) found that 82% of housing need in Oxford is for social rented accommodation. Because of the high cost of housing in Oxford, shared ownership housing should offer buyers a maximum initial share of 25% of the open market value of the dwelling. Higher proportions can be offered provided the cost would be less than 30% of the net household income as set out in the Local Plan. Oxford's Housing Requirement Study found that overall there is an 18% need for shared ownership affordable housing.

Affordable housing Policy HS.4 states that the City Council will require affordable housing as part of any development of 10 or more dwellings, or a site that includes residential development and has a capacity of at least 10 dwellings or on a residential site with a gross area of at least 0.25ha.

When Policy HS.4 applies, the City Council will seek the provision of **generally a minimum of 50% of the proposed dwellings as affordable housing**.

The table below sets out the affordable housing strategic mix that will be expected from developments on the city-centre site of Oxpens.

Property size (bedrooms)	Oxpens site	
	Social rented	Shared ownership
1	5%	10%
2	40%	10%
3	25%	0%
4+	10%	0%

Affordable Housing Mix of Tenure (source: Affordable Housing SPD, 2006, OCC).

Design of Affordable Housing

The Affordable Housing SPD provides guidance on matters of design including:

- **Design quality: innovation;**

Para. 67 The City Council will usually expect affordable housing to be provided on site as part of the proposed development. The City Council will take into account the design quality and siting of the affordable housing in determining the application. Innovative design is also encouraged.

- **Design quality: tenure blind;**

Para. 67 continued: The affordable housing should not be visually or operationally distinguishable from market housing in such terms as details, build quality and materials.

- **Location (pepper potting);**

Para. 67 continued: Also, the affordable housing should, as far as practicable, be dispersed (pepper-potted) across the development to create a mixed communities and avoid concentrations of affordable housing.

- **Size of Affordable Homes**

Guidance for the appropriate size of affordable homes is set out in Table A4.4 in the Appendix of the Affordable Housing SPD, as follows:

Size of dwelling (beds / people)	Size of dwelling Area	
	sq ft	sq m
1 bed - 2 person flat	484 – 538	45 – 50
2 bed - 3 person flat	613 – 721	57 – 67
2 bed - 4 person flat	721 – 807	67 – 75
2 bed - 4 person house	807	75
3 bed - 5 person house	914 – 1,022	85 – 95
4 bed - 6 person house	1,076 – 1,130	100 – 105
4 bed - 7 person house	1,162 – 1,237	108 – 115

Suggested Size of Affordable Dwellings (source: Affordable Housing SPD, 2006, OCC).

BALANCE OF DWELLINGS SPD

1.65 Oxford City Council's *Balance of Dwellings* Supplementary Planning Document (January 2008) sets out objectives to address the housing crisis being experienced in the city:

Para. 1: "Not only is the need for housing far greater than the supply, but the new housing that is being developed is mainly small one- and two-bedroom flats. The continuation of this trend over a number of years will lead to a mismatch between need and supply."

Para 59: "The evidence base shows that if current trends continue there will be a significant mismatch between need and supply. Our policy approach is therefore to influence this imbalance to include more family housing units in the future housing mix."

Para 60. "The main aim of this guidance is to ensure that future housing provision promotes a balanced and mixed community in Oxford. The City-level profile is particularly important in providing an overall policy framework to achieve the appropriate strategic mix of dwellings for Oxford."

1.66 The Balance of Dwellings SPD identifies clear evidence that family housing is required to meet housing need up until 2026, as shown in the table below. Note the mismatch between projected supply and provision required for 2 and 3 bed homes. 3 bed homes which are capable of housing families are projected to be undersupplied:

- 2 bed homes - supply projected to be over and above required provision;
- 3 bed homes - supply projected to be significantly under above required provision;

Size	Projected supply (2006-26)	Provision required (2006-26)
1 bed	27.7%	20.9%
2 bed	42.2%	29.6%
3 bed	21.8%	43.2%
4+ beds	8.4%	6.3%

Supply profiles: comparing expected supply with provision required
(source: *Balance of Dwellings SPD, 2008, OCC*).

1.67 The *Balance of Dwellings* SPD presents policy guidance in relation to the location of proposed development – i.e. sites in the City Centre, District Centres, Neighbourhood Areas etc.

1.68 SPD defines The City Centre as "*The boundary of Oxford City centre, as defined by the adopted Local Plan or subsequently replaced in the Local Development Framework*". The Oxpens site is located within this area and as such the guidance for City Centre sites is applicable:

Para. 70 "While the Council seeks to ensure a balanced mix of dwellings across Oxford, the City centre is considered more suitable for higher-density residential developments. The proposed mix therefore promotes a greater proportion of smaller units but still requires some family accommodation."

1.69 The desired mix of residential units for sites in the City centre is outlined in the *Balance of Dwellings* SPD. The strategic mix for the City centre reflects the emerging policy approach for the West End Area Action Plan. The mix of housing required for the Oxpens site is as per the table below.

Dwelling Types	Dwelling mix for sites of 10 and above (percentage range)	Dwellings of 1-9 units
1 bed	15-25%	No specific mix
2 bed	40-50%	
3 bed	20-25%	
4+ bed	10-18%	

Housing Mix for City Centre (source: *Balance of Dwellings SPD, 2008, OCC*).

HOUSING MIX

Housing mix policy considerations include extracts from the Core Strategy and WEAAP as follows:

Core Strategy – Housing Mix

Policy CS23: Mix of Housing

Planning permission will only be granted for residential development that delivers a balanced mix of housing to meet the projected future household need, both within each site and across Oxford as a whole.

The mix of housing relates to the size, type and tenure of dwellings to provide for a range of households, such as families with children, single people, older people and people with specialist housing needs.

Appropriate housing mixes for each Neighbourhood Area are set out in the Balance of Dwellings SPD. The City centre and district centres will be expected to deliver higher densities.

West End AAP – Housing Mix

The WEAAP, policy WE15 states that at least 50% of residential units should be houses. Further to this the policy states requirements for the appropriate size of residential units, this is conveyed as requirements for proportional split of house sizes according to the number of bedrooms, as listed below:

WE15: Housing Mix:

Across the West End, the overall balance of the different sized homes (new build) to be achieved should be:

- **Not more than 65% flats (at least half of the flats should have 2 bedrooms); and***
- **Not less than 35% houses of 3, 4, and 5 bedrooms.***

This mix applies equally to the market and affordable elements of residential development and must be applied as far as appropriate on all sites. However, where multiple development sites are in the same land ownership, the City Council will enter into negotiations with developers to secure the required balance across that group of development sites.

If the following sites come forward for housing, at least 50% of the units provided should be houses: Oxpens site, the remainder of the Oxford and Cherwell Valley College site and Becket Street Car Park.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

West End AAP – Student Accommodation

The area of Oxpens bordering the railway line is an appropriate location for student accommodation. As identified in AAP Policy WE 18, occupancy restrictions will be secured for student accommodation sites to ensure that the accommodation is only available to those in full-time education at the University of Oxford or Oxford Brookes University.

5. OPEN SPACE & LEISURE

Open space and leisure policy considerations include extracts from the Core Strategy and WEAAP as follows:

Core Strategy – Open Space & Leisure

Policy CS 21 aims to maintain an overall average of 5.75ha of publically accessible green space per 1,000 population.

The City Council will seek to maintain an overall average of 5.75 ha of publicly accessible green space per 1,000 population.

Planning permission will only be granted for development resulting in the loss of existing sports and leisure facilities if alternative facilities can be provided and if no deficiency is created in the area. Alternative facilities should be provided in a location equally or more accessible by walking, cycling and public transport and will be particularly welcomed in areas that have an identified shortage.

Improvements to, or the provision of, public green space, public rights of way, indoor and outdoor sports facilities and play facilities will be sought in accordance with Policy CS17. Opportunities will be sought for opening up access to new public spaces, for providing suitable new green spaces on or near to development sites, and for providing public access to private facilities.

West End AAP – Open Space & Leisure

Key policies for Open Space & Leisure include:

Policy WE 8: Oxpens Field

Oxpens field will be enhanced to create a high quality open space with areas for formal and informal play planted gardens and a wetland nature area on the south of the park, along the Thames and Castle Mill street. Biodiversity will be enhanced. Flood compensation measures will be implemented on the field. Development could face the field.

Policy WE 9: The Thames

Development on part of the Oxpens site will provide an opportunity to improve access to the Thames. An attractive frontage onto the river will be created that maintains much of the green, tree-lined frontage and a new bridge between Oxpens Field and Osney Mead will be provided as outlined earlier.

Policy WE 28: Leisure

Opportunities for leisure should continue to be provided in the Oxpens area.

The WEAAP also includes the following key issues:

Commercial Leisure:

Commercial leisure facilities would be acceptable in this location. It is important to design leisure facilities with flexibility to meet changing tastes. One way to achieve this would be to design flexible leisure space that could incorporate a range of leisure opportunities; the enhancement of Oxpens Field could be an important factor in this.

Oxpens Field (Oxpens Meadow)

Oxpens Field is the largest area of green space in the West End. The field is used for informal recreational activities such as walking, although people currently make relatively little use of the space as it has little to attract them. As part of the West End renaissance Oxpens Field will be configured to create a park offering a range of facilities that are attractive and accessible for existing and new users of the area. Oxpens Field should be designed as a linking space between Grandpont Nature Park and the City Centre.

Development at the Oxpens site should face onto the field to create an active frontage onto play spaces to enhance the feeling of safety, and to establish a link between the development and the area of public open space. This will help ensure that the development is not designed as a separate entity which has no relationship to its wider context.

Public Squares and Spaces:

Oxpens Square will be a new civic square on the Oxpens site, which could host festivals and other events. The space will be surrounded by new buildings with an urban and civic quality. The new square will be positioned to catch the sun and to be well connected, so that it will be well used. It should incorporate high quality materials and street furniture.

Street Trees:

In order to enhance the public realm area on the Oxpens site, trees will be planted at key points and in particular along Oxpens Road.

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6. BUILDING DESIGN

BUILDING HEIGHT

The key issue for development proposals at Oxpens to consider in relation to building height is to limit the height of proposed development to a **maximum of 18.2m height**, in accordance with the saved Local Plan Policy HE9:

Local Plan Policy HE 9: Building Height (saved policy)

Planning permission will not be granted for any development within a 1,200 metre radius of Carfax which exceeds 18.2m in height or height above sea level except for minor elements of no great bulk. A lesser height may be considered more appropriate for buildings that have to fit into the existing townscape. If existing buildings are redeveloped, the City Council will consider carefully whether rebuilding to their previous height is acceptable in terms of how it would affect the appearance of the existing townscape and skyline.

The area covered by the 1,200 metre radius of Carfax is identified on the Proposals Map.

Local Plan Policy HE 10: View Cones of Oxford (saved policy)

The City council will seek to retain significant views both within Oxford and from outside, and protect the green backdrop from any adverse impact. Planning permission will not be granted for buildings or structures proposed within or close to the areas that are of special importance for the preservation of views of Oxford (the view cones) or buildings that are of a height which would detract from these views.

West End Design Code – Building Height

The West End Design Code, (Volume 2 of the West End Area Action Plan), provides further specific detail regarding building height, varying depending on the situation of the building, the use and the neighbouring buildings. Guidance includes:

B1.2 A range of building heights are given in relation to street widths.

The provisions of the Code are designed to generate a variety of building heights along street frontages as this is an important feature of Oxford's streetscape and skyline.

- **Storeys are used in preference to dimensioned heights as this will in itself create some variety between commercial and residential building heights.**
- *For most street types, a range of heights are given. This means that it is expected that the height of buildings should vary along the same street frontage.*
- *Half storeys, expressed as 0.5, are defined as rooms accommodated within roof structures. The roof should only contain one storey of accommodation within it, not multiple storeys.*
- *Roof level setbacks are given for some street types.*

E3 Skyline & Roofscape:

The concerns about the impact of high buildings on Oxford's skyline is explained in The Local Plan policy (Para. 5.7, HE.9- High Building Area). The aim is to achieve a varied skyline and roofscape (1). The impact of new development on the skyline is addressed in Section B, which requires a range of building heights within each street as well as varying heights with the order of streets (2,3), from Type One to Type Four. Section C deals with the location and character of variations from the typical street provisions. This section gives general principles for achieving a varied roofscape as seen from within the streets and other public spaces (4):

- *In order to retain the varied skyline of the City, new structures may use the opportunity for further variation in skyline and silhouette in the locations identified on the Segment Plan.*

- *The design of ridge level, eaves level and/or roof silhouette should vary so that there is no longer than 25 metres of continuous or uniform roof design (see Local Plan paragraph 5.7.4) (4). This equates to three of the maximum bay widths of 8 metres.*
- *Building shoulder height, eaves, and ridge level should step up or down in accordance with changes in ground level.*

BUILDING DESIGN QUALITY

West End AAP – Building design quality:

As stated in AAP Policy WE 12 high quality architecture will be expected in all new development. It should be demonstrated in planning applications that buildings are designed to be flexible and long lasting.

West End AAP – Lifetime homes:

On the Oxpens site 15% of all new market houses must be built to “Lifetime Homes” standard, or its equivalent.

SUSTAINABILITY & RENEWABLE ENERGY

West End AAP:

In relation to Resource Efficiency, AAP Policy WE 13 states that planning permission will only be granted for new development that complies with the requirements of the Natural Resource Impact Analysis (NRIA).

As part of the West End renaissance, a community energy scheme will be delivered, and developments will be required to connect to the scheme where practicable. On the Oxpens site, development that connects to the community energy scheme will be able to count this contribution towards its on-site renewable energy requirements.

NON STATUTORY REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION

1.70 The following non-statutory context material of particular relevance for the Oxpens site includes:

- *Oxford West End Area Development Framework*, prepared by David Lock Associates Limited, March 2005;
- *Oxpens Compensatory Flood Storage Pre-Feasibility Study*, prepared by Atkins, June 2007.

Oxford West End Area Development Framework

1.71 The Area Development Framework (ADF) was prepared by David Lock Associates Limited on behalf of Oxford City Council in March 2005 this document sought to establish a framework for development in the Oxford West End. The document prepared an overarching master plan for the West End, and broke the area down into four development 'quarters' to provide specific planning and design guidance to inform the creation of distinct characters within each area. The overarching vision of the ADF set the ground for the preparation of the West End Area Action Plan.

Oxpens Compensatory Flood Storage Pre-Feasibility Study

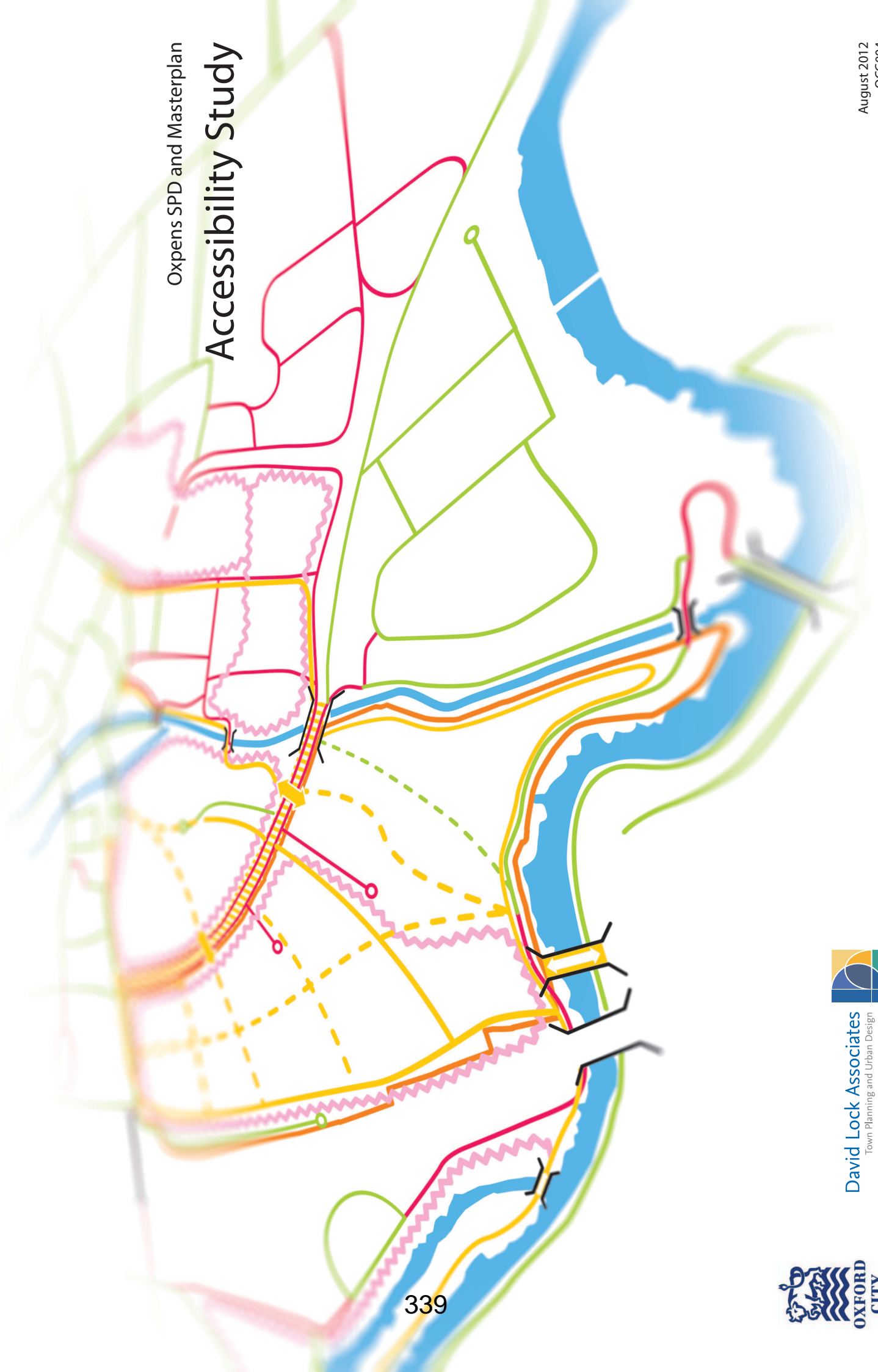
1.72 This study was commissioned by Oxford City Council and prepared by Atkins in June 2007. Full details are presented under *Site Features* in Chapter 3 of this report.

APPENDIX B:
ACCESSIBILITY STUDY

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Accessibility Study



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Accessibility Study

This accessibility study provides an overview of the quality of access between the Oxpens site and the wider context of the Oxford West End, towards Oxford City Centre.

The accessibility study identifies:

- Good connections – routes that are clear, direct and feel safe to use as pedestrian or cyclist.
- Poor connections – either missing links between good access routes, or poor quality routes that feel unsafe to use as a pedestrian or cyclist because they may be unsurveilled, indirect and are poorly maintained.
- Connection improvements – indicative location of improvements to access routes within and around the Oxpens site.

These access connections and issues are illustrated on plan and supported by a photographic record of good and poor access routes.


Accessibility Study Contents:

3

- 1. Location Plan**
 - Identification of Oxpens study area, within the Oxford West End; and
 - Key streets, spaces and places.
- 2. Good Connections Plan**
 - Routes identified in the Oxford West End with good accessibility, clearly legible, over-looked and safe (for all users, including pedestrians & cyclists).
- 3. Poor Connections Plan**
 - Missing links between good connections, or poor quality routes that are indirect, unclear and/or feel unsafe or insecure.
- 4. Connections Issues Plan**
 - Identification of key access issues. Either good or bad connections that are further illustrated with photographs on following sheets. Issues are numbered to correspond with photo sheets:
- 5. Poor Connections Issues Photo Sheet**
 - Photographic record of poor access connections in the Oxford West End, in and around the Oxpens site. Photos / issues numbered and annotated to correspond with Connections Issues Plan.
- 6. Good Connections Issues Photo Sheet**
 - Photographic record of good access connections in the Oxford West End, in and around the Oxpens site. Photos / issues numbered and annotated to correspond with Connections Issues Plan.
- 7. Indicative Improved Connections**
 - Illustration of indicative location of improvements to access routes within and around the Oxpens site. Improvements include new links through the Oxpens site (subject to further master plan design work), potential enhancement of existing routes in and around the Oxpens site and improvements to the section of Oxpens Road that is adjacent to the Oxpens site.


OXPENS LOCATION PLAN



 Oxpens Site Boundary

August 2012
OCC0004 / 035
Not to scale

0km 150m

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GOOD CONNECTIONS



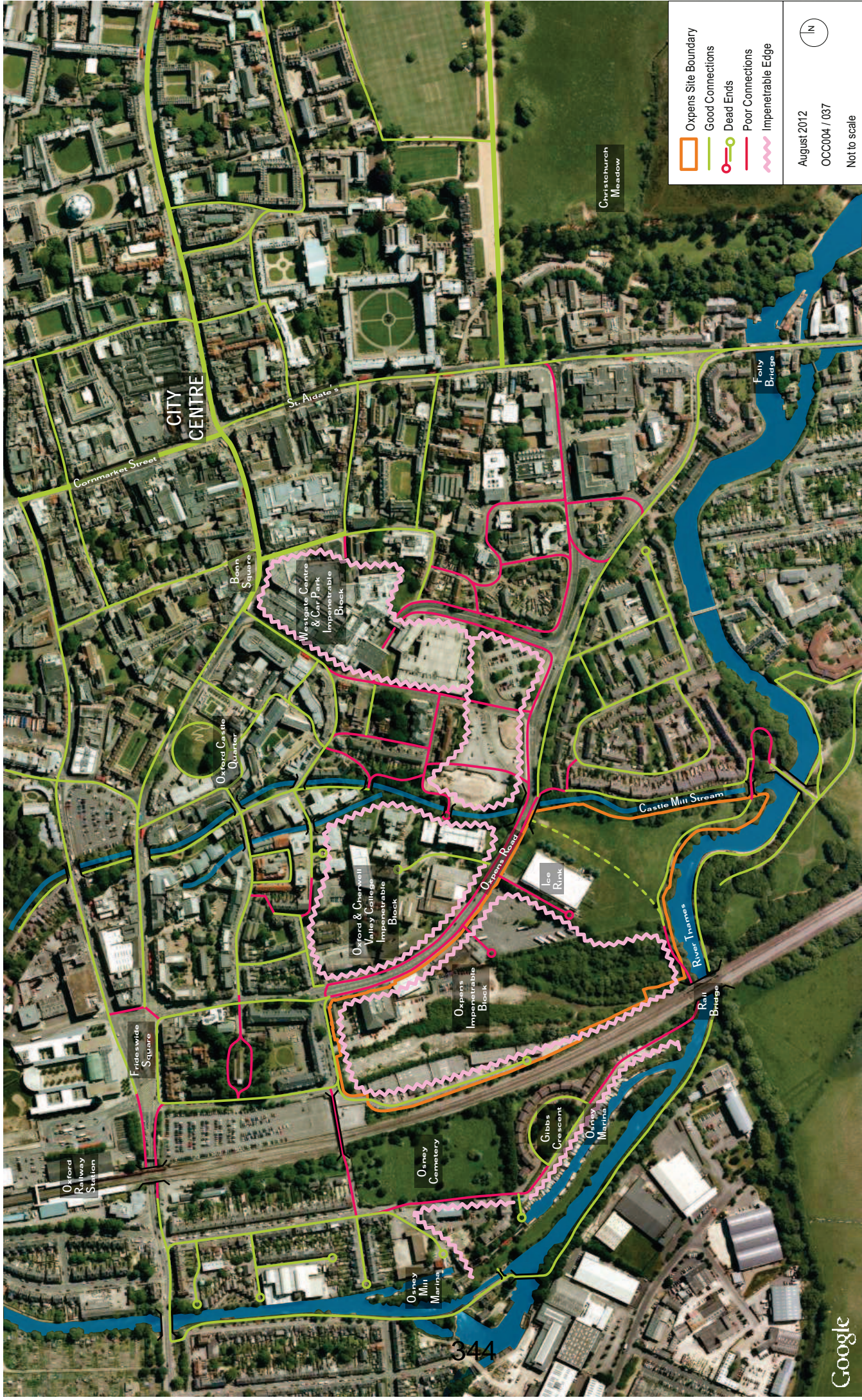
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0km 150m

David Lock Associates
Town Planning and Urban Design

OXPENS SPD AND MASTER PLAN

POOR CONNECTIONS



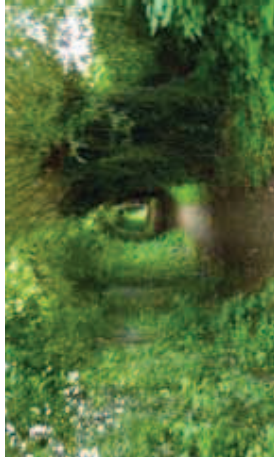
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POOR CONNECTIONS ISSUES PHOTO SHEET



1. Oxpens Road / Osney Lane junction: traffic dominated.



5. Narrow, overgrown, footpath between the river and Gibbs Crescent.



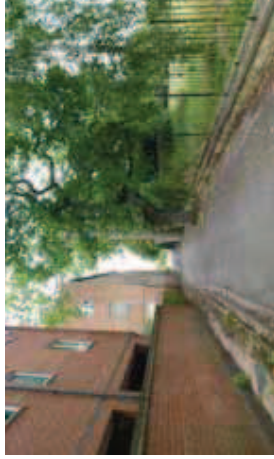
2. Oxpens Road: poor pedestrian experience and single crossing.



6. Dark footpath adjacent to blank gable end of Gibbs Crescent.



3. Oxpens Road and Westgate Car Park: traffic dominated, poor pedestrian experience.



7. Dark footpath adjacent to blank industrial gable end at southern end of Mill Street, Osney.



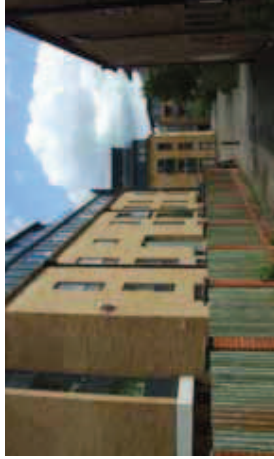
4. Dark, unsurveilled footpath on north bank of River Thames / Isis, under rail bridge.



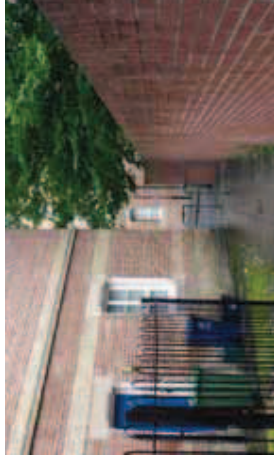
8. Exposed footbridge over rail line at Osney Lane.



9. Dark, unsurveilled footpath at Grandpont (former railway bridge).



10. Missing link in pedestrian route between Osney Lane and Woodins Way.



11. Dark, unsurveilled footpath link between St Thomas' Street and the Old Christchurch Buildings.



12. Dark, unsurveilled footpath between Castle Mill Stream and footbridge entrance to Oxford & Cherwell College



13. Dark, unsurveilled footpath link between Oxford & Cherwell College and Castle Mill Stream.



14. Dark, unsurveilled footpath link between Castle Mill Stream and Paradise Street.



15. Norfolk Street: clear, visible route to City Centre but poor public realm.



16. Old Greyfriars Street, Westgate car park: pedestrian routes behind railings deny crossing of street.

GOOD CONNECTIONS ISSUES PHOTO SHEET



1. Oxpens Meadow – informal footpath desire line between River Thames/Isis and Oxpens Road.



2. Oxpens Meadow – footpath along River Thames/Isis.



3. Castle Mill Stream, footpath overlooked by New St Ebbes housing.



4. Osney Lane, rich historic buildings, opportunity to enhance public realm.



5. Osney Lane, rich historic buildings, opportunity to enhance public realm.



6. Woodins Way, recent development with good pedestrian routes.



7. Woodins Way, recent development with good public realm, including small square.



8. Woodins Way, recent development with good pedestrian routes adjacent Castle Mill Stream.



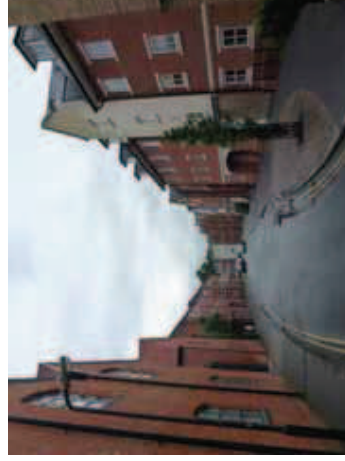
9. Section of Paradise Street fronted by high quality recent development.



10. Oxford Castle Quarter, new high quality public realm fronted by development.

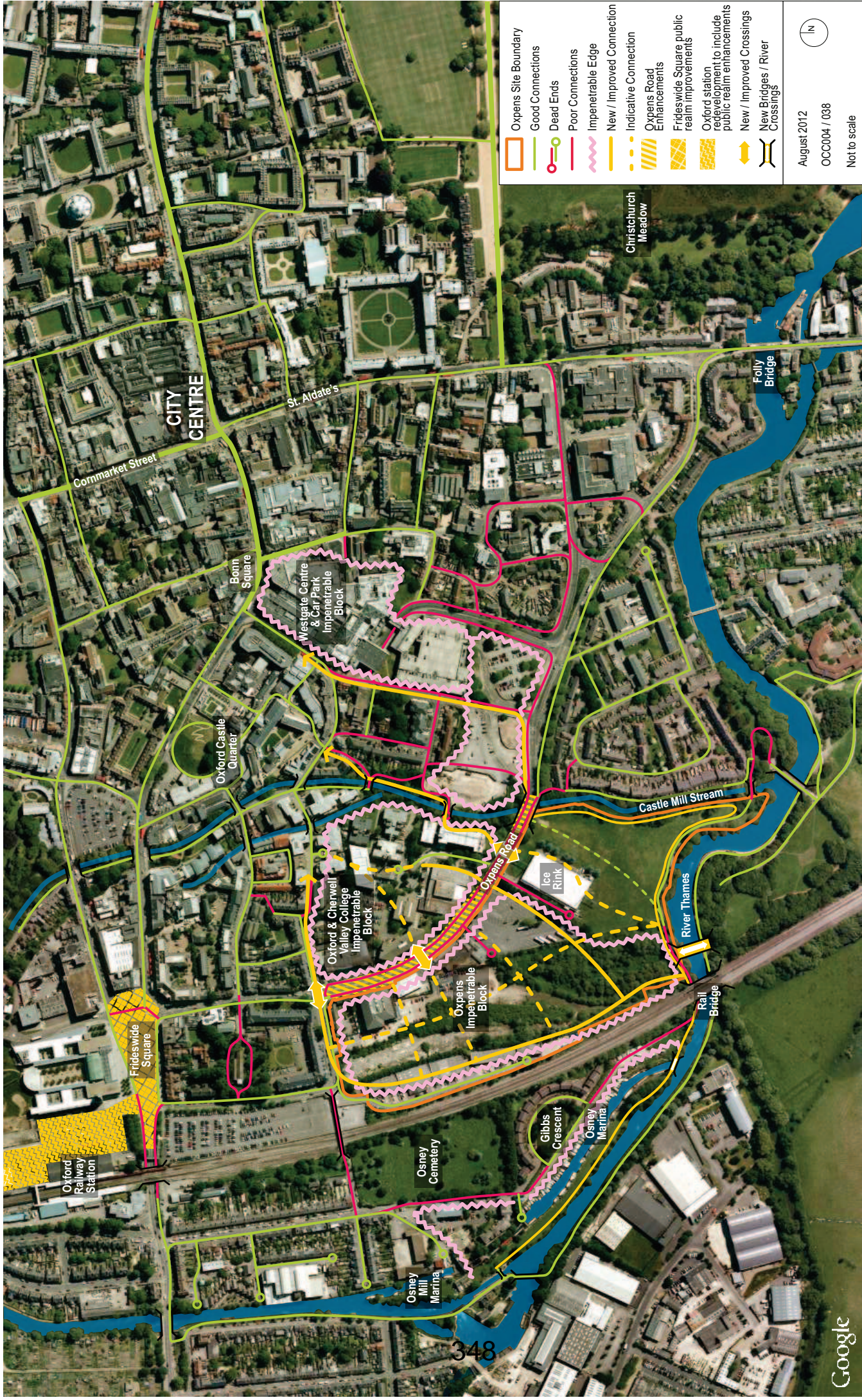


11. St Thomas' Street – The Lion Brewery high quality recent development with improved footpaths.



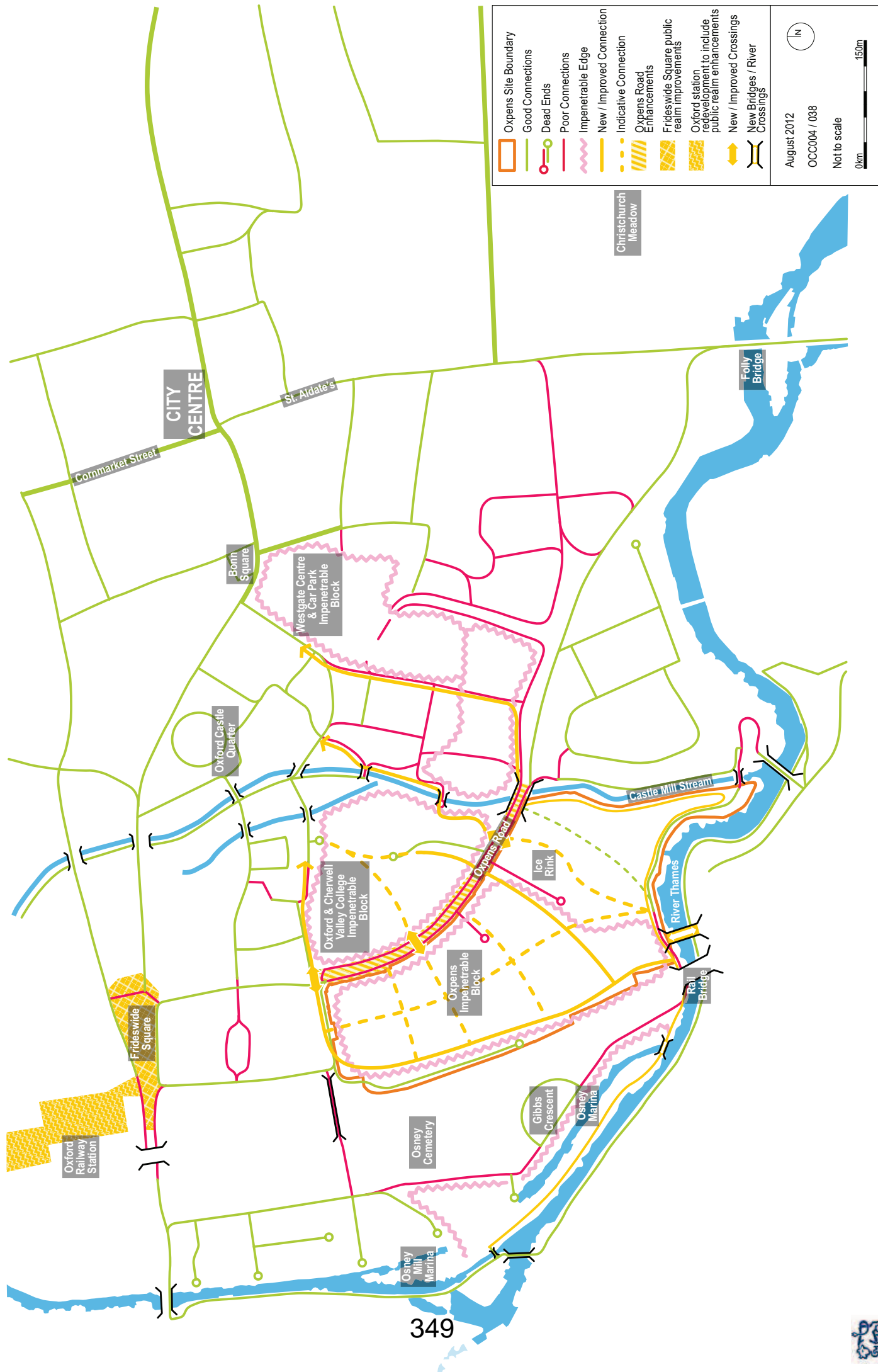
12. St Thomas' Street, attractive walking route.

INDICATIVE IMPROVED CONNECTIONS



August 2012
 OCC0004 / 038
 Not to scale
 0km 150m

INDICATIVE IMPROVED CONNECTIONS



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APPENDIX C:
OTHER LAND USE
CONSIDERATIONS

OTHER LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

- 1.1 The Oxpens Master Plan SPD presents a range of allowable land uses for the Oxpens site - see Allowable Land Uses in Chapter 6, Master Plan.
- 1.2 In addition to the allowable land uses for Oxpens a number of other land uses have been proposed for the site but are considered not appropriate.
- 1.3 Other land uses that have been considered by Oxford City Council for Oxpens, but are thought not appropriate for this site include the follow:
- Railway Station (relocated);
 - Construction Compound for Oxford Railway Station Redevelopment;
 - Bus Station / Bus Turn Around Facility;
 - Public Car Park; *and*
 - School.

Railway Station (relocated)

- 1.4 Oxford Railway Station is scheduled to be redeveloped in its current location. National funding for the redevelopment of the station on its existing site was announced by the Department for Transport (DfT) in July 2012.
- 1.5 The redevelopment of the station in its current location is aligned with other adjacent development projects including the public realm improvements scheme at Frideswide Square. Oxford City Council are proposing to commission the preparation of a Station Area Master Plan SPD to guide the development of the station and its immediate environs.

Construction Compound for Oxford Railway Station Redevelopment

- 1.6 Oxford City Council are aware of the need to provide an area of open land to accommodate the construction compound during the redevelopment of the Oxford Railway Station. This Master Plan SPD is informed by the assumption that this construction compound will be located close to the railway station, potentially on part of the Becket Street surface car park, as opposed to be positioned on part of the Oxpens site.

Bus Station / Bus Turn Around Facility

- 1.7 Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council have discussed the potential to create a new bus station within the Oxford West End. Oxpens has been considered as a potential site but for the purpose of this Master Plan SPD the bus station is assumed not to be accommodated within the Oxpens site. A possible location for the bus station may be within the wider area of around the Oxford Railway Station, this may be considered further in the preparation of the SPD Master Plan for the Oxford Station Area.

Car Park

- 1.8 During the redevelopment of the Westgate Centre the current car parks to the south of the Westgate Centre will be demolished to make way for new development. During this time of redevelopment alternative car parking may need to be provided within the city centre. The Oxpens site has been considered as an alternative location for temporary car parking but for the purposes of preparing this Master Plan SPD a car park is not included in the illustrative material.

School

- 1.9 Oxfordshire County Council have advised that a school is not required on the Oxpens site.

APPENDIX D:
OXFORD WEST END
DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES

DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES IN THE OXFORD WEST END

1.1 Other key sites and development proposals in the Oxford West End include the following:

- Westgate Centre redevelopment;
- Oxford & Cherwell Valley College site;
- Frideswide Square redevelopment;
- Oxford Railway Station redevelopment;
- Oxford Railway Station Area Master Plan; *and*
- The Magnet, Science Oxford's project to create a world-class centre for science and innovation in the Oxford West End.

1.2 In respect of Oxford Station, national level funding has been sought for infrastructure improvements in the Oxford corridor. A masterplan for the station area is underway, jointly commissioned by Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Network Rail.

1.3 The location of these proposals in relation to the Oxpens Master Plan site are illustrated in **Figure 3.1, Oxpens Site Location within the Oxford West End.**

1.4 Each of these schemes is an important consideration as context for the Oxpens Master Plan. An overview of key details for scheme is provided as follows.

Westgate Centre Redevelopment

1.5 The Westgate Centre is located to the south east of the Oxpens site and is the largest commercial / retail development proposal in Oxford, extending from the heart of the city centre, through the Oxford West End up to the Oxpens Road, opposite the Oxpens site.

<i>Planning Application submitted:</i>	10/00454/EXT (renewal of unimplemented full planning permission 06/01211/FUL) <i>Pending Decision</i> A new Westgate redevelopment Planning Application expected Summer 2013.
<i>Landowner:</i>	The Westgate Partnership
<i>Expected construction/completion date:</i>	Construction, from early service diversions and demolitions through to completion of the development, is likely to take around 4 years.
<i>Summary of Proposal:</i>	Mixed use development involving the alteration, refurbishment, part redevelopment and extension of the existing Westgate Centre to provide new retail and residential accommodation within Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, C3 and D1, erection of a replacement multi storey car park at Abbey Place and new access onto Thames Street, provision of new bus facilities and a bus priority route, environmental improvements to the public realm, associated highway access and landscape works, and other associated uses.

Oxford & Cherwell Valley College site potential redevelopment

1.6 Located directly opposite the Oxpens site on the north/east side of the Oxpens Road the College site has been subject of studies for potential redevelopment. Initial master planning work was undertaken in 2007 and has not been followed by any formal proposals to date. Reduction in funding for education redevelopment schemes has stalled progress with this site.

<i>Planning Application submitted:</i>	No application submitted Master plan for a college, housing and commercial elements designed (September 2007)
<i>Designer:</i>	RMJM
<i>Expected construction/completion date:</i>	Unknown
<i>Summary of Proposal:</i>	A master plan to provide a framework for the redevelopment of the Oxford and Cherwell Valley College's site at Oxpens Road in the near future.

Frideswide Square Redevelopment

1.7 Major redevelopment is due to be undertaken to enhance the public realm of Frideswide Square. This is an important consideration for the Oxpens site as it is situated north of the site, at the northern end of the Oxpens Road – Hollybush Row route.

<i>Planning Application submitted:</i>	Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet approved the Boulevard design option on 13 March 2012
<i>Designer:</i>	Hamilton-Baillie Associates & Powell Dobson Urbanists.
<i>Expected construction/completion date:</i>	Detailed design work on scheme is scheduled to be completed in Autumn 2013, with a target construction start date early in 2015.
<i>Summary of Proposal:</i>	Transform Frideswide Square – to create a square that can better handle the tens of thousands of journeys that use it every day, with traffic flowing slowly but steadily – creating a safe, efficient and attractive environment for all road users.

Oxford Railway Station Redevelopment

1.8 National level funding has been sought from the Department for Transport to finance the redevelopment of Oxford Railway Station and for infrastructure improvements in the Oxford corridor.

<i>Planning Application?</i>	<i>No application submitted:</i> Network Rail is still committed to the project, and has asked for funding between 2014 and 2019.
<i>Landowner:</i>	Network Rail
<i>Expected construction/completion date:</i>	End of 2018
<i>Summary of Proposal:</i>	A major station redevelopment to increase passenger and freight capacity, improve passenger facilities and create a multi-modal interchange.

Oxford Railway Station Area Master Plan SPD

1.9 A master plan for the station area is underway, jointly commissioned by Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Network Rail. Informed by the proposed redevelopment of the Railway Station the scope of the master plan extends to provide design guidance for the wider network of streets and blocks including Becket Street, as far south as the northern edge of the Oxpens Master Plan Site. It is important that both Master Plan SPDs (for Oxpens and Station Area) are complementary.

<i>Planning Application?</i>	<i>No application submitted:</i> Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council have formed a partnership with the Department of Transport and Network Rail to prepare a master plan which will outline the long-term vision for the station, as providing a gateway to Oxford West End.
<i>Landowner:</i>	Network Rail + others depending on boundary of master plan
<i>Expected construction/completion date:</i>	Unknown
<i>Summary of Proposal:</i>	Masterplan of Oxford station area including all rail proposals, such as the electrification, the East-West rail link, and the creation of the Evergreen 3 link from Oxford to London Marylebone via Bicester, to ensure that a new multi-modal interchange station is developed that is of a quality and experience that befits this important gateway to Oxford. Also, a new Becket Street platform will be considered along with the more extensive redevelopment.

The Magnet

1.10 The Magnet is Science Oxford's project to create a world-class centre for science and innovation in the Oxford West End. Further information on <http://www.themagnetoxford.com>:

Science Oxford has purchased a 0.5 acre site on which we will build The Magnet.

The site is roughly triangular and is bounded by New Road, Tidmarsh Lane and the historic Castle Mound. Both Macclesfield House and The Register Office will be demolished and replaced with a new three-storey building and basement designed by Foster + Partners.

The site is exceptionally well placed for visitors and has excellent access. It is conveniently located on a major thoroughfare linking the railway station to the city centre.¹

¹ The Magnet: for reference and further information please refer to <http://www.themagnetoxford.com>

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