

**To:** City Executive Board  
**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> October 2017  
**Report of:** Interim Assistant Chief Executive – Regeneration and Economy and Executive Director for Sustainable City  
**Title of Report:** Oxford Station Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To consider the public consultation responses and then subject to the proposed changes to adopt the Oxford Station Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Executive Board Members:</b>	Councillor Bob Price, Board Member for Economic Development  Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Planning and Regulatory Services
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	A vibrant and sustainable economy; and a cleaner and greener Oxford
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	The SPD will assist in the delivery of a key priority in the Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire, the planning policies of the documents which make up the Oxford Local Plan including the West End Area Action Plan.
<b>Recommendation(s): That the City Executive Board resolves to:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Adopt</b> the Oxford Station Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) as modified in the form set out in (Appendix 5)</li> <li>2. <b>Approve</b> the Oxford Station SPD as a material consideration in determining planning applications</li> <li>3. <b>Endorse</b> the accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Combined Screening and Scoping Report (Appendix 3)</li> <li>4. <b>Authorise</b> the Head of Planning Sustainable Development and Regulatory Services to make any necessary editorial corrections to the document prior to publication, in consultation with the Interim assistant Chief Executive for Regeneration &amp; Economy, and Board Members for Planning and Economy.</li> </ol>	

<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1	Public participation statement
Appendix 2	Summary of public consultation responses received and proposed changes to the SPD
Appendix 3	SEA Combined Screening and Scoping Report
Appendix 4	Risk Assessment
Appendix 5	Oxford Station SPD (may be found via this link <a href="http://www.oxford.gov.uk/oxfordstationspd">www.oxford.gov.uk/oxfordstationspd</a> )

### **Introduction and background**

1. The City Executive Board is asked to consider the responses from the public consultation and subject to approving the changes proposed to adopt the Oxford Station Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Appendix 5).
2. The Oxford Station Masterplan (2013) was prepared by the tripartite partnership of Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Network Rail in conjunction with the Train Operating Companies and the Department for Transport. The mission of the masterplan was:
 

*‘To develop a rail hub and interchange for Oxford, reflecting its status as a world class city and a global centre for innovation and learning, and responding to its internationally recognised heritage assets.’*
3. The masterplan objectives, agreed in 2013, were to ‘provide an exemplary gateway to Oxford’; ‘meet operational demands for expected rail growth over the next 30 years’; to ‘act as a catalyst to encourage a wider regeneration in Oxford’; and to be ‘deliverable, flexible and represent good value for money.’
4. The SPD developed and informed by the master plan work supports the delivery of development to meet planning policy objectives, helping to address Oxford’s social, economic and environmental needs, in particular the City’s growing economy, housing shortage and its transport capacity. The SPD provides a more detailed framework together with some design principles to help to deliver this development.

### **Strategic context**

5. The Oxford Station Masterplan highlighted the strategic rail improvements and upgrades and focused on the need for a major overhaul of Oxford’s Station and its immediate surroundings. A significant amount of exploratory work has therefore been undertaken with partners to explore the impacts and improvements that should accompany this transformation.

6. At Oxford Station, vital capacity enhancements are required for the rail and road corridor which will have local, regional and nationally significant network capacity and regeneration benefits. The provision of a new Station at Oxford is a top priority for the city as recognised in the Strategic Economic Plan. The regeneration benefits will be unlocked by first addressing the transport capacity constraints at Botley Bridge. The redevelopment of the station has the potential to bring further economic benefits to the city through the potential re-opening of the Cowley branch line linking the City centre to the Cowley area.

### **Pre- stakeholder and public engagement**

7. An Interim Public Participation Statement (early stage consultation) was published and made available at the City Council's offices, setting out how Oxford City Council has engaged and consulted with stakeholders and the public. This interim statement provided details of the informal engagement, consultation activities and resulting feedback relating to the pre-production stage of the SPD.
8. The outputs from an architectural competition undertaken in 2015, together with the feedback from the Oxford Design Review Panel masterplan workshop helped to inform the content of the SPD which has built upon rather than reinvented the previous work undertaken.
9. The City Council has continued to work with its primary partners, Network Rail and Oxfordshire County Council in developing the SPD and has carried out early stage engagement with a wide range of stakeholders through the Oxford Station Working Group and the West End Steering Group and has sought to reflect their responses to the SPD in the changes being proposed.

### **Purpose of the SPD**

10. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) gives detail to existing adopted policies. There are many adopted policies that are likely to be relevant to the development of this site, including the Core Strategy and the West End Area Action Plan. The West End AAP in particular was prepared as a policy framework to 'guide future development and change in the West End' area of the city. The AAP was considered to be 'both a policy and a delivery tool'. It identifies the Oxford Railway Station and the Becket Street car park as future development sites and recognised the importance of strategic infrastructure to enable the West End and its wider environment to function 'particularly transport and utilities.'
11. The SPD will help to realise the vision to create an integrated transport hub and serve as a distinctive gateway to Oxford. It provides further advice and guidance on the mix of uses and design principles to realise the development potential of the Station area and act as a catalyst for the wider regeneration of the West End.
12. Once the landowner is ready, detailed plans for the site can be drawn up based on the guidance in this SPD and provide the framework for a planning application to be made. The advice and guidance is intended to show how the Station area can be developed within key design principles but, as set out in the illustrative master plan, recognising the flexibility required to support alternative innovative design solutions. The SPD will help to provide certainty for both the developer and the public to inform a future planning application.

13. The SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, supporting the policies of the adopted Core Strategy and the West End AAP in particular. The SPD provides clarity and advice on how the City Council's adopted planning policies should be implemented. The SPD is a material consideration and its weight in planning terms will increase as it proceeds through the adoption process.

## **Content of the SPD**

### *Vision and objectives*

14. The vision is that *'the Oxford Station area development will create a distinctive new gateway to Oxford, contributing to a vibrant new quarter and a fully integrated transport hub linking the station area with the City and beyond.'*

The objectives are:

- to be responsive to surrounding developments and the wider West End AAP and identify a 'zone of influence' for proposed enhancements;
- to define a new townscape reference for the Station area with a cluster of architecturally significant buildings around the Station and Frideswide Squares;
- to highlight the need to deliver cohesive public realm between the Station area and surrounding context, particularly along key station approach routes to the City centre
- to emphasise balanced east-west connectivity from Oxford Station through delivery of a Station building with access on both sides of the tracks
- to promote active frontages along Becket Street, Botley Road and Station Square
- to identify a preferred land-use mix that establishes the Station area as the 'gateway hub of Oxford' with commercial, residential and networking spaces, which complement the surrounding developments.

### *Design principles*

15. This explores the contribution required in urban design terms to improve the character and identity of the area. The SPD provides advice on some key design principles which would inform the urban form, views and accent buildings; the potential scale and massing of future buildings (subject to detailed design); the land use mix; public realm and amenity space; together with guidance on pedestrian, cycle and vehicle access and movements and the need for new development should positively respond to climate change.
16. The SPD proposes design principles for station buildings and station squares, which need to be designed and built to create a prominent and high quality building and public spaces that will help to define the Station area.

### *Illustrative Masterplan*

17. The Illustrative masterplan has been developed from the design principles and includes an illustrative layout along with possible variants that would respond to different design approaches to allow for flexibility and the future operational

requirements of Network Rail. It promotes viable uses including office space, hotel and residential making efficient use of land and optimising the quantum of supporting development that can attract private sector investment in addition to public funding.

### **Public consultation undertaken**

18. Formal public participation on the Oxford Station SPD took place for an eight-week period from 30<sup>th</sup> June to 25<sup>th</sup> August 2017. The Public Participation Statement (Appendix 1) was updated and sets out in detail how Oxford City Council engaged and consulted with the public, key stakeholders and statutory consultees on the Oxford Station Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in accordance with Regulation 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012<sup>1</sup>, and the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

### **Public Consultation response and proposed changes**

19. **Statutory Consultees:** The statutory consultees were formally consulted about the Oxford Station SPD. No objections were received from either the Environment Agency or Natural England (Appendix 2).
20. In accordance with the City Council's approved Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) a questionnaire was made available both on-line via the City Council's Consultation system and in 'hard' copy at the City Council's offices, exhibitions and within the libraries around the city. The public and stakeholders were also offered the opportunity to submit responses by letter or email.
21. The public consultation, as set out in the Public Consultation Statement, Appendix 1 shows the extensive consultation undertaken with both partners and key stakeholders during the course of the exhibitions held at both the City Council's offices and St. Aldates, Chambers together with an in-depth discussion with residents at a drop-in session held at the Town Hall.
23. **Questionnaire response:** A summary of the key findings from the questionnaire is set out in Appendix 2. There were 99 responses to the questionnaire of which the majority 55% of the respondents either agreed or agreed strongly with the vision and objectives set out in the Oxford Station SPD.
24. The public and key stakeholders were asked for their views on the eight design principles set out in the SPD.
  - there was strong support (62%) for the need to improve pedestrian and cycle links at the Station area and to integrate better with the transport network and for the creation of new public spaces to promote a greater sense of arrival to the City.

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<sup>1</sup> With effect from 6th April 2012, the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument 2004 No. 2204) were replaced by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (Statutory Instrument 2012 No. 767). Therefore 2004 Regulation 18 was replaced by 2012 Regulations 12(b) and 13.

- positive support (59%) was received for the creation of new public spaces and the need to create a greater sense of arrival;
  - there was support (52%) for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site to deliver a new multi-modal transport interchange; together with
  - a recognition (58%) that the design principle relating to urban form, views and buildings will be important in ensuring that this redevelopment has a good standard of urban design which can significantly improve both the character and appearance of the City centre.
25. The design principle for car and taxi movement was however not supported by the respondents, 51% of whom either disagreed or disagreed strongly. This largely reflected the concerns expressed by the Abbey Road and Cripsey Road residents about the creation of new short-term parking, staff parking and a drop-off and pick up point being proposed to the west of the Station.
26. In relation to the question about the design approach taken for the four key development components on the Station Area, strong support (79%) was received for the approach taken for the Station and Station Square East. A majority of people (53%) both supported the proposals for the Corner development site and the Bus Interchange and multi-storey car park. The lowest amount of support (43%) was for the design treatment of the Western Station entrance, which reflected residents' concerns.
27. Further comments were invited on the Illustrative masterplan and other comments generally. The responses received were varied and covered a wide range of comments, which are summarised briefly in Appendix 2. In the majority of cases the key concerns and issues raised are reflected by those identified by the key stakeholders, residents groups and amenity bodies set out and responded to in Appendix 2 together with the proposed changes to the SPD put forward below.
28. **Stakeholders response:** 46 individual letters and emails were received from a range of key stakeholders, organisations, residents groups, amenity bodies, landowners and individual residents. There was strong support from a number of the partners and key stakeholders who have been working in partnership with the City Council through the early master planning stages. The redevelopment of this site for a new Station has been a priority for the City Council and forms part of the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).
29. The main areas of concern and the focus of the issues expressed by key stakeholders together with the officers' response and proposed changes is set out in detail in Appendix 2. However using these main areas of concern as a heading, and in brackets some of the key organisations who responded, the main proposed changes to the SPD are set out briefly below.

### **Funding, Viability and Design Principles** (*Network Rail and County Council*)

30. The role of the SPD is to provide advice and guidance to show how the Station site can be redeveloped to provide a new Station together with the supporting commercial uses. Its role is to set out the place making aspirations for the area, for new development to respond to. However, redevelopment of the station area will

require a phased approach to both funding and development. The SPD will be amended to reflect the progress already made for funding and the potential for future sources; confirm that all of the proposed uses are considered to be viable, through a phased development of the site; and that the City Council will continue to work jointly with the County Council and partners to ensure a funded deliverable scheme. In addition, amendments will be made to the SPD to allow for flexibility to respond to any potential currently unforeseen opportunities, subject to compliance with general design principles.

**Impact on residential amenity** (*ACRA, Christchurch, Rewley Management Co, Liberal Democrat Group, local residents*)

31. A new section has been included in SPD on the character of the 'residential areas' near the Station, including the west of the Station, Rewley Park and area around St. Thomas' church. The design principles will include reference to the need to assess the relationship and potential impact of new development on residential areas. The proposed short-stay parking spaces to the West of the Station will be relocated to Becket Street area and the potential for redesigning the scale and mass of the operational building. Parking provision will be retained for people with disabilities and staff parking for operational purposes. The trees along Cripsey Road will be subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to facilitate consideration of the role of trees and landscape in the wider regeneration and redevelopment of the area. The sustainability section and design principles will include reference to the importance of providing 'green infrastructure'. The access and movement section will include the need for a redesign of Roger Dudman Way and Cripsey Road together with the access points and the importance of maintaining vehicular and cycle access to existing areas.

**Cycle and pedestrian routes, access, movement and parking** (*Cyclox, Univ. of Oxford, Cllr. Pressel, County Council, Liberal Democrat Group and residents*)

32. Convenient and safe access and movement within the Station area for both pedestrian and cyclists is a top priority and will be emphasised in the design principles. The option of providing some further cycle spaces to the west side of the Station will also be included. Additional text on cycle proposals as set out in the Oxford Transport Strategy and LTP4 will be added. Further detailed work will need to be undertaken at the detailed design stage to ensure that cycle provision is made under Botley Bridge in line with the County Council's requirements for its designation as a Cycle Super Route; and access and signage arrangements are provided. Cycle parking of 2,450 covered cycle stands represents the minimum parking requirement and opportunities for additional cycle space will be encouraged. Innovative cycle parking facilities will be promoted through the design principles.

**Bus interchange and access** (*Oxford Bus Com, Rail Future, Christchurch, Oxford Civic Society, North Hinksey NP*)

33. The bus interchange is an important component of the creation of a 'transport interchange' the importance of ensuring the interchange between modes is recognised. Further supporting text will therefore be added to strengthen this key

role. Additional content will provide further information on proposed pedestrian and cycle routes and how they relate to the Station site area. The proposed access arrangements and possible design solutions will be explored further as the scheme is developed in more detail.

34. The City Council will continue to work with the bus and coach operators and the County Council as highway authority to ensure the appropriate design solution for the bus interchange is achieved and that access arrangements to and from the site are as efficient as possible to avoid any undue delay in journey times. The bus movement and interchange section of the design principles shows an alternative layout with 'islands'. The options in the SPD are indicative only and do not rule out other solutions

**Parking:** *(ACRA, Christchurch, Univ of Oxford)*

35. Short-stay parking on west-side of Station will be relocated to the Becket Street area, thus limiting parking on the west to people with disabilities and staff operational parking only.

**Oxford's identity and local distinctiveness** *(Oxford Preservation Trust, residents)*

36. The 'heritage context' has been reviewed in the light of the detailed comments received, particularly in relation to the Swing Bridge and St. Thomas's Church. The scale and massing section has been revised to include further details on the need to consider the 'local' and 'longer' views and the Oxford View Cones Assessment. The Illustrative master plan provides the opportunity to show that different options for elements of the development can be explored offering different design solutions. The SPD seeks to provide some necessary flexibility for innovative designs which comply with the design principles.

**Roger Dudman Way / Cripsey Road** *(ACRA, Univ. of Oxford, Christchurch & local residents)*

37. The access and movement section has been amended to include a redesign of Roger Dudman Way and Cripsey Road together with access points and the need to maintain access for both vehicles and cyclists who already use these routes. The City Council will need to discuss with the County Council as highway authority the need to consider appropriate traffic management measures at the junction with Roger Dudman Way and Botley Road.

**Botley Road Bridge** *(Cyclox, Cllr. Pressel, North Hinksey NP)*

38. A further assessment will need to be undertaken at the detailed design stage to show what changes to the levels in the Botley Road may be required together with any traffic management measures. The needs of pedestrians and cyclists will be taken into account to ensure they fully satisfy the County Council's requirements for the designation as a 'Cycle Super Route'.

**Public realm** (*Oxford Civic Society, Cyclox, County Council, residents*)

40. The creation of a high quality public realm within the Station Square East is a key component of the SPD, which will focus principally on promoting pedestrian and cycle priority. The detailed design of this space will be set out in a comprehensive Design and Access Statement as part of any planning application. A City centre movement and public realm strategy has recently been commissioned to provide part of the evidence base to inform the Local Plan and any key findings that emerge from that study will be taken into account alongside the key design principles of this SPD as the redevelopment of the Station site is taken forward.

**Sustainability and renewable energy** (*ACRA, Oxford Bus Co, Liberal Democrat Group and some residents*)

41. Additional text will be added to the 'sustainability' design principle to highlight the need for the new developments to respond to sustainable and renewable energy issues and climate change. This will include mention of 'green infrastructure', the need to address issue of 'urban heat islands', promotion of green / brown roofs for biodiversity and mitigation measures to reduce light and pollution that use latest technology.
42. New development should have regard to flooding and sustainable drainage issues, with consideration given to renewables and a carbon-neutral approach. The text will reference the emerging approaches on sustainability principles set out in the Preferred Option of the Local Plan 2036 together with the City Council's Sustainable Strategy.

**The next stages**

43. The City Executive Board is asked to adopt the Oxford Station SPD and authorise the Head of Planning Sustainable Development and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Interim assistant Chief Executive for Regeneration & Economy, and Board Members for Planning and Economy to make any editorial corrections necessary prior to the publication.

**Environmental impact**

44. While Sustainability Appraisal is no longer required for SPDs under UK law, there is still a requirement to look at whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment could be needed for and SPD. As such, to comply with European regulations, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Combined Screening and Scoping Report, was produced to identify whether the SPD would be likely to have any significant environmental impacts and whether or not an SEA is needed for the SPD. This can be found at Appendix 3. This exercise found that further work on flooding and transport should be undertaken, (this additional work has now been completed), but that no SEA was required because a Sustainability Appraisal was conducted on the SPD's parent document – the West End Area Action Plan (WEAAP) – because the SPD simply supplemented the policies in the AAP rather than adding to them no SEA was required. The statutory consultees for the SEA (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) were consulted again on the Combined Screening and Scoping Report and no objections were raised.

### Financial implications

45. Any further work on the production of the Supplementary Planning Document and supporting documents will be undertaken by Partnerships, Regeneration and Economy Team using current resources.

### Legal issues

46. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) may be included as part of the local development documents file, but do not have the full status of a development plan document. They are not subject to independent examination and do not strictly speaking form part of the development plan for the area. They add detail to the plan and are a material consideration in planning applications. They must be consistent with national planning policy.

47. Any person with locus standii (meaning a legitimate interest) can challenge the adoption of an SPD. This must be made promptly and, in any event within three months of adoption.

### Level of risk

48. A risk assessment has been undertaken and the risk register is attached (Appendix 4). All risks have been mitigated to an acceptable level.

### Equalities impact

49. Consideration has been given to the public sector equality duty imposed by s149 of the Equality Act 2010. Having paid due regard to the need to meet the objectives of that duty and of the SPD the view is taken that the duty is met.

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**Background Papers:** None