

To: Cabinet

Date: 19 August 2026

Report of: David Butler, Director of Planning and Regulation

Title of Report: Endorsement of the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS)

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	Cabinet to endorse the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy following earlier endorsement by the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee.
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Anna Railton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Zero Carbon Oxford
Corporate Priority:	Support thriving communities Pursue Zero Carbon Oxford Supporting development to deliver a strong fair economy Delivering more affordable homes
Policy Framework:	None

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:
1. Endorse the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) which has already been endorsed by the Oxfordshire Joint Leaders Committee (OLJC) on 24 th April 2026

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy	No
Appendix 2	Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy Appendices	No
Appendix 3	Risk Register	No

Introduction and background

1. The purpose of the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) is to identify and understand the strategic infrastructure required to support development across the county to 2050. It serves as an evidence-based document to underpin the planning of sustainable growth.
2. The first iteration of OxIS produced in 2017 was considered to be a success for Oxfordshire. It demonstrated a proactive approach to strategic infrastructure planning that helped achieve the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and successful Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) bids.
3. A second iteration of OxIS, prepared in 2021/22. While the Stage 1 Report was approved by all six Oxfordshire's authorities, the Stage 2 Report was not. This was due to a perceived mismatch between the growth-related messaging of OxIS and the changing political climate in Oxfordshire.
4. This third 'refresh' of OxIS was originally a commitment in the Housing and Growth Deal. Funded by Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee (OLJC), a working group of officers drawn from across the councils have led the project from inception and all major milestones have been approved by the working group and, when appropriate, the Executive Officer group of OLJC.
5. OxIS was considered at the meeting of the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee (OLJC) on 24 April 2026. The report asked the OLJC to note and endorse the final OxIS, and to recommend its subsequent approval by constituent councils.

Purpose of OxIS

6. The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) identifies the strategic infrastructure required to support development across the county to 2050 and it serves as an evidence-based document to underpin the planning of sustainable growth. In addition, it will act as a key investment framework and a vehicle for engagement and consultation.
7. The Strategy applies to all local authorities within Oxfordshire and also considers the county in its wider regional context. This includes key interrelationships with neighbouring authorities and strategic geographies such as England's Economic Heartland (EEH) and the Oxford-Cambridge Corridor.
8. OxIS seeks to support rather than replicate the Infrastructure Delivery Plans (IDPs) developed by councils as part of their statutory Development Plans by focussing upon large strategic infrastructure projects that span or influence a wider area than one district.
9. As outlined above, this third 'refresh' of OxIS was originally a commitment in the Housing and Growth Deal but with the decision to cease work on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Plan, OxIS was refocussed around four key principles as follows:
 - To promote the strategically important pieces of infrastructure to government required by Oxfordshire's growth, but whose route to delivery was uncertain, either through lack of funding or other blockages to development.

- To fill the gaps in knowledge of infrastructure needs common across most districts, namely energy issues, health issues, water stress and quality, and the promotion of strategic environmental or green infrastructure.
 - To ensure that the population of infrastructure projects is up to date. Since the last iteration of OxIS there have been more recent local plans and related Infrastructure Development Plans (IDP) published as well as the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LCTP).
 - To ensure that the ranking or prioritisation matrix agreed in OxIS accurately reflects the full range of Oxfordshire's political ambitions, as set out in the Strategic Vision, Local Plans, and other relevant strategies.
10. OxIS is not strictly a strategy, in that it does not assess the infrastructure needs of Oxfordshire afresh and then consider how they could be actioned. Instead, OxIS is a data set of the known strategic scale infrastructure requirements for planned or projected growth to 2050. As such, OxIS functions as both a statement of ambition and a tool which can be used to present more refined outcomes. It is intended to supplement local plans and guide investment priorities for local authorities, government bodies and infrastructure providers.

The production of OxIS

11. OxIS was developed in two phases. The first phase involved gathering a complete list of strategic infrastructure projects across Oxfordshire from a wide range of stakeholders and understanding future infrastructure requirements based on Local Plans. The first stage of OxIS was summarised in a Stage One Strategy. This report was offered to stakeholders for review and comment in a consultation exercise during August/September 2025, which gave consultees the opportunity to review and refine the data set.
12. The second stage of the OxIS took the long list of infrastructure projects (377 in total) and reduced it to just over one hundred strategic projects, which were then assessed using an agreed multi criteria assessment process which examined the social implications, the environmental impact or benefit and how the infrastructure project contributes to Oxfordshire's carbon reduction journey. This process resulted in an agreed listing for the schemes with the intention of showing government and others our agreed infrastructure requirements to enable planned 'good growth'.
13. OxIS also estimates the infrastructure funding deficit. It only considers strategic infrastructure projects not anticipated to be funded solely from developer contributions collected through S106 or CIL contributions. OxIS concludes that providing infrastructure for growth from 2025 to 2050 will require at least £9 billion in capital. Currently, only £1.4 billion is secured, leaving a funding gap of over £7.6 billion, not accounting for potential developer contributions or other future investments. OxIS is therefore in many respects an investment document designed to promote those strategic infrastructure projects that are collectively important for Oxfordshire to Government and other stakeholders.

Alternative Options Considered

14. Cabinet may choose not to endorse the OxIS, however, this is not recommended as it could undermine the development of the Council's Local Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and weaken the Council's ability to secure future funding for strategic infrastructure that supports the county as a whole.

Implications of Local Government Reorganisation

15. The endorsement of OxIS will be a helpful tool going into Local Government Reorganisation. All Oxfordshire Authorities will have endorsed this document and the government and successor authorities will have the benefit of an up-to-date document with which to advocate for investment and co-ordinate delivery of infrastructure.

Financial implications

16. This report seeks endorsement of a completed project; there are no financial implications arising.

Legal issues

17. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Level of risk

18. No significant risks have been identified arising from this report, particularly as this is a jointly developed document supported by all councils across the county. As outlined above, choosing not to approve the OxIS would present risks, including potential impacts on the delivery of the Council's Local Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and a reduced ability to secure future funding for strategic infrastructure. See Appendix 3 – Risk Assessment for further details.

Equalities impact

19. There are no detrimental equality impacts arising from this report. This is due to the nature of OxIS as a jointly developed document to help secure funding for strategic infrastructure, the delivery of which would be likely to benefit all residents.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

20. There are no direct carbon or environmental implications arising from this report, the process followed in developing OxIS itself considered the implications arising from the listed infrastructure projects and utilised this in prioritising them.

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