

To: Council
Date: 26 January 2026
Report of: Director of Planning and Regulation
Title of Report: Proposed Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	Council is requested to approve the Proposed Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045 for public consultation and, subject to the outcome of the consultation, if no matters are raised that materially impact upon the Plan strategy, the submission of the Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045 to the Secretary of State for formal examination.
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning
Corporate Priority:	Support thriving communities; Enable an inclusive economy; Pursue zero carbon Oxford; Deliver more affordable housing
Policy Framework:	The Local Plan is a statutory requirement. The scope of the policies is wide and encompasses all of the Council's corporate priorities

Recommendation(s): That Councils:

1. **Approve** the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan 2045 document for public consultation;
2. **Approve** all the supporting statutory documentation including the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulation Assessment, Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP), Policies Map and Equalities Impact Assessment;

3. **Authorise** the Director of Planning and Regulation, after consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member, to make any necessary minor editorial corrections to the Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045, IDP, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment, Policies Map, and to agree the supporting evidence base prior to going out to consultation.
4. **Authorise**, following publication, the Director of Planning and Regulation, after consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member, to make any minor changes to the document deemed necessary as a result of the consultation.
5. **Authorise** submission of the Oxford Local Plan 2045 to the Secretary of State for examination, following Regulation 19 consultation and any minor amendments made according to recommendation 3 or 4 and subject to there being no matters raised in the consultation that are considered to materially impact upon the Plan strategy.
6. **Authorise** the Director of Planning and Regulation, after consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member, to invite the examining inspector(s) to recommend any modifications considered to be necessary in accordance with section 20(7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan 2045
Appendix 2	Sustainability Appraisal
Appendix 3	Habitat Regulations Assessment
Appendix 4	Infrastructure Development Plan
Appendix 5	Policies Map
Appendix 6	Risk Assessment
Appendix 7	Equalities Impact Assessment

Introduction and background

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Proposed Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045 (Appendix 1) for consultation, and subsequently submission. Production of a local plan is a statutory requirement of the City Council as a planning authority. The Local Plan is important because it sets the planning framework for the city, with statutory policies which will inform decisions on all planning applications in the city. The Plan sets out how the city should look and feel, guiding development to the right locations, ensuring it meets the needs of the city and its communities, and making sure new development is well designed to make best use of resources, including by making efficient use of

land. In the absence of up-to-date policies in a local plan, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This limits the ability of the local planning authority to apply its locally relevant policies when making decisions. It is therefore important that the Draft Local Plan progresses quickly towards adoption, which is best achieved by having a ‘sound’ plan that meets the Government’s tests. The Planning Inspectorate will assess the Plan against these tests and makes the final call on whether these tests are met or the policies need amendment.

2. The policies in the Proposed Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045 have been informed and are supported by an extensive evidence base, including a whole-plan viability assessment. The proposed policies have been prepared carefully to meet the Government’s tests of soundness set out in paragraph 36 of the NPPF, which are that it is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. Alternative options for all policy approaches have been considered, but the proposed policies are considered to be those that best meet the aims of the plan’s strategy overall and the tests of soundness.
3. The Proposed Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045 has been prepared for the final consultation stage that will take place before the Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State in order for it to be subject to independent examination. From 30th January 2026 to 13th March 2026 it is intended that a public consultation will be undertaken that will meet the requirements set out in Regulation 19 of the Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012.
4. Early non-statutory consultation took place from 17th March-28th April 2025 with an engagement survey intended to seek early views from residents, businesses and other bodies to help identify the main issues being faced. Following that, the Regulation 18 consultation was the first of the two statutory consultations to be carried out before submission of the local plan to the Secretary of State in order that it may be independently examined. The consultation took place from 28th June-8th August. That consultation presented a series of draft policies for public consideration. To inform those draft policies, a series of options on a range of topics were identified and are detailed in background papers which also formed part of the consultation. These early stages of consultation built on the previous work on the Oxford Local Plan 2040 and helped officers understand the issues that the public thought the plan should cover and their views on the draft policies.
5. This proposed consultation on the Draft Submission Version of the Plan, to run from 30th January to 13th March 2026, will ask for views on whether the Plan meets the tests of soundness set out in paragraph 36 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Proposed Submission Draft Plan is intended to then proceed straight to submission to the Secretary of State unless anything material arises from the consultation. Minor changes that would not constitute ‘main modifications’ may be made prior to submission. Comments received in

response to this Regulation 19 consultation will be submitted alongside the Plan to be considered by the Inspector as part of the examination of the Plan.

The Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045

6. The Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045 offers a range of policies with supporting text. These range from strategic policies to more detailed policies to be used in development management decisions. The Plan is comprehensive and will replace the Local Plan 2036. Any adopted Neighbourhood Plans will be the only other documents containing statutory policies after the Northern Gateway AAP expires in 2026. The sections below briefly summarise the key points from each chapter of the Plan.

Vision and Strategy

7. The first step in any local plan is to understand needs and the next step is to try to meet these needs, within the bounds of key objectives for the plan. Of primary importance is that the plan seeks to alleviate the housing crisis whilst aiming to achieve sustainable development. A Sustainability Appraisal is attached as Appendix 2 and a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) as Appendix 3.
8. The Vision for Oxford in 2045 is that it will be a healthy and inclusive city, with strong communities that benefit from equal opportunities, not only in terms of access to housing and jobs, but to social and leisure opportunities, to healthcare and to the natural environment. Oxford will continue to be a city with a strong cultural identity, that respects our heritage, whilst maximising opportunities to look forwards, to innovate, learn and enable businesses to prosper. The city will be supported to continue to make advancements in the life sciences and low carbon sectors. The protection of the environment is central, ensuring the city maintains its biodiversity, is well connected in terms of blue and green infrastructure and is resilient to climate change. We will utilise resources prudently, while mitigating impacts upon the natural environment. The city will be net zero carbon by 2040, while our communities, buildings and infrastructure will be more resilient to the impacts of climate change or other emergencies.
9. The vision and strategy chapter contains a suite of policies that set out key features of the strategy. These include locational policies that support easily accessible facilities, and a plan-wide viability policy that sets out when viability evidence must be submitted and a cascade for relaxing the policy approaches considered as having the most impact on viability, if robustly justified and supported by strong evidence. This approach will ensure that we bring forward as much development, specifically housing, as possible in the plan period.

A healthy, inclusive city to live in

10. Chapter 2 is concerned with the delivery of housing. There is an urgent need for new homes in Oxford, but a limited and constrained supply of land available for development in the city. The very high need for new housing means that general market prices for renting and buying are prohibitive for many. The challenges the workforce may face in finding accommodation mean that employers struggle to find and retain staff.

11. The NPPF requires that the overall housing need is understood and puts forward the Standard Method as the only method by which this need should be calculated. The Standard Method for Oxford calculates the need as 1,087 dwellings per annum. There is not sufficient capacity within Oxford for new housing to meet this need. Policy H1 sets instead a housing requirement, which is based on the assessed capacity. Every effort has been made to find capacity, but the Plan does result in unmet need. A formal request for help with unmet need has been sent to the neighbouring authorities in Oxfordshire, and all have agreed to help meet this need, noting that provisions in existing plans already go a long way, if not the whole way, towards helping to meet this unmet need arising from Oxford.
12. In addition to the overall housing need, various individual housing needs must be considered, and local plans are expected to attempt to meet these needs. The need for affordable housing is particularly significant in the city and amounts to 692 units per annum, and of this 446 per annum need is for those who cannot afford to either buy or rent. Social rented housing meets the needs of those most excluded from the housing market. Regardless of how high the need is, any policy requirement set for affordable housing must be viable and therefore deliverable. The intention of Policy H2 is to maximise the amount of social rented homes that can be provided and to set the affordable housing contributions at a level that can generally be afforded, which is 40% of housing schemes over 10 units. The requirement is set at a level that should ensure the majority of developments are viable, which will limit the amount of viability evidence that will need to be assessed at the planning application stage. The policy requires 80% of affordable homes to be social rented. There will be schemes that have specific features that mean this level of affordable housing cannot be afforded, so when justified, Policy S2 sets out a cascade approach. In addition, Policy H3 sets out when contributions towards affordable housing will be sought, including from purpose-built student accommodation, certain types of elderly persons accommodation and certain employment-generating uses.
13. Policy H4 seeks to provide employer-linked housing which recognises the challenges that employers face in both recruiting and retaining staff in Oxford given the shortage of housing and its affordability. This acute staffing issue impacts on the operation and provision of key services such as schools and hospitals. Employer-linked housing involves the development of housing by specified key employers in the city, on their own specified sites, to provide a means of delivering affordable housing for their own staff. For example, the NHS provide staff accommodation within the hospital sites.
14. The large number of students resident in Oxford has an impact on the availability of general market housing. Policy H8 aims to ensure new student accommodation is built only in suitable locations and is limited to those on courses of a year or more who are receiving the greatest and longest-term educational benefit. It prioritises students of the two universities to assist with the economic aims of the Plan in supporting the universities. Policy H9 ensures that where new academic and teaching facilities are proposed that support additional students, that these students' accommodation needs can be met. In the case of

the universities this will be measured by the set threshold of students living outside of university accommodation such as student halls.

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

15. Chapter 3 is concerned with Oxford's economy. The Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045 sets out policies that seek to identify and plan for the employment needs of the city over the plan period whilst recognising the balance of other land uses, particularly housing. Existing employment uses will be supported through the intensification, modernisation and regeneration of existing employment sites, including university and hospital sites (Policy E1). The strategy is that employment needs over the plan period can be met on existing sites. Key employment sites outside of the city centre and district centres are protected for their importance to the economy. Within the city centre and district centres, full flexibility is allowed for, with no protection of sites (although new employment uses could be located here, recognising that Use Class E includes many commercial uses and new employment uses could take place as a lawful use). Other policies are intended to help ensure benefits of the successful economy are widely felt, such as the requirement for Community Employment and Procurement Plans (E3) and the Affordable Workspace policy (E4).

A green, biodiversity city that is resilient to climate change

16. Chapter 4 is concerned with protecting and enhancing green and blue infrastructure, delivering net gains in biodiversity and building in resilience to flooding and promoting sustainable drainage and resilient construction methods. Ensuring people have access to a network of green and blue infrastructure, such as green spaces, is important in Oxford, and these networks need to be protected, as well as new green and blue infrastructure provided in new development where opportunities arise.

17. The policy approach in the Local Plan recognises the multi-functional benefits of our GI network and seeks to ensure that we protect (Policy G1) a range of spaces and features for the benefit of the city now and into the future, where possible enhancing these (Policy G2) and providing new features to strengthen that network. Policy G3 requires use of the Urban Greening Factor tool to encourage greening on new developments. The policies set out the requirements that seek to ensure applicants identify/assess and protect existing habitat value and add biodiversity and green features. Policy G4 sets out how the 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) required through the Environment Act 2021 should be delivered. In addition to BNG, new development offers the opportunity to support additional biodiversity in the local area through sensitive and well thought out design that incorporates wildlife friendly measures that can support nature, such as bird and bat boxes, insect homes and wildflower meadows (Policy G5).

18. The way we design and build has a key role to play in both mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change. Other policies in this chapter are

concerned with climate resilient design, including by managing flood risk (Policy G7).

A city that utilises its resources with care, protects the air, water and soil and aims for net zero carbon

19. Chapter 5 includes policies that seek to ensure that new development comes forward in a way that does not further exacerbate climate change. If development is to be truly sustainable, then the city's natural resources must be appropriately stewarded to protect the natural environment, also ensuring public health is not negatively impacted by poor air and water quality.
20. Draft policies support the City Council's target of being a net zero carbon city by 2040. Policy R1 provides requirements for the carbon efficiency of buildings once they are in operation and throughout their lifetime. Policy R2 focuses on emissions associated with the lifetime of the development, including the construction process (embodied carbon), and Policy R3 is concerned with the importance of retrofitting existing buildings in the city, and also says that carbon efficiency benefits which a scheme may bring are a public benefit that may be weighed against heritage impacts. Policies R4-R8 are concerned with environmental quality, including of air, water and soil, and with environmental health impacts of development.

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

21. Chapter 6 is concerned with policies that respect the city's heritage and foster high quality design. Delivering high quality urban design is about more than just how a building or street looks. It is also about ensuring development functions positively for the people who live and work there, including taking account the need to adapt to climate change, and that development is attractive and easy to move around, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.
22. Policy HD1 then sets out the principles of high-quality design, which need to show that it is responsive to its context, creates or enhances local distinctiveness & ensure that the amenity of the natural environment is protected. Policy HD2 is concerned with ensuring new developments make efficient use of land. The policy includes criteria to ensure that a proposal makes the best use of its site capacity. New development should respect and respond to the city's heritage and archaeology.
23. Policy HD3 sets out the criteria for assessing the impacts of new developments on designated heritage assets and the importance of ensuring that they are protected and enhanced and that applications affecting them are informed by heritage assessments to weigh the impacts of proposals on both the significance of the asset and their settings. Policy HD4 deals with non-designated heritage assets and Policy HD5 with archaeology.
24. The city's historic views into and across the city are encapsulated in the view cones, and design should fully consider and respect these key views. Policy HD6 then goes on to consider specifically design in relation to views & building heights.

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

A liveable city with strong communities and opportunities for all

26. Accessibility to valued facilities, services and cultural opportunities is important for making strong local communities that enable people to thrive. Oxford is generally well serviced by local centres, so the focus of this chapter of the plan is on policies (Policies C1 and C2) that protect them and focus new similar developments to those locations, which are already accessible, allowing linked trips and supporting continued success of those centres.

27. The policy approach is to minimise the need to travel and prioritise sustainable modes of transport (Policies C6 and C7). The approach towards motor vehicle parking is to continue to seek a downward pressure on public, residential and non-residential parking across the city (also Policy C8). Urban spaces should be created for people to move around safely, rather than designed to prioritise cars, as these are safer, healthier, more attractive and enjoyable environments to live in.

Development sites and infrastructure

28. In order to guide the right type and level of development to the optimal location, whilst fully considering the city's constraints, the Plan contains site allocation policies and Areas of Focus policies. The latter are defined areas across the city anticipated to experience more change as a result of new development (in some cases including development across the city boundary) during the Plan period. Every effort has been made to identify as many sites for allocation as possible, so as to reduce the level of unmet housing need. This work has also involved a detailed search within the Green Belt. The revised NPPF makes it clear that, when there are unmet needs within a planning authority area, the planning authority is required to look to the Green Belt to meet those needs (paragraph 146). Several "calls for sites" have been held asking landowners and developers to nominate potential sites. These streams of work and follow up investigations through the development of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) have combined to result in the proposed allocation of 53 sites, the vast majority for housing development, including some sites newly identified in this Plan.

29. New development across the city results in additional infrastructure needs. This could range from the requirement for additional capacity at a city school, the introduction of a new cycle or pedestrian route or a contribution to a community or health facility. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), which details the key infrastructure needs within the city has been produced with the engagement of utility and health providers and the county council, and is attached as Appendix 4. The following tables summarise the development sites which have been investigated through the SHLAA process and are proposed to be taken forward as policy allocations in Chapter 8, and which are shown on the Policies Map

(Appendix 5). Table one identifies those with a current allocation in the Oxford Local Plan 2036. Table two identifies those newly identified sites. Table three lists sites which have been considered through the SHLAA, but which are not included in Chapter 8 for specific reasons, which are set out.

Table 1: Sites with allocation policies in Chapter 8 that are currently allocated in the Oxford Local Plan 2036:

SHLAA ref	Site allocation name	Minimum housing number anticipated (or stated if no residential expected)
587	ARC Oxford	employment
006b	Banbury Road University Sites - Parcel B	54
008a	Bertie Place Recreation Ground	25
11	Canalside Land, Jericho	0 in allocation as, in the event of an alternative application, will be heavily dependent on the proposed arrangement of uses on site (including boathouse/ community centre/ public open space) in conjunction with flood mitigation measures.
12	Churchill Hospital	0 in allocation as hospital use primary need
16	Cowley Marsh Depot	83
17	Crescent Hall	75
018	Diamond Place and Ewert House	135
21	Faculty of Music	23
104	Former Iffley Mead Playing Field	84
24	Government Buildings and Harcourt House	68
70	Island Site	59
26, 234	Jesus College Sports Ground	40
27	John Radcliffe Hospital	0 in allocation as hospital use primary need
028a	Kassam Stadium	290
389	Land at Meadow Lane	allocation does not state number as nature of site means this must be led by detailed proposals that respond to heritage and biodiversity sensitivities.
117	Land surrounding St Clement's Church	50
32	Lincoln College Sports Ground	24
31	Manor Place	43
574	Manzil Way Resource Centre	0 in allocation as medical use primary need
114e	Marston Paddock extension	20
497	MINI Plant Oxford	employment

42	Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC)	0 in allocation as medical use primary need
586	Osney Mead	247
028b	Overflow carpark at Kassam Stadium site	100
439	Oxford Brookes Marston Road Campus	42
001a1	Oxford North remaining phases	161
075 (a & b)	Oxford Railway Station and Becket Street Car Park	52
588	Oxford Science Park	employment
049	Oxford University Press Sports Ground, Jordan Hill	90
76	Oxpens	450
001e	Pear Tree Farm	111
001c	Red Barn Farm	employment
113	Redbridge Paddock	200
54	Ruskin Campus	30
289	Sandy Lane Recreation Ground	300
124	Slade House	0 in allocation as medical use primary need
14	Templars Square	500
38a2	Thornhill Park (phase 2)	402
61	Union Street Car Park	15
120	Unipart House	employment
63	Warneford Hospital	0 in site allocation policy as hospital the principal use of the site.
65	West Wellington Square	13
81	Worcester Street Car Park and Public House	Part of the Nuffield sites allocation (with Island Site and South of Frideswide Square) that has a minimum housing requirement of 59)

Table 2: Sites with allocation policies in Chapter 8 that are not currently allocated in the Oxford Local Plan 2036. (N.B. some of these sites have been previously allocated or were being considered in the Oxford Local Plan 2040, but they do not have a current site allocation policy relating to them):

SHLAA number	Site name	Minimum housing number anticipated	Description
516	474 Cowley Road	14	Former Powells Timber Yard
613, 614, 615	Botley Road sites around Cripley Road including River Hotel and Westgate Hotel	20	A mix of uses exist and some reprovision expected, but some conversion and intensification will result in more residential

204	East Oxford Bowls Club	10	Disused and vacant site was a bowling green
20b2	Elsfield Hall, Elsfield Way	27	Wider site including car park previously allocated and previous car park now includes housing. Building currently in use as offices and gym
664	Jowett Walk (South)	14	College accommodation to be intensified including additional student accommodation
624	Land south of Frideswide Square		Part of the Nuffield sites allocation that also includes the Island Site and Worcester Street Car Park, but only the other two parts were included in the OLP2036 (all three were included in the OLP2040). 59 units minimum across the three parts of the site
33	Littlemore Mental Health Centre, Sandford Road	0	No minimum number in policy, but 81 assumed in the SHLAA against all Oxford Health Trust sites. Redevelopment and intensification expected on this site, including staff/student accommodation
028c	Ozone Leisure Park & Minchery Farmhouse	employment	No residential expected and in lawful use for other uses
428	Rectory Centre	21	Anticipated to come forward as part of the Oxford Health Trust's rationalisation of its sites
463	Ruskin Field	28	Ruskin Field does have an allocation policy in the OLP2036, but the red line allocation for the policy has shifted to the northern part of the site
616	St Thomas School and Osney Warehouse	10	Redevelopment of small brownfield site with heritage interest

Table 3: Sites that have been considered (i.e. they passed the first stage of filtering), but that are not proposed to have a site allocation policy:

SHLAA number	Site name	Reason site has not been taken forward for an allocation
440	1 Pullens Lane	Site includes house with significant garden, which was initially considered large enough for 10 dwellings (the allocation threshold), but more detailed assessment suggests the very significant amount of green infrastructure, particularly trees, on the site might make that difficult to achieve. Site could come forward as windfall
660	2 Harberton Mead	Detailed assessment suggests the site does not have capacity for 10 dwellings (the allocation threshold). Could still come forward as windfall
173	Bayards Hill Primary School Part Playing Fields	At the current time there is not enough information to suggest it can come forward without unacceptable loss of playing pitch.

657	Clarendon centre	Work commenced on approved scheme
467	Edge of Playing Fields, Oxford Academy	At the current time there is not enough information to suggest it can come forward without unacceptable loss of playing pitch.
658	Land off Harolde Close	Further investigation of ecology and general developability suggests it does not have capacity for 10 dwellings.
43	Old Road Campus	Put forward by the University as intention to intensify further, but limited intensification within same use on this site does not require an allocation policy
665	Oriel College Sports Ground and adjoining land (comprising 263 and 639)	Very sensitive site for heritage - important as green space to the character of Bartlemas Conservation Area, and the setting of the Bartlemas Farmhouse and chapel. Also, not apparent that sports use could be provided within the site, alongside development.
111	Oxford Stadium (Greyhound stadium)	Site put forward for housing by landowner, and considered. However, current community uses mean it could not also support housing, so allocation would require the loss of those uses.
579	ROQ Site	Site is part of an area of focus and does not need a specific site allocation policy
62	University of Oxford Science Area & Keble Road Triangle	Site is part of an area of focus and does not need a specific site allocation policy
Multiple	Green Belt sites, particularly in Marston Gap	The Green Belt was considered again, as required by the NPPF. Large amounts of Green Belt within Oxford are not developable because they are functional flood plain and/or strongly protected for their biodiversity value (SSSIs). Other sites were looked at, but many were ruled out because development of them would be contrary to the strategy of the plan (Core Green Infrastructure areas, e.g. University Parks). Of the remaining areas, landowner interest was then gauged. This was minimal, but there was interest in two sites to the east of the current development sites on the western edge of Old Marston, another site which was the Extension of the Marston Paddock Development (put forward for allocation), and another site which was the playing field of Hertford College. The sites in the Marston Gap have been ruled out on transport grounds, based on detailed comments from the Highways Authority. There is no likely prospect of suitable access, and the sites are isolated and would be car-dependent. The Hertford College Playing Field is in sports use. The College suggested the site for housing, but also said they ideally want to retain the sites in sports use, and they do not have alternative plans in train for reprocision of the pitches. Therefore, it seems premature at this point to allocate it as a housing site, as it is not clear how that would come forward.

Sustainability Appraisal and HRA

30. A Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix 2) has been carried out to assess the policies against the sustainability objectives. This iterative work has informed the development of policies. A Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) appropriate assessment (as required by regulation) has been carried out to assess any potential negative impacts of development on the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and suggested mitigations are included in relevant site allocation policies. The Sustainability Appraisal and HRA will be published alongside the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan and will also be available for consultation.

Consultation

31. Engagement has already provided an important input in forming and shaping the Proposed Submission Local Plan. Engagement and consultation on the Oxford Local Plan 2045 has been and will continue to be consistent with the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning and appropriate to the stage. Public engagement so far has involved the early engagement survey 17th March-28th April 2025 and the Regulation 18 consultation 28th June- 8th August. The first was a non-statutory engagement exercise to seek early views from residents, businesses and other bodies to help identify the main issues being faced and the Regulation 18 was a statutory consultation where preferred options as draft policies were put forward for consultation to inform and check the direction of the plan. Alongside the evidence base and Government policy, engagement has been important in informing policy direction, together with professional judgement.

32. The aim of the Regulation 19 (proposed submission draft) consultation stage is to ask for views on whether the Plan meets the tests of soundness set out in paragraph 36 of the NPPF. Comments received at this stage of consultation are sent to the Secretary of State on submission of the Plan for consideration by the Inspector as part of the examination. There is limited scope to make changes to the Plan based on comments received during this consultation stage, although suggested modifications that would overcome identified soundness issues can be put forward. Should this be necessary, the Director of Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, will draft such modifications for consideration by the Planning Inspector. If any such changes are required by the Inspector they will be consulted on and put forward as Main Modifications that will be part of the Plan taken to Cabinet and Council for adoption.

33. The consultation period is intended to commence on 30th January 2026, and run until the 13th March 2026. This is in line with the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme.

Financial implication

34. Production of a Local Plan is a significant and multi-year financial commitment. In particular the costs associated with examination are notable. Work on the Oxford Local Plan 2045 has been structured to be able to progress whilst minimising financial implications. The budget of the Planning Service is drafted and has been approved with this service pressure in mind. The work required

has been assessed as capable of being resourced by existing Planning Policy staff and existing Planning Policy budgets and reserves. This situation will be kept under review as the Local Plan progresses through the last stages of production.

Legal issues

35. There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report. There are legal requirements that must be followed through the production of the Local Plan, which will be considered by the Inspector at Examination. Legal advice has been sought as required through the drafting process, both from internal resources and through the securing of an external barrister specialising in planning law.
36. The process for preparing the Local Plan is set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The draft submission document is prepared for the 3rd round of consultation, which will meet the requirements set out in Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 for this stage of consultation. At Regulation 19, comments should relate to the 'soundness' of the Plan and are considered as part of the examination.

Level of risk

37. A risk assessment has been undertaken (Appendix 6). All risks have been mitigated to an acceptable level.

Equalities impact

38. The Equalities Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix 7. A number of the policies contained in the Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045 will help address inequalities within the city if adopted.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

39. The council is committed to addressing the effects of, and reducing our contribution towards, climate change. In 2019, the council declared a climate emergency and has committed to a series of actions. The Submission Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045 has sustainability, climate change and climate adaptation and mitigation as core themes running throughout the plan. The document seeks to reflect this across all the chapters, whether it is through design policies, parking policies, flooding, drainage or how to ensure the most efficient use of land. The Plan is supported by a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment.

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Background Papers: None

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