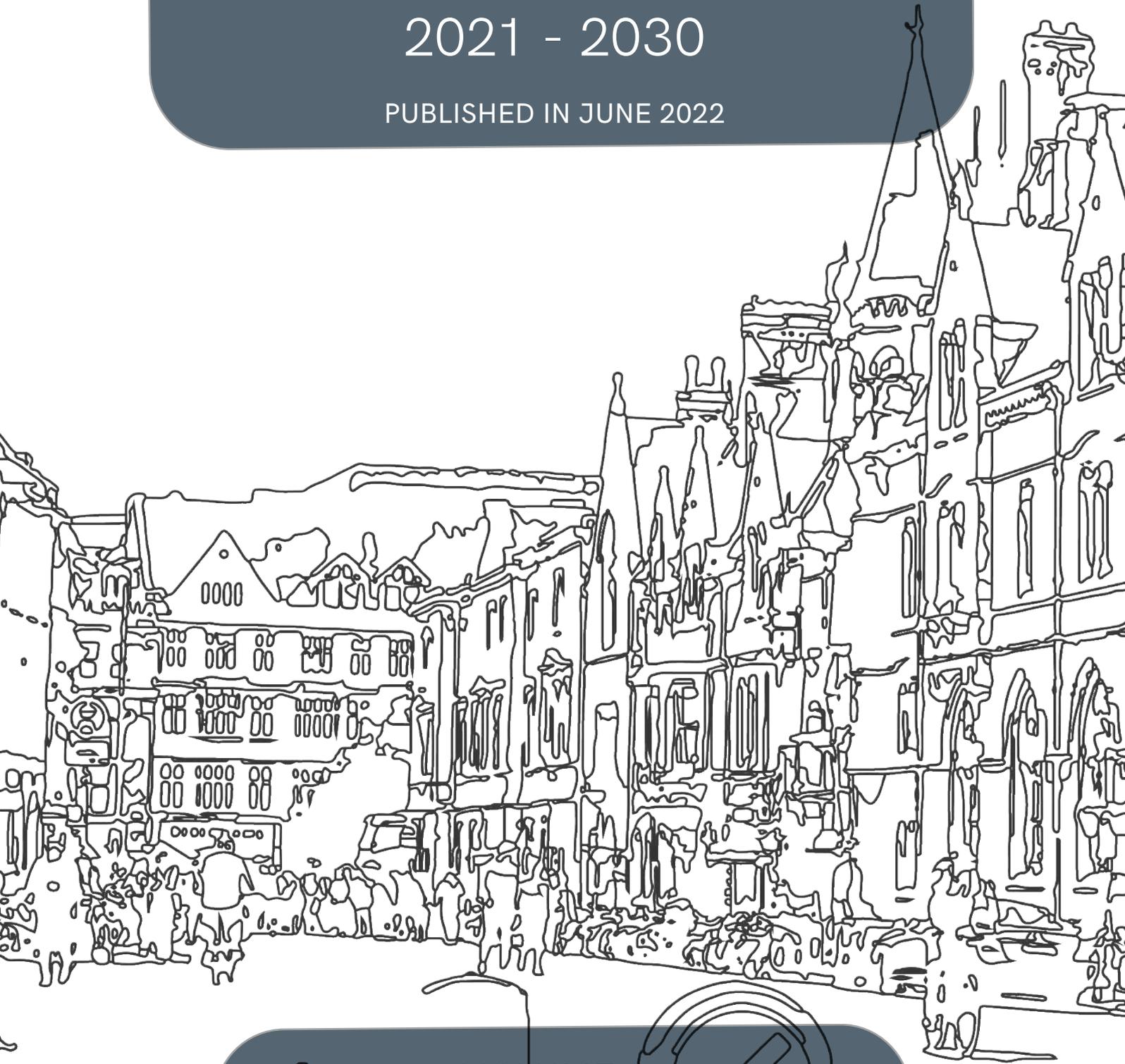


OXFORD CITY CENTRE ACTION PLAN

2021 - 2030

PUBLISHED IN JUNE 2022



VOLUME 2
ACTION PLAN & IMPLEMENTATION

CONTENTS

CITY CENTRE ACTION PLAN | VOLUME 1



CONTEXT

Part A provides a headline profile of Oxford's city centre alongside a summary of its primary strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, as well as a summary of the actions already underway to support a positive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.



APPROACH

Part B defines a hierarchy of the Action Plan and presents the four distinct workstreams and their clear objectives, which drive the projects and commitments within the Action Plan.

CITY CENTRE ACTION PLAN | VOLUME 2

ACTION PLAN

Part C outlines the catalyst initiatives and projects that will support Oxford in achieving the objectives of this Action Plan, grouped by workstream. Full project details can be found in the Projects & Places Appendix.

IMPLEMENTATION

Part D sets out how change will be coordinated across stakeholders. Responsibility for leading on and supporting delivery will be shared by a range of different organisations.



CITY CENTRE ACTION PLAN | PROJECTS & PLACES APPENDIX



PROJECTS

This section provides further detail on the catalyst initiatives and projects that will support Oxford in achieving the objectives of this Action Plan, grouped by workstream.

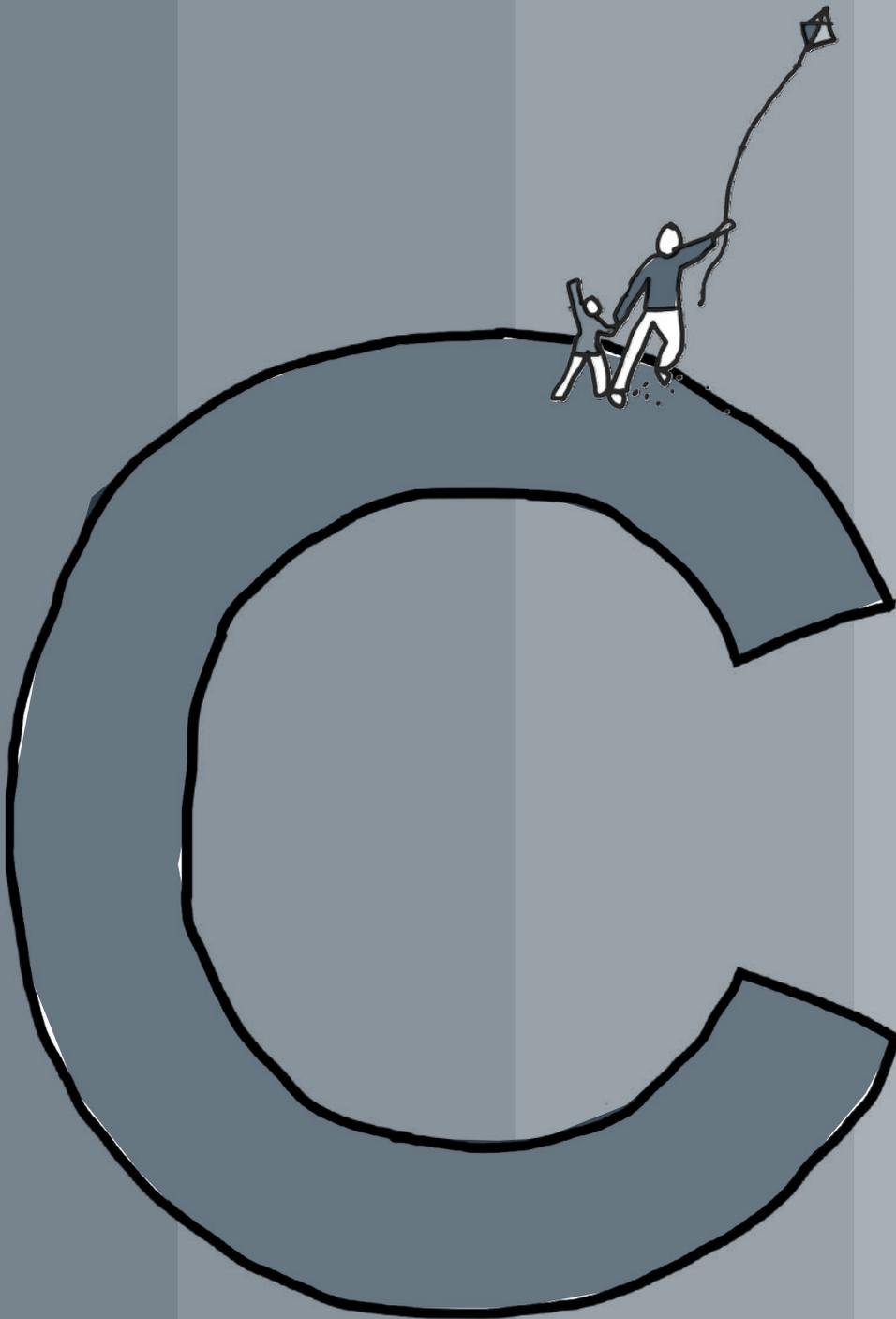


STREET-BY-STREET

This section explores some potential location-specific opportunities and considerations for an improved public realm across Oxford city centre, to help define the scope for a public realm strategy.

CITY CENTRE ACTION PLAN | **VOLUME 2**

<u>PART C: ACTION PLAN</u>	4
CONNECTIVITY & ACCESS	6
PUBLIC REALM & ANIMATION	8
GETTING THE MIX RIGHT	10
GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT	12
<u>PART D: IMPLEMENTATION</u>	14
GOVERNANCE	16
PROJECT TIMELINES	18



ACTION PLAN

Part C outlines the catalyst initiatives and projects that will support Oxford in achieving the objectives of this Action Plan, grouped by workstream. Full project details can be found in the Projects & Places Appendix.

CONNECTIVITY & ACCESS



1 CONNECTIVITY & ACCESS

Limit private vehicles, reduce conflict and congestion, and create space for buses, bikes, and people.

DESCRIPTION

While Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council are taking significant steps to improve the connectivity and access arrangements across the city centre through proposals such as the Core Transport Schemes and the Zero Emission Zone, there is still much to do.

Actively planning for an increase in the use of more sustainable modes, as well as enhancing the arrival experience, are major priorities for the city.

While reducing through car journeys and promoting active travel are core objectives, they come with a commitment to take into account the needs of people who rely on vehicles to access the city centre and to recognise the importance of disabled parking bays, availability of taxi locations, bus drop off and pick up points close to destinations, and sufficient space and suitable surfaces for those in wheelchairs on pavements and at crossing points.

OBJECTIVES



PROJECTS

P1.1

Core Transport Scheme Proposals

The Core Transport Scheme proposals aim to reduce congestion; reprioritise road space for public transport, active travel, civic uses and businesses; and reduce pollution. Proposed measures being considered include traffic filters, a workplace parking levy, new and improved bus, cycling and walking routes.

P1.2

Zero Emission Zone

Oxford Zero Emission Zone (ZEMZ) aims to reduce air pollution, tackle the climate emergency, and improve health by introducing a charge for vehicles entering the zone based on their emissions. Only 100% zero emission vehicles would be able to enter the zone free of charge (subject to exemptions). A pilot ZEMZ in the heart of the city centre is scheduled to start in early 2022.

P1.3

Oxford Railway Station Redevelopment

Oxford Railway Station will be undergoing significant transformation to facilitate an anticipated doubling of passengers, allowing East-West rail service improvements including more trains to London faster, frequent direct trains to Cambridge, and potential direct connection to Bristol. Improvements include two new railway lines and platforms, a new western entrance and station building on the Botley Road, and a multi modal transport interchange.

P1.4

Oxpens & Osney Mead Connectivity

The delivery of a new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the Thames between Oxpens and Grandpont, and path improvements between the proposed bridge and Osney Mead will provide convenient, attractive and improved connectivity for walking and cycling between the city centre, Rail Station and Osney Mead.

P1.5

New Delivery (and Collection) Solutions

To reduce the impact of freight trips by large and / or polluting vehicles in and around Oxford's city centre, we will work with Oxfordshire County Council on exploring options around freight consolidation and develop proposals for new delivery and collection solutions that will also benefit Oxford's businesses.

P1.6

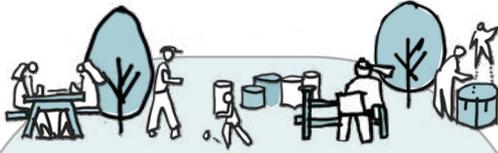
Visitor Coach Strategy

Support Oxfordshire County Council in short and long term options for where visitor coaches can drop and layover in a way that lessens negative impacts, aligns to the Core Transport Scheme proposals, but supports visitor trips.

P1.7

Park & Ride Enhancements

Oxford City Council is committed to work with Oxfordshire County Council to evolve and enhance the offer of existing Park & Rides. This forms part of the strategy in the Local Transport Plan (LPT4) to enhance the current five Park & Ride sites and increase capacity in the city's outer ring.



2 PUBLIC REALM & ANIMATION

Improve the public realm and provide events and experience to animate it and boost dwell times.

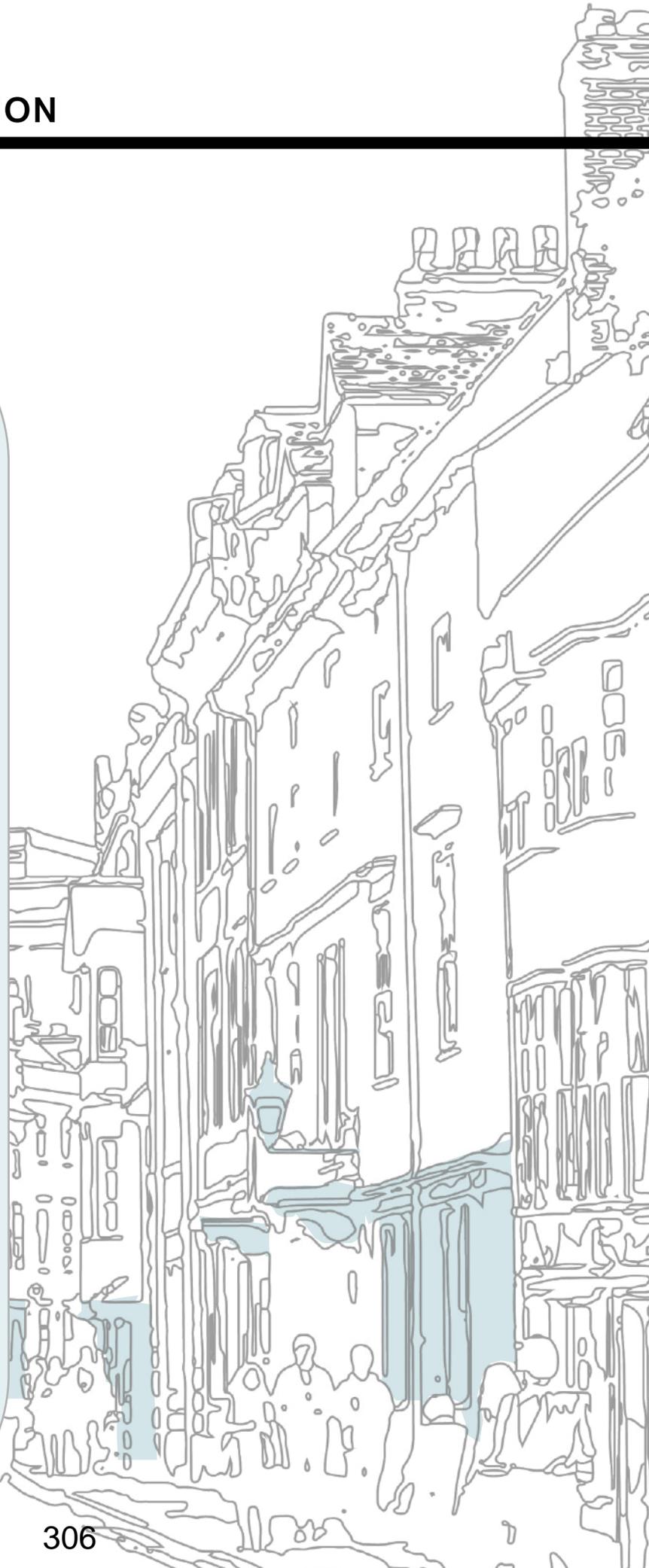
DESCRIPTION

The quality of the public realm and experience of the city centre for residents and visitors does not always befit the city's global status. A high quality public realm is fundamental to establishing a vibrant city centre.

There is also a lack of publicly accessible green space in the city centre, and the waterways are often inaccessible. This results in low biodiversity, natural resilience, and connectivity to nature in the city centre core.

To achieve long term improvements a public realm strategy that encourages new activities and greater dwell times, and allows people to enjoy high quality, outdoor public spaces is needed. To achieve this, it must be considered alongside a movement framework that re-prioritises road space based on congestion being reduced through the proposed Core Transport Schemes.

OBJECTIVES



PROJECTS

P2.1

City Centre Public Realm & Movement Strategy

The Public Realm & Movement Strategy will, subject to funding, revisit traffic management and prioritisation in the city centre in a comprehensive way to support a more comfortable, less congested experience for people using the city centre, to encourage increased dwell time and access for sustainable travel. The strategy will also set out wider public realm improvements including exploration of further pedestrianisation options, and increasing the amount of public green space and biodiversity in the city centre core.

P2.2

Interim Public Realm Improvements

There are several interventions that are not reliant on movement and, therefore, can be progressed alongside development of a wider public realm strategy under Project 2.1 subject to funding being secured. This includes short term interventions which would not undermine a longer-term strategy. This project, therefore, highlights public realm improvements that support the city centre's unique identity and strengthen its economy that are not reliant on strategic interventions.

P2.3

City Centre Shopfront Design Advice

Oxford City Council has developed a Shopfront and Signage Design Guide, which takes the form of a planning Technical Advice Note (TAN) accompanying Oxford's Local Plan 2036. This has the aim of conserving and enhancing Oxford's architecture, public realm, heritage and image.

The Street-by-Street section in the Projects & Places Appendix focuses on the 12 streets or groups of streets that make up the 'outdoor' city centre.

GETTING THE MIX RIGHT



3 GETTING THE MIX RIGHT

Building on Oxford's world-class innovative and creative spirit, enhance the city centre as a place to live, start and grow a business, visit, and play.

DESCRIPTION

Oxford city centre has a strong profile of shops and businesses, attracting national brands, as well as strengths in knowledge, innovation, creative and cultural sectors.

However, high retail rents, the decline and displacement of big retail and businesses, and a lack of suitable workspace have created a challenging environment for shops and businesses - especially SMEs and social enterprises. A lack of affordable housing has created a centre reliant on workers and visitors, and challenges for recruiting staff.

There is a lack of community gathering spaces and live music venues.

There is an opportunity to diversify the centre's mix of uses, providing new and flexible spaces for businesses, and enhancing the residential, community, and night time offer. The development of the West End provides a major opportunity, as it will increase and diversify the residential and commercial offer and create an innovation district of national significance.

OBJECTIVES



PROJECTS

- P3.1 Oxford West End**
Oxford West End is the largest-scale mixed-use development the city centre has seen and one of the largest transformation opportunities in the UK. A series of coordinated developments are being brought forward as part of an over-arching vision co-created by local landowners and stakeholders to deliver an innovation district. Together these have the scale to meet urgent demand for start-ups, spin-outs, and HQs in the city centre, alongside new homes, including affordable homes.
- P3.2 City Centre Major Development Projects**
Major development projects and sites will be advanced in a holistic manner. This includes working with developers and stakeholders on a coordinated approach to curating the mix of uses, public realm improvements, maximising the social value of development, and construction impacts.
- P3.3 Target & Reduce Vacant Units including 'Meanwhile in Oxfordshire...' Project**
Work with landlords and agents to reduce the number of vacant city centre units, including the reduction of underutilised upper floor space. In addition to seeking long-term occupancy, this will target the temporary use of vacant buildings, partly via the ongoing 'Meanwhile in Oxfordshire...' project.
- P3.4 Covered Market Evolution**
There are a number of strategies being developed to support the successful long-term viability of the Covered Market and its businesses. This includes a leasing and operating strategy, a masterplan, a heritage-led asset management & maintenance plan, an activation and animation strategy, a branding & marketing strategy, and an environmental sustainability strategy.
- P3.5 Workspace**
In order to deliver on the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy vision which positions Oxford as one of the world's top three innovation ecosystems, Oxford needs space for high-value priority sectors to grow and expand as well as affordable space for small businesses, social enterprise, and the third sector.
- P3.6 Stimulate the Night-Time Economy**
Support business owners and managers to develop a programme of recovery and rebuild measures for the night-time economy, including exploring the potential for new and diversified uses of buildings alongside their primary uses. Protect existing music and arts venues, and explore opportunities for new ones.
- P3.7 Culture and Creative Businesses**
Work with landowners to provide the right spaces and leases in the city centre for independent, cultural and creative businesses, and develop opportunities to widen and strengthen the role and presence of these communities.

GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT



4 GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT

Create an inclusive, safe, and attractive city centre that mediates and promotes the diverse range of activities and uses.

DESCRIPTION

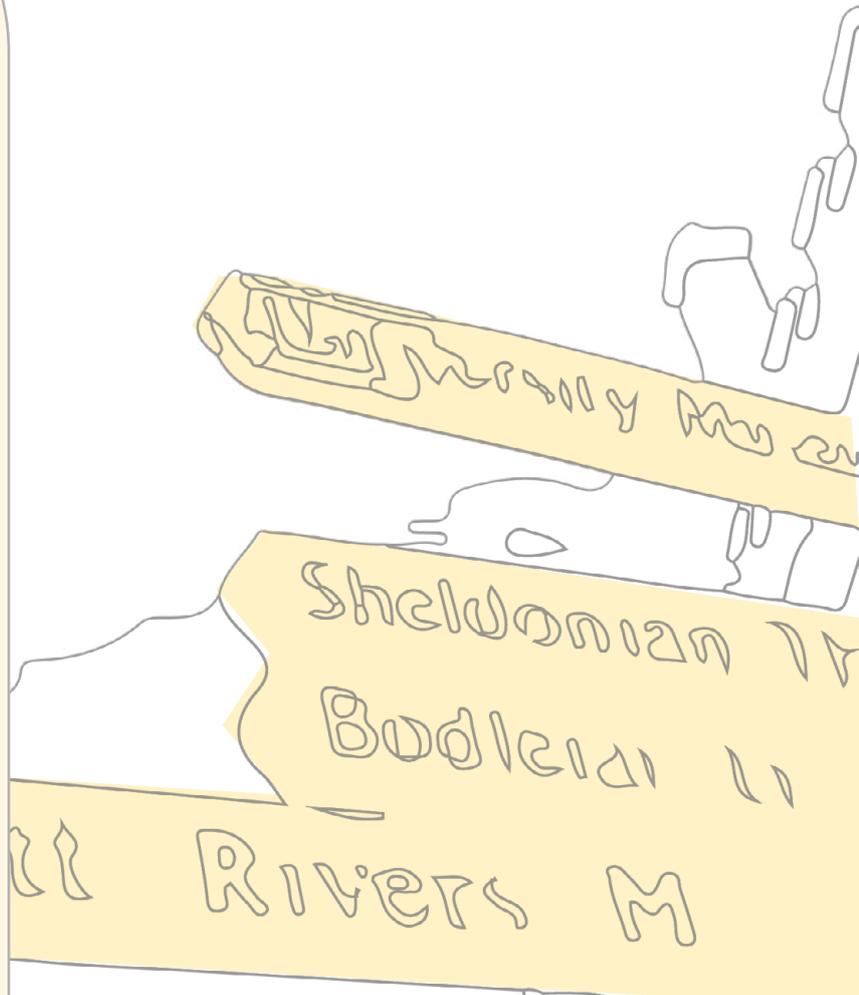
Oxford is a city that's highly attractive to a range of people including, residents, workers, shoppers and hospitality / leisure / services customers, students and visitors with sometimes competing objectives.

However, not everyone feels welcome in the city centre; there is a perception that the centre is not for locals and not accessible to those without means.

Oxford City Council and stakeholder partners will seek to create an inclusive, safe, and functional city centre; mediating conflicting issues, promoting the diverse range of activities, and endeavouring to create a place for all.

A range of operational enhancements are proposed to ensure that the city centre is improved as a more inclusive, safer, healthier and more enjoyable place in which to spend time for all our communities.

OBJECTIVES



PROJECTS

P4.1

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

Working with people who present as homeless or are sleeping rough, and with a range of partner organisations in the public sector, community, charity and social enterprise sectors to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping.

P4.2

Street Scene Management

Continue to work with Oxford Direct Services and other stakeholders to develop effective street scene management and cleaning and waste regimes. Encourage businesses, city centre customers and visitors to play their part.

P4.3

Tourism and Visitor Management

Tourist and visitor management is critical to providing a quality and memorable experience for visitors, driving footfall into the city centre and balancing the impact on businesses, residents and the public realm. We will explore funding options for work with the destination management organisation and individual attractions and businesses to review visitor arrival points; develop a strategy for visitor routes and signage; and review our provision of visitor information to ensure it is sustainable.

P4.4

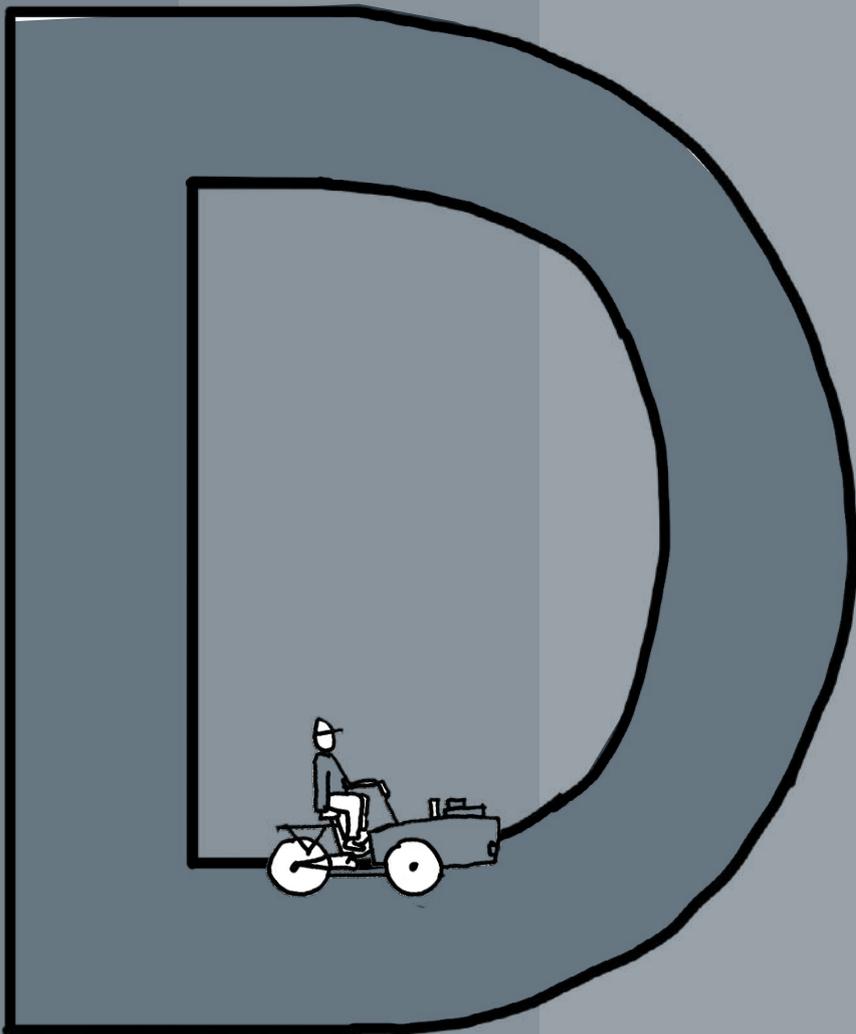
Reducing Crime and Antisocial Behaviour

Creating a safe city centre, and one that is perceived to be safe to all, is fundamental to its economic success. Collaborative joint working on a combined, strategic, responsive approach is required to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in Oxford city centre.

P4.5

Marketing and Promotion

Work with city centre businesses and partners to achieve a strong collective approach to marketing and promotion, including exploring funding options for promoting the city centre's brand and messaging, and establishing it at the heart of all communications. This will celebrate its unique place qualities including its history, world-class architectural heritage and university institutions; as well as its strengths in retail, hospitality and leisure, and in culture, community and social enterprise.



312

IMPLEMENTATION

Part D sets out how change will be coordinated across stakeholders. Responsibility for leading on and supporting delivery will be shared by a range of different organisations.

GOVERNANCE

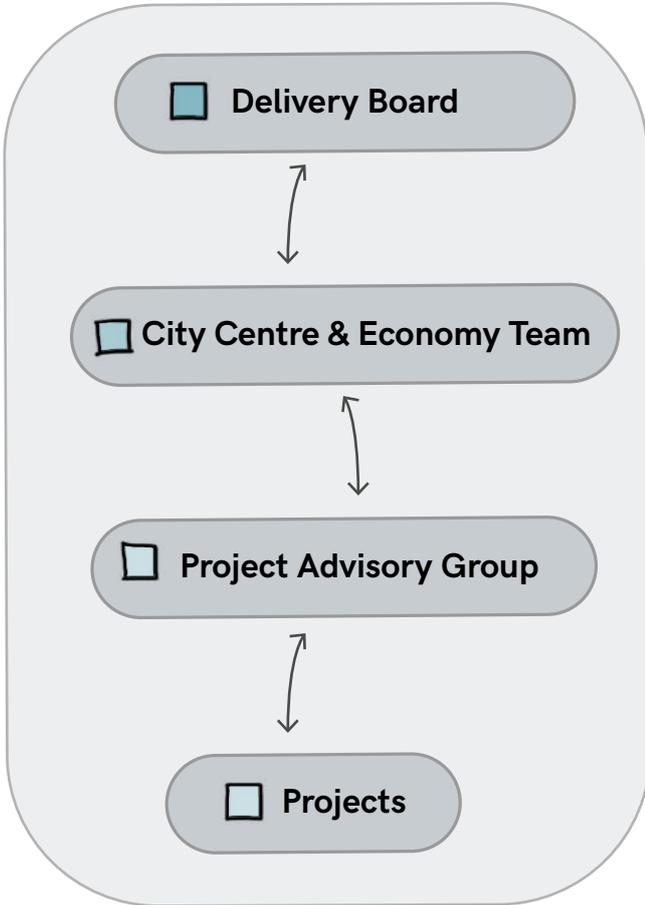
The City Council has taken the leadership in preparing the CCAP. Yet, the CCAP is intended to be a community owned plan, and cannot be delivered in isolation. The City Council seeks collaboration across stakeholders and the community. Therefore, it is important to have effective governance structures, both internally for the City Council, as well as, for the wider stakeholder group.

The delivery of the actions set out in this document require a number of elements of the City Council and County Council to work closely together. The City Centre Management function will co-ordinate the City Council's work through a multi-disciplinary programme team - the Oxford City Centre Action Plan Delivery Group. The purpose of the Group is divided into two areas of responsibility:

- + to be the delivery mechanism for the projects for which the City Council is identified as the main responsible and accountable body; and,
- + to monitor and support those projects where other stakeholders have been identified as being the main responsible and accountable body.

Further to the City Council's leadership role in preparing the CCAP, the Council will also take on the coordination and support role for the Delivery Board. The CCAP is intended to be a stakeholder owned plan, which will guide a partnership approach to the future of City Centre Management. It will be for the partnership to develop, and agree the appropriate structure. A flow diagram of this process is set-out adjacent, for illustrative purposes only.

Oxford does not have a Business Improvement District (BID), and discussion of a BID as a potential funding and delivery model for the city has been on hold for some time. Oxford City Council remains prepared to engage in conversations about this funding option and others like it including a Community Improvement District and Tourism BID, if initiated by the city's business community.



PROJECT TIMELINE

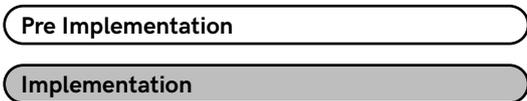
The interventions proposed in this Action Plan will need to be brought forward in phases. This section sets out the indicative timescales for the various projects. There are several key interdependencies between projects across workstreams. For example the connectivity and access workstream is critical to many of the other interventions, particularly the ability to deliver public realm changes. Achieving the objectives of this Action Plan will require partnership working across stakeholders in the city centre.

Where appropriate the interventions record both pre-implementation (business case development / design / consultation / pilot) as well as implementation.

There are three types of project.

Some are ongoing, others are already underway and there are a number that are not started but could be initiated if agreed and viable once this Action Plan has finished its stakeholder engagement. To illustrate this, each project carries a marking to show their category:

- O** ongoing
- U** underway
- NS** not started



SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

1 CONNECTIVITY & ACCESS

- 1.1 Core Transport Schemes
- 1.2 Zero Emission Zone (Core Transport Scheme)
- 1.3 Oxford Railway Station Redevelopment
- 1.3 Station
- 1.4 Oxpens & Osney Mead Connectivity
- 1.5 New Delivery (and Collection) Solutions
- 1.6 Visitor Coach Strategy
- 1.7 Park & Ride Enhancements

2 PUBLIC REALM & ANIMATION

- 2.1 City Centre Public Realm & Movement Strategy
- 2.2 Interim Public Realm Improvements
- 2.3 City Centre Shopfront Design Advice

3 GETTING THE MIX RIGHT

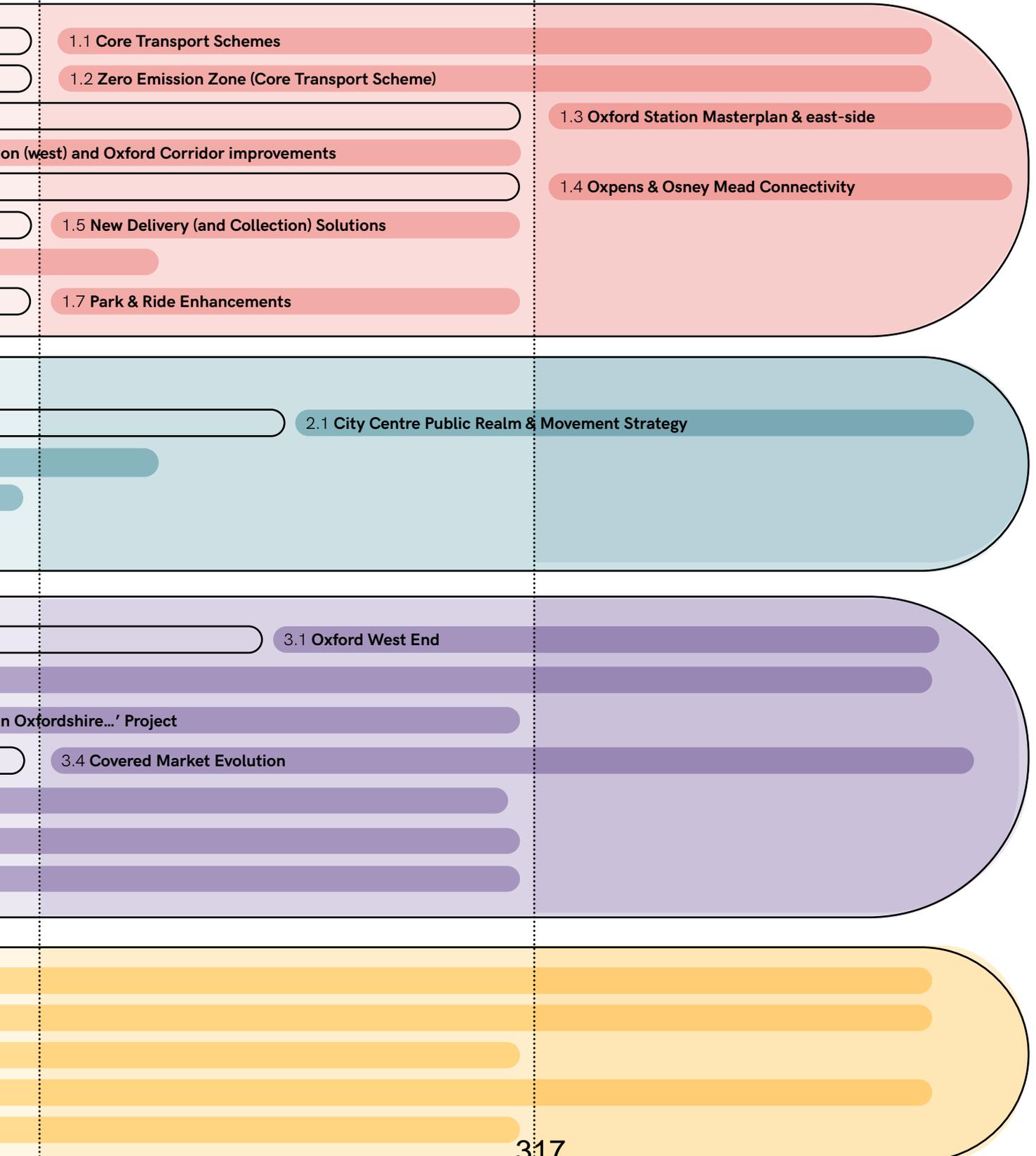
- 3.1 Oxford West End
- 3.2 City Centre Major Development Projects
- 3.3 Target & Reduce Vacant Units Including 'Meanwhile' i
- 3.4 Covered Market Evolution
- 3.5 Workspace
- 3.6 Stimulate the Night-Time Economy
- 3.7 Culture and Creative Businesses

4 GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT

- 4.1 Homelessness & Rough Sleeping
- 4.2 Street Scene Management
- 4.3 Tourism & Visitor Management
- 4.4 Reducing Crime & Antisocial Behaviour
- 4.5 Marketing & Promotion

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+YEARS



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European Union

European Regional
Development Fund

European Regional Development Fund

This project is receiving funding from the England European Regional Development Fund as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (and in London the intermediate body Greater London Authority) is the Managing Authority for European Regional Development Fund. Established by the European Union, the European Regional Development Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding>.



**PRIOR
+PTNRS**

