

To: Cabinet

Date: 18 March 2026

Report of: Clive Tritton/ Carolyn Ploszynski, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Sustainability

Title of Report: Project approvals and delegations for Redbridge Paddock affordable housing development

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	This report seeks project approval and delegations to enable the continued delivery of more affordable housing at the Redbridge Paddock site
Key decision:	Yes https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=41810&PlanId=572&RPID=66080022
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing Councillor Ed Turner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management
Corporate Priority:	More Affordable Housing
Policy Framework:	Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023 to 2028

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:	
1.	Give project approval for the development, including the land sale and acquisition of affordable dwellings developed by Oxford City Housing (Development) Ltd (OCH(D)L) for which budgetary provision has been made in the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) in respect of Redbridge Paddock;
2.	Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive - City and Citizens' Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Head of Law and Governance/Monitoring Officer, to finalise the scheme design and financial appraisals and enter into any necessary agreements and contracts to facilitate the agreed purchase by the Council of the affordable housing (to be held in the HRA) and any associated land, within the identified budget, for the provision of the affordable homes, as set out in this report, on the Redbridge Paddock development, within the project approval;

3. **Delegate authority** to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Head of Law and Governance/Monitoring Officer, to approve the final terms, which will be S123 compliant, and enter into the sale agreement for the Redbridge Paddock site from the General Fund to OCH(D)L;

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Financial Information and risk for Redbridge Paddock	Yes This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the following basis: Commercial Sensitivity
Appendix 2	Risk Register	

Introduction and background

1. The Council continues to develop a supply programme to deliver more affordable housing through multiple delivery routes. These include direct delivery schemes; partnerships and joint ventures; regeneration projects; acquisitions and advance purchase agreements; and enabling work with Registered Providers, community-led Housing groups, and other partners. Direct delivery schemes can comprise of developments delivered directly by the Council (in the HRA) and also developments brought forward by Oxford City Housing Limited (OCHL) – trading as OX Place.
2. This report relates specifically to the Redbridge Paddock scheme. It seeks to secure Cabinet approvals to progress this OCH(D)L scheme including the sale of the land to OCH(D)L, who will undertake the development, and then the subsequent purchase of all affordable homes into the HRA (as freehold) on completion.

Development programme

3. As an OCHL delivered scheme, this model of delivery proposed would commit the Council to selling the land for development and then buying back the affordable homes and any associated land. The Council will hold the affordable housing stock, and any directly associated land, within the HRA on completion.
4. The Council has allocated sufficient budget in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the HRA business plan, for this purpose. The current consultation budget (2026/27 and MTFP) proposes to continue the capital funding provision.
5. The scheme is detailed below, with additional financial appraisal information provided in the (commercially sensitive) appendix to this report.

Redbridge Paddock

6. Redbridge Paddock is an 8.99 acre/ 3.64-hectare site owned by Oxford City Council and situated in Hinksey Park ward. The site sits opposite the Redbridge Park and Ride (across Abingdon Road). To the other side it borders Weirs Mill Stream.
7. It is an allocated housing site in the current Local Plan 2036 (adopted June 2020), and in the emerging Local Plan 2045. The Local Plan 2036 proposed residential development at Redbridge Paddock delivering a minimum of 162. The Regulation 19 consultation for the 2045 Local Plan opened in January 2026, following approval by Council on 26th January 2026, and proposes a minimum of 200 homes.



Red line image depicting extent of the site



Aerial photo of site referencing the red line

8. From the late 1960s almost all of the site was used for landfill. Landfill operations ceased in 1972, after which it was infilled and covered over to create made ground. The land has remained largely unused ever since; however, from 2013 to 2023 a tenant grazed horses on the land. The site will be sold for development on the basis of vacant possession.
9. As a former landfill site it will require extensive remediation and enabling work to make the site safe and suitable for development. Numerous site investigations have been undertaken with a team of specialist consultants developing an appropriate strategy to address the contamination while also limiting local disruption.
10. The site is held for General Municipal Purposes in the General Fund. As such, the Council holds the land under its general powers and there is no single statutory purpose fixing or constraining its use by virtue of how it is held by the Council. It is currently managed by Corporate Assets, and was formerly, leased for horse grazing.
11. The site has a long history, in part due to specific site abnormalities along with the desire for the scheme to be an exemplar development for design and sustainability. Key elements relate to moorings, site density, parking requirements and its status as a former landfill. The scheme is only viable to bring forward with subsidy support to address the costs of remediation and enabling works. A bid is being prepared for Homes England for grant funding to support the remediation and decontamination works. Such subsidy is required to make the scheme viable and is assumed in the financial modelling, with more information shown in Appendix 1.
12. Density expectations have evolved over several years. Previously the site was anticipated to deliver at a higher density of approximately 295 homes. However, the current proposal improves the viability and deliverability of this mixed-tenure scheme, whilst still ensuring the levels of affordable housing delivery across the wider programme, as previously envisaged.

13. The approach to parking has yet to be developed. There is a preference to minimise the parking provided within the development, in part due to the proximity of the park and ride scheme. A range of options is being explored in conjunction with the Local Planning Authority which will need to balance the need and impact of resident parking along with visitor parking, blue badge and car club spaces.

Scheme detail

14. This is a 50% affordable housing scheme which will deliver 118 much-needed affordable homes. There is a mix of unit types from 1-bedroom flats to 5-bed houses. 94 homes (80%) are to be let at Social (Council) Rents to households on the housing register, and 25 (20%) homes are to be developed as Shared Ownership tenure.
15. A further 119 properties will be available for outright market sale. The total number of homes on the site is 237. A full breakdown of expected unit types and tenures is detailed below.

Proposed accommodation schedule (subject to planning)

Size	SR	AR	SO	Total Aff	Aff %	OMS	OMS %	Total
1B2PF	39		10	49	80%	12	20%	61
2B4PF	20		5	25	38%	41	62%	66
3B5PH	17		5	22	36%	40	64%	62
4B7PH	16		4	20	46%	24	54%	44
5B6PH	1		1	2	50%	2	50%	4
Total	93		25	118		119		237
%				50%		50%		100%

16. A minimum of 10% of the site should be for public open space, which should be accessible for existing local residents. In accordance with planning requirements, 5% of the affordable homes (for which the City Council is responsible for allocations or nominations) will be designed to the M4(3) wheelchair accessible standard. Currently this will provide six accessible properties.
17. It is proposed that circa 20 homes from the market sale properties will be sold to Oxfordshire Cohousing (OCH) for the purpose of creating a co-housing scheme. This has been provisionally agreed with OCH and will progress on the basis of an advance purchase deal.
18. The site does not currently have planning consent, which means there is some planning risk. More detail on the planning risks, including reference to moorings and parking, are noted in the risk register (Appendix 2).
19. The submission of an Outline planning application for this scheme is currently targeted for August 2026. The scheme is already in the pre-application process. As such, this Cabinet report is being presented relatively early in the development process. This provides OCHL with improved contractual certainty from the Council with regards to the purchase of the homes and enables contracts with developers to be more quickly progressed.

20. As such, it should be noted that the scheme details (including layouts; unit numbers; size and tenure mixes; etc) are likely to still change. If changes are made, then the development appraisals will require re-assessment. Officers will continue to ensure that all the HRA financial parameters and tests continue to be met, reverting to Cabinet for re-approval if they are not, or if the scheme delivery approach is substantially changing.
21. The scheme has previously had two pre-apps and a public consultation (which took place in September 2024). These have elicited key feedback from planners and the public as the scheme advances.

Development programme

22. The proposed development programme milestones are outlined in the table below:

Table 1: Proposed Development Programme

Project Milestone	Target Date
Outline planning submission	August 2026
Outline Determination	March 2027
Reserved Matters planning submission	June 2027
Reserved Matters determination	Dec 2028
Discharge Conditions & Enabling Works	Up to Feb 2029
Start on Site (Phase 1)	Feb 2029
Final phased PC handovers	2030/31 to 2033

Innovation

23. The scheme is intended as a sustainability exemplar development. It is envisaged as a low- or zero-carbon development. In line with other OCHL developments this will deliver a 40% or more reduction in carbon emissions (on 2022 building regulations). It will take a fabric first approach with high levels of thermal efficiency and focus on renewable energy, including photovoltaic technology. The homes will be all-electric, with air-source heat pumps and PV.
24. It is also intended that the scheme takes an innovative approach to place-shaping and building a community. This includes engagement with Oxfordshire Cohousing to shape a diverse and sustainable community with a key focus on developing facilities for children's play.
25. On completion, OCHL will sell the land and the affordable homes to the Council. The land sale will be Section 123 compliant. The affordable housing, and land directly associated with it, will be held in the HRA.

Alternative options considered

26. There are no further alternatives to the proposed options, other than to not progress with the scheme, as outlined, this is considered the approach that best ensures feasibility and a viable scheme that can be delivered.
27. Options relating to the sale of the land for housing by a third party have been considered, but the viability-gap from the cost of remediation is not considered to generate land values beyond current assumptions.

Financial implications

28. This report seeks the required delegations to further develop this scheme within the programme of affordable housing supply. The Council's Medium Term Finance Plan (MTFP), approved at Council on 11 February 2026, supports the 40-year HRA Business Plan, and makes provision for purchases of affordable housing from OCHL's 10-year development programme, alongside direct delivery by the Council, within an overall budget envelope of £385.6m (before grant and shared ownership sales).
29. The decision to proceed with any development or buy-back will be supported by a development scheme appraisal/ financial modelling to ensure that financial parameters and requirements are met for OCHL and the HRA. The HRA parameters are:
 - a payback period of up to 70 years; and
 - a positive Net present value (NPV) over a 70-year life; and
 - an internal rate of return (IRR) of at least 3%.
30. Meeting these parameters ensure that the HRA business plan remains financially robust. Conversely not meeting these parameters will impact this position.

Legal issues

31. The activity, as set out in this report, relates to activity for the purpose of developing homes as affordable housing. This is within the Council's statutory powers. The Council has power to dispose of land by agreement under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Council has power to acquire land by agreement under section 121 of the Local Government Act 1972.
32. The Council has Homes England Investment Partner status and has Registered Provider status, in order to receive grant on any 'additional' affordable homes beyond the requirement in the planning consent.
33. Procurement of goods and services for the purpose of developing homes must be carried out in accordance with the Council's Constitution, Contract Rules, procurement procedures and in compliance with the Procurement Act 2023 (or any successor legislation), including adherence to transparency, fairness and best value principles.

Level of risk

34. Any risks inherent in this programme are already identified elsewhere, with actions to mitigate these detailed in the OCHL and HRA Business Plans and the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

35. The risks include potential cost overruns or visibility, and legal exposure if contracts are not appropriately structured. These risks will be mitigated through detailed financial appraisals, use of established governance delegations, and legal oversight throughout procurement and contracting stages.

Equalities impact

36. There are no adverse impacts in undertaking this activity, with the potential to improve provision for persons in housing need, through the provision of more affordable and accessible housing to better meet client needs.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

37. All development schemes delivered by the Council / OCHL are subject to high sustainability standards with the expectation that they exceed statutory (building) standards.

Report author	Dave Scholes
Job title	Affordable Housing Supply Corporate Lead
Service area or department	Regeneration, Economy and Sustainability
Telephone	01865 252636
e-mail	dscholes@oxford.gov.uk